

[GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Tue Dec 19, 2017](#)

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Advisory issued on Tuesday, December 19th at 7:00 a.m. Today's advisory is sponsored by [Cooke City Super 8/Bearclaw Bob's](#) and [Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Assoc.](#) This advisory does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

At 5 a.m. the mountains around Cooke City received 1-2" of new snow. Under cloudy skies winds are W-SW at 25-40 mph in the northern ranges and 10-25 mph in the south with temperatures in the high teens to mid-20s. Today is unsettled with chances of snow increasing throughout the day. By tomorrow morning I expect 2-4" in the north and 6-8" in the south with the storm continuing through Wednesday. Winds will remain westerly and average 20-30 mph as temperatures cool into the teens tonight.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



[Bridger Range](#) [Northern Gallatin](#) [Northern Madison](#)

Strong wind yesterday in the northern mountains built wind slabs 1-2 feet thick that were triggered by ski patrols, and avalanched naturally on Mt. Blackmore ([photo](#)) and in Beehive Basin ([photo](#)). The slides were small and only involved the new, wind-drifted snow. Winds were variable in speed and direction and loaded slopes at the ridgeline and cross-loaded slopes in gullies mid-mountain ([photo](#)). Today, more wind and new snow will make wind slabs easy to trigger.

Snowfall today will further bury and stress a weak layer of faceted snow buried 5-10" under the surface. This problematic layer formed during sunny weather a week ago and will begin to crack, collapse and possibly avalanche with more snow in the coming days, which Alex explains in a video he made up Hyalite ([video](#)).

Natural and human triggered slides on wind-loaded slopes yesterday, plus continued wind today, point to a **CONSIDERABLE** danger on all wind-loaded terrain and **MODERATE** on all other slopes.



[Southern Madison](#) [Southern Gallatin](#) [Lionhead Range](#) [Cooke City](#)

In the southern mountains the wind has not been very strong, but this may change with today's storm. At Lionhead on Friday, Eric found a thin, weak and faceted snowpack ([snowpit profile](#)) which will become unstable with more snow. Outside Cooke City the snowpack is 4-6' deep and stable, but on Sunday I found a weak layer of sugary facets 4-6" under the surface that will produce avalanches when loaded with more snow or wind slabs ([photo](#), [video](#)). For today the avalanche danger is rated **MODERATE**, but could rise to **CONSIDERABLE** with today's storm. This means that the ability to trigger avalanches will rise from *possible* to *likely*.

If you get out and have any avalanche or snowpack observations to share, drop a line via our [website](#), email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram (#gnfacobs).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

[Events and Education Calendar](#)

BOZEMAN

Dec. 21, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 P.m. at Play It Again Sports, Bozeman

Jan. 12 and 13, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)

Jan. 17, 18 and 20 or 21, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 24, 25 and 27, **Advanced Avalanche Workshop w. Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Feb. 9 and 10, **Companion Rescue Clinic**, [Info and Register](#)

WEST YELLOWSTONE

Today and tomorrow, **Snowmobiler Introduction to Avalanches with Field Course**, [Info and Register Here](#)

Jan. 6, **Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn Conference Center

COOKE CITY

22 and 23 December, **Weekly Current Conditions and Avalanche Rescue**, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Friday @ the Super 8, and anytime between 10-2 on Saturday @ Lulu Pass road.