

# [GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Thu Jan 16, 2020](#)

Good Morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by [Highline Partners](#) and [Your Montana Chevy Dealers](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## Mountain Weather

There's no new snow to report, only wind. Weather stations are showing S-SW wind blowing 45-65 mph in Hyalite, and gusts of 35-50 mph elsewhere. Today will remain windy under mostly cloudy skies with temperatures rising from the teens to low 20s. Two to three inches of snow will fall around West Yellowstone tonight with a trace in other ranges.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



**Bridger  
Range**

**Madison  
Range**

**Southern  
Gallatin**

**Lionhead  
Range**

**Cooke  
City**

Yesterday, a large avalanche was triggered south of Saddle Peak in the Bridger Range, and a big slide was seen near Cooke City on Mt. Fox. Snowfall and strong wind this past week loaded many slopes to their breaking point. Wind is still moving snow, but overall most slopes are handling the load. Here's a recap:

*Bridger Range:* A skier triggered a large slide to the south of Saddle Peak yesterday. Luckily no one was caught because it would have been unsurvivable. If you are wondering what the stability on Saddle Peak is looking like, look no further. This avalanche is evidence of a poor structure that's been overloaded with windblown snow ([photos and description](#)).

*Northern Madison Range:* Yesterday, skiers triggered a wind slab in Bear Basin and also saw a large slide that released a day or two prior. ([photos and description](#)).

*Cooke City:* A natural avalanche on Mt. Fox broke at the ground on Tuesday. It was impressively large and ran hundreds of feet wide. Although we are finding that most slopes have gotten stronger ([video](#)), this lone beast recalibrates the potential danger ([photo and description](#)).

In the last 4 days we've had field days to [Fairy Lake](#), [Lionhead](#), [Buck Ridge](#) and [Cooke City](#). Watch our [videos](#) if you are heading out since they show you what to look for. Also check out the recent [avalanche activity](#) page which documents [smaller slides around Cooke City](#) and [whumphing in the southern Gallatin Range](#).

For today, triggering avalanches is possible and the danger is rated **MODERATE**. Some avalanches might be small, localized wind slabs, while others could be hair-raising deep slabs. It is not easy to determine which is which, so I recommend notching things back and thinking twice before getting into avalanche terrain.



## Northern Gallatin

It might not have snowed, but at least it's windy. Yes, that's a joke. The [Hyalite weather station](#) is getting buffeted with 65 mph gusts from the southwest. Any loose flakes of snow are long gone and I expect wind-drifts to be packed into hard slabs. The snowpack is generally stable in the northern Gallatin Range with the exception of wind-drifted slopes at the ridgelines and in gullies. Most drifts will be glued down, but some may avalanche. Shooting cracks are a red flag you are on a slope with the latter. Alex's [video](#) from his ski up Blackmore this weekend speaks to this concern. For today, the danger is **MODERATE** on all slopes with wind-drifted snow and **LOW** on all others.



## Island Park

Yesterday, a large avalanche was triggered south of Saddle Peak in the Bridger Range, and a big slide was seen near Cooke City on Mt. Fox. Snowfall and strong wind this past week loaded many slopes to their breaking point. Winds are still moving snow, but overall most slopes are handling the load. However, triggering avalanches remains possible. Some avalanches might be small, localized wind slabs, while others could be hair-raising deep slabs. It is not easy to determine which is which, so I recommend notching things back and thinking twice before getting into avalanche terrain.

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out and plan to attend one or two: [Events and Education Calendar](#).

### COOKE CITY

Every Friday and Saturday, **Snowpack Update and Rescue Training**. Friday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Soda Butte Lodge. Saturday anytime between 10-2 @ Round Lake.

### BOZEMAN

January 27, **Avalanche Information and Demonstration Table**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Montana Science Center.

January 29, **GNFAC Forecaster Chat: Avalanche Myth Busters**, 6-8 p.m. at Uphill Pursuits.

January 31, Women's Only Companion Rescue Clinic, 6 - 8 pm at REI followed by a field day February 1. [More info and Register Here](#).

February 1, **King and Queen of the Ridge** at Bridger Bowl (fundraiser). This is the Friends of the Avalanche Center's second biggest fundraiser of the year. Come on out and help us raise money by hiking and skiing laps on the ridge. Prizes, camaraderie and a good time is guaranteed. [Register with Bridger](#) to hike in the event, and [create a pledge page](#) to raise funds with your Ridge laps.

### DILLON

January 29 and 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evenings of January 29 & 30 plus a field day February 1. Snowmobile specific field day offered February 2. [More Info and Register Here](#).

## **WHITEHALL**

January 18, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Homestake Lodge.

## **WEST YELLOWSTONE**

January 25, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.

February 1, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 7-8 p.m. at West Yellowstone Holiday Inn.

## **HELENA**

January 28, **1-hr Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7 p.m. Carroll College.

## **LIVINGSTON**

January 30, **Introduction to Avalanche w/ Field Course**, evening of January 30 plus a field day February 2.  
[\*\*More info and Register Here.\*\*](#)