

[GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sat Nov 18, 2017](#)

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with early season weather and avalanche information from the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center on Saturday, November 18th at 6:30 a.m. This bulletin is sponsored by [The Friends of the Avalanche Center](#) and [Spark R&D](#). We will update this bulletin when conditions change. The GNFAC will begin issuing daily advisories on Friday, November 24th.

Mountain Weather

The mountains got 1-2" of snow as the storm ended yesterday. Wind has been out of the west-southwest at 15-30 mph with gusts to 40 mph. Temperatures this morning are single digits to teens F and will rise to high 20s F today. Skies will be partly cloudy with moderate to strong southwest wind at 15-30 mph. There is no new snow expected through the weekend and a chance for a small storm Monday night.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



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

The storm that ended yesterday morning left 1-2 feet of dense snow in the mountains around Cooke City and West Yellowstone. This new snow was equal to 1.5 to 2" of SWE ([snow water equivalent](#)) and was accompanied by strong west to southwest winds. This rapid, heavy load created very unstable conditions. Snowmobilers near Cooke City witnessed a natural avalanche on the east side of Mt. Abundance that covered their tracks from earlier in the day ([photo](#)). Strong wind last night continued to load slopes, and today avalanches will remain easy to trigger or could run naturally. Carefully evaluate terrain and avoid traveling on or underneath large, steep slopes.



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

The 2-4" of new snow in the mountains near Bozeman and Big Sky does not create as much instability as the 1-2 feet in the southern ranges. However, strong west-southwest wind drifted recent snow into wind slabs and large cornices ([video](#), [photo](#)). Fresh wind slabs and cornices are mostly confined to ridgelines ([photo](#), [photo](#)), and will be possible to trigger this weekend. The best strategy is to travel on non-wind loaded slopes, and stay far back from the edge of cornices while travelling along ridgelines.

On non-wind loaded slopes, snow from November has bonded mostly well to the older snow. Avalanches breaking on deeper layers are still possible, as Eric and I found earlier this week in the northern Bridgers ([video](#), [photo](#)), and as shown by a large natural avalanche near Cooke City last week ([photo](#)). Many slopes are stable while some are not. Dig a snowpit and do a stability test to assess the relationship between all layers in the snowpack before traveling in steep terrain.

We are still collecting snowpack data from around the advisory area and will begin issuing danger ratings when we start daily advisories a week from today.

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).

Get Avalanche Smart – Episode 2: Don’t Be Like Dick

The Friends of the Avalanche Center present the second of 4 short films promoting avalanche education. Dick Aspen and Doug Chabot star in this episode to encourage you to “get the real forecast” [VIDEO](#).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

[Events and Education Calendar](#)

HELENA

TONIGHT!!! November, **Avalanche Awareness and Beacon Practice for Snowmobiles**, 9 a.m. at Montana Boat Center, Helena

7 December, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at Basecamp, Helena

BOZEMAN

6 December, **Avalanche Awareness**, 6-7:30 p.m. at REI Bozeman

7 December, **Avalanche Awareness and Beacon Practice**, 6-8 p.m. at Beall Park, Bozeman

Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 2, 3 or 9, **Introduction to Avalanches w/ Field Day**, [Info and Register Here](#)

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](#)

COOKE CITY

24 and 25 November, **Current Conditions and Avalanche Rescue**, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Friday and anytime between 10-2 on Saturday.