

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Mon Apr 3, 2023

Good morning. This is Dave Zinn with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Monday, April 3rd at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by [Blitz Motorsports and Yamaha](#) and the [Yellowstone Club Community Foundation](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

The mountains around Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Cooke City received 1-3" of snow yesterday. Temperatures are in the single digits F, and winds calmed and shifted to the southwest to southeast at 5-10 mph. Today, temperatures will be in the 20s F with east to northeast winds blowing 5-15 mph. West Yellowstone will see up to 5" of snow by tomorrow morning, with a trace to 2" elsewhere.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



Southern
Madison

Southern
Gallatin

Lionhead
Range

Cooke
City

Island
Park

The southern ranges of the advisory area received 12-14" of snow in the last few days. Strong winds drifted snow onto slopes where avalanches breaking 1-2' deep are likely today. Larger avalanches failing on deeply buried weak layers are possible.

Despite poor visibility, we had many reports of avalanches yesterday within the new and wind-drifted snow. Near Cooke City, a natural avalanche broke 1-3' deep and 100' wide on Woody Ridge ([photos and details](#)), and a skier remotely triggered a wind-loaded slope on Mineral Mountain from 20' away that avalanched 12-18" deep, 750' wide and ran into mature trees below ([photo and details](#)). We saw six natural avalanches in the Taylor Fork that broke within the new and wind-drifted snow above Beaver Creek ([photos and details](#), [video](#)).

True to form this season, new snow and wind-loading resulted in at least a few deep slab avalanches. In the Hayden Creek drainage south of Cooke City, an avalanche broke 1000' wide and 4-6' deep ([photos and details](#)), and near Hilgard Peak in the Southern Madison Range, an avalanche similarly appeared 4-6' deep and 1000' wide ([photos and details](#), [video](#)). Groups sent in two noteworthy observations of deep slab avalanches from outside the advisory area; a large avalanche in the Tobacco Root Mountains ([photo](#)) and an avalanche east of Emigrant Peak in the Absaroka Range that broke an estimated 10' deep and 1000' wide ([photo and observation](#)).

Recreate on slopes less than 30 degrees steepness, avoiding areas immediately below steep slopes. Choose smaller, non-wind-loaded slopes without terrain traps. The danger is [CONSIDERABLE](#).



Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison

The northern ranges of the advisory area received 5-7" of snow and strong winds in the last few days. Avalanches breaking 1-2' deep within recently wind-drifted snow and on deeply buried weak layers are

possible.

Yesterday, groups sent in details and photos of natural avalanches breaking 1-3' deep on wind-loaded slopes in the Bridger Range ([Battle Ridge](#), [Naya Nuki](#)). On Friday, a natural avalanche failed on Cedar Mountain near Big Sky ([photo](#)), and a rider triggered a 2-3' deep avalanche from 100' away in Portal Creek ([photo and details](#)).

Recent deep slab avalanches highlight a dangerous possibility. Thursday, outside the Big Sky Resort boundary, a snowboarder took a nasty ride over cliffs in a slide that broke 2-4' deep ([photo](#)). Earlier this weekend, an avalanche above Ainger Lake in the Bridger Range broke several feet deep and 500 feet wide, running to the Lake below ([details and photos](#)).

Dig and test for instability in the upper few feet of the snowpack and retreat from steep slopes where signs of instability are present. Choose smaller, non-wind-loaded slopes with fewer hazards, like trees or cliffs. The avalanche danger is [MODERATE](#).

Please share avalanche, snowpack or weather observations via our website, email (mtavalanche@gmail.com), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

[Events and Education Calendar.](#)