GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Wed Mar 6, 2024

Good morning. This is Doug Chabot with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Wednesday, March 6th at 7:00 a.m. Today's forecast is sponsored by **Alpine Yamaha in Livingston** and the **Yellowstone Club Community Foundation**. This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

AVALANCHE WARNING

We are issuing a Backcountry Avalanche Warning for the mountains around Cooke City, the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone, and Island Park, ID. A foot of snow has fallen in the last 24 hours with blustery wind. The snowpack is weak and the new snow and wind-loading are creating very dangerous avalanche conditions. Human-triggered and natural avalanches are likely. Avoid avalanche terrain and avalanche runout zones. The avalanche danger is **HIGH** on all slopes.

This warning will expire or be updated by 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 7th.

Mountain Weather

In the last 24 hours 7" fell in the Bridger Range and in Hyalite, 3" around Big Sky, 7" in Taylor Fork and 12+" in Cooke City, West Yellowstone and Island Park. Wind is W-NW at 10-20 mph with gusts of 45 mph. Snowfall has mostly stopped and westerly wind will calm to 10-20 mph. Clouds will diminish today and temperatures will rise from 10F to 25F. Clear, sunny weather is on the menu through the beginning of next week.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Lionhead Range Cooke City Island Park

Avalanche Warning

An Avalanche Warning has been issued for the mountains around Cooke City, the Lionhead area near West Yellowstone, and Island Park, ID. Over a foot of snow has fallen in the last 24 hours and very dangerous avalanche conditions exist. Since Friday these mountains have received 3.6"-4.7" of snow water equivalent. *This is a lot of weight!* It translates into 4-5 feet of snow. The snowpack is weak and strong wind has loaded slopes even further. Avoid all avalanche terrain including flatter areas underneath steeper ones. Don't mess around. Slopes that previously avalanched are avalanching *again*. The danger is rated HIGH on all slopes.

Bridger Range Gallatin Range Madison Range

The Bridger, Madison and Gallatin Ranges had 2-3 feet of snow falling since Friday (1.7-2.8" of SWE). With this snow and strong wind came avalanches: a jaw dropping large avalanche in Hyalite on Arden Peak (**observation** and **photo**), avalanches running a second time on Buck Ridge (**observation**), and Dave getting surprised in Bacon Rind where he found 3-4' deep avalanches in small, low-angled openings (**observation** and **video**). As a forecaster he was stoked, because seeing unusual avalanches is cool, but as a skier he was less

stoked since it showed how bad things are. He found an equally unstable snowpack in Taylor Fork yesterday (**video**). And let's not forget that the Bridger Range had an Avalanche Warning on Sunday from a 24" storm (**Alex's field video**).

Conditions are dangerous. Triggering avalanches is a real consequence of getting into avalanche terrain. A person needs to be extra careful traveling under steep slopes because triggering avalanches from the flats is possible.

Be patient. The snowfall just stopped and the snowpack needs a breather to adjust all the added weight.

The avalanche danger is rated CONSIDERABLE on all slopes.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: **Events and Education Calendar.**

TONIGHT, March 6: *Darkest White* book signing at World Boards 4-7 p.m. The book chronicles the life of Craig Kelly, snowboarding superstar. More information can be found here: https://www.ericblehm.com/events.

March 8-10: Bozeman Splitfest. Check the Bozeman Splitfest website for event details and avalanche education opportunities offered by the Friends of the Avalanche Center.

Every weekend in Cooke City: Friday at The Antlers at 7 p.m., Free Avalanche Awareness and Current Conditions talk, and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Round Lake Warming Hut, Free Rescue Practice.

Loss in the Outdoors is a support group for those affected by loss and grief related to outdoor pursuits. Check out the link for more information.