

## GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Tue Jan 14, 2025

This is Dave Zinn with the avalanche forecast for Tuesday, January 14th, at 7:00 a.m. sponsored by [Werner Wealth Management](#), [Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association](#) and [Cooke City Motorsports](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

### Mountain Weather

**This morning**, temperatures are in the single digits to low teens F, with 5-15 mph winds from the west through the north. The exception is the Bridger Range, where winds are 25 mph, **gusting to 40 mph**. In the last 24 hours, a trace to 2" of snow fell across the forecast area.

**Enjoy a few nice winter days** before snow and cold temperatures arrive at the end of the week. Today, temperatures will be in the high teens to low 20s F with light winds under clearing to mostly sunny skies. Stronger winds will persist in the Bridger Range.

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



Southern Madison   Southern Gallatin   Lionhead Range   Cooke City

In the Southern Madison and Southern Gallatin Ranges and the mountains around Cooke City and West Yellowstone, the primary concern is **persistent slab avalanches** failing on deeply buried weak layers. Recently, avalanches 4-6 feet deep have occurred naturally near Cooke City, some triggered remotely from distant flat terrain ([Ian and Alex's video](#)). Yesterday and the day before, slides broke deep within the snowpack south of town ([photos and details](#), [Photos/ details 2](#)).

Around West Yellowstone, the snowpack is shallower, with avalanches likely to break 1-3 feet deep in steep terrain. At Bacon Rind, we triggered *many* whumphing collapses with shooting cracks ([observation and video](#)), and at Lionhead, the terrain near our snowpit collapsed with a thunderous rumble ([observation/ video](#)).

Wind-loading on steep slopes exacerbates the persistent slab problem and could be hazardous independently as **wind slab avalanches** ([slide near Two Top](#)).

Enjoy great powder turns and ride in low-angle terrain, avoiding slopes steeper than 30 degrees and runout zones.

The danger is [CONSIDERABLE](#).



Bridger Range

Strong winds in the Bridger Range are drifting the plentiful new snow, making **wind slab avalanches** likely today. The distribution is irregular and widespread. Today is the second day of heavy wind loading, and slabs are becoming thicker. Seek out slopes sheltered from the wind to find softer turns and safer conditions.

The last two weeks of snow built a thick slab and steadily added weight to weak layers at the bottom of the snowpack. This snowpack structure makes **persistent slab avalanches** possible. ([Playground observation](#)).

The avalanche danger is [CONSIDERABLE](#) on wind-loaded slopes and [MODERATE](#) on all others.



## Northern Gallatin Northern Madison

Recent snowfall and wind in the Northern Madison and Northern Gallatin Ranges make human-triggered avalanches possible. **Wind slab avalanches** can break up to several feet deep on slopes with fresh drifts of wind-loaded snow. Larger wind slabs can bury or kill a skier or rider, and shallower slides are dangerous if they drag you into trees, over cliffs, or pile deep in narrow gullies.

Avalanches failing on persistent weak layers deep within the snowpack are possible. These **persistent slab avalanches** are often triggered from shallower areas on a slope, like near rock outcrops or wind-scoured ridges, and propagate to where the snowpack is deeper ([Blackmore Video](#)).

Assess the snowpack for instability before considering travel in avalanche terrain. Less steep slopes sheltered from the wind are less likely to slide, and smaller pitches with fewer terrain traps reduce the consequences of an avalanche. Always follow safe travel practices. The avalanche danger is [MODERATE](#) on all slopes.



## Island Park

Island Park received less snowfall last week but is deeper overall, resulting in a somewhat more stable snowpack. Despite the more stubborn nature, there's a risk of triggering a 3-5-foot-deep **persistent slab avalanche** ([video](#)). Getting caught by an avalanche of this magnitude is likely fatal.

The most recent slides reported from the Island Park area were **wind slab avalanches** in the Mount Jefferson Bowl ([info and photos](#)). Slope loaded by wind-drifted snow makes wind slabs, and large persistent slab avalanches more likely.

Reduce the risk and impact of dangerous avalanches by following safe travel practices and choosing smaller, less steep slopes sheltered from wind-loading with clear runouts and minimal terrain traps. Riding on slopes less than 30 degrees steep without overhead hazard largely eliminates your avalanche risk.

Human-triggered avalanches are possible, and the avalanche danger is [MODERATE](#).

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

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

*Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Session* for non-motorized travelers during the [last weekend of January](#).

**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.

## **KING AND QUEEN OF THE RIDGE**

Do you like to hike? Do you like to ski/ride? Then the King & Queen of the Ridge on 2/1 is for you. Hike, ride and raise money for the Friends of the Avalanche Center at Bridger Bowl this year! Join this fun event to promote and support avalanche safety and awareness! Fundraising prizes for the top 5 individuals who raise over \$500. *No racing is necessary to compete for the fundraising prizes.* Info to fundraise is [HERE](#) or [donate here](#).

\*\*\*Race participants for the King and Queen of the Ridge must register separately with Bridger Bowl [here](#)\*\*\*