

# **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Sun Mar 26, 2023**

Good morning. This is Alex Marienthal with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Sunday, March 26th at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by [Gallatin County Sheriff Search and Rescue](#) and [Spark R&D](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## Mountain Weather

Since yesterday morning the Bridger Range received 14" of low density snow, Hyalite got 6", near Big Sky and West Yellowstone got 3-4", and 1-2" fell near Cooke City. Yesterday wind was out of the northwest at 5-15 mph, and overnight wind shifted to the southeast-southwest. Temperatures are singles to low teens F this morning, and will reach low 20s F today. Wind will be 5-15 mph out of variable directions. Snow showers are expected through today with 4-8" possible near Bozeman and Big Sky, and 2-4" near Cooke City and West Yellowstone.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



**Bridger Range**   **Gallatin Range**   **Madison Range**   **Lionhead Range**

Dangerous avalanche conditions exist and human-triggered avalanches are likely in the mountains near Bozeman, Big Sky and West Yellowstone. Since Friday night these mountains received 8-20" of new snow equal to 0.6-1.5" snow water equivalent (SWE). New snow amounts have been highly variable, and we received reports of 2-4 feet of low density snow in parts of Hyalite and the Bridger Range. Today a person can trigger large avalanches that involve the new snow. Avalanches will be larger and more likely where more snow fell, especially on slopes that have a hard crust below the new snow or where snow was drifted into thicker slabs. Yesterday, skiers in Beehive Basin saw a natural avalanche that was more than a foot deep and 75' wide which shows what is possible today ([photos](#)). More snow through today will make natural avalanches possible and increase the potential size of human-triggered avalanches.

Additionally, there is a possibility avalanches could break several feet deep on old buried weak layers which would create a massive, likely unsurvivable avalanche ([video](#) from Mt. Blackmore). A slide that broke 8-10 ft deep earlier this week on Elephant Mtn. is the latest example of huge avalanches that could be triggered or break naturally today ([details and photos](#)). See our [avalanche activity list](#) and [recent videos](#) for more examples of recent big slides. A good reason to choose objectives that avoid avalanche terrain.

Plan to avoid slopes steeper than 30 degrees altogether, or very carefully assess the stability of new and wind-drifted snow and potential for deep buried weak layers before traveling across or below steep slopes. Conservative decision making and cautious route finding are essential today. Human-triggered large avalanches are likely and avalanche danger is [CONSIDERABLE](#).



**Cooke City**

In the mountains near Cooke City the main avalanche concern is a person triggering avalanches that break several feet deep on weak layers buried two months ago. On Thursday near Daisy Pass a snowmobiler triggered avalanche broke 4 feet deep, caught two riders, and one of them suffered a broken femur ([details and photos, video](#)). Additionally, 3-5" inches of new snow from the last couple days will be drifted into thicker slabs that a person can trigger. If you plan to travel on or below steep slopes, choose smaller slopes that have not been recently wind-loaded and without large consequences such as trees, gullies or cliffs below. Human-triggered avalanches are possible and 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).



## Island Park

Dangerous avalanche conditions exist and human-triggered avalanches are likely. Today a person can trigger large avalanches that involve the new snow. Additionally, there is a possibility avalanches could break several feet deep on old buried weak layers which would create a massive, likely unsurvivable avalanche. Conservative decision making and cautious route finding are essential today.

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

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

Sunday, March 26, [Avalanche Alliance Sweepstakes](#)! Win a custom 2022 Ford 350 Super-Duty truck or many other items. Proceeds help support avalanche centers. Use code LASTCHANCE to receive 40% more tickets. Winners will be chosen at the Jackson Hole Hill Climb.

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