

# **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Tue Jan 9, 2024**

Good morning. This is Dave Zinn with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Tuesday, January 9th at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by [Ride Rasmussen Style](#), [Werner Wealth Management \(Advisors with DA Davidson\)](#) and the [Upper Yellowstone Snowmobile Club](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## Mountain Weather

Mountain temperatures range from around 0 degrees F near West Yellowstone, Island Park, and Cooke City to the mid-teens F near Bozeman and Big Sky. Winds are 15-30 mph with gusts up to 55 mph from the southwest to northwest, and there is 1-2" of new snow in the Bridger Range and near West Yellowstone, Island Park, and Cooke City.

Today, temperatures will be in the teens to 20s F with 20-35 mph winds from the west to southwest. By tomorrow morning, the mountains around Island Park, West Yellowstone, and Cooke City will receive 5-10" of new snow, with 2-5" around Big Sky and Bozeman.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



### All Regions

Strong winds are transporting recent snow into thick drifts on wind-loaded slopes where dangerous avalanche conditions exist, and human-triggered avalanches are likely. New snow today will add fuel to this fire. Human-triggered avalanches are possible in non-wind-loaded terrain where the slabs of recent snow are sitting on persistent weak layers.

Mountain winds increased yesterday afternoon and will continue to blow 20-35 mph from the west to southwest throughout the day. Avoid steep slopes where strong winds are transporting 4-9" of snow that fell across much of the advisory area, and up to 16" in the Centennial Range through the weekend. Today's snow will amplify instabilities. Wind-loaded slopes will be sensitive to human triggers and likely to produce avalanches 1-2+ feet deep, large enough to injure or bury backcountry travelers. A natural avalanche two days ago on West Woody Ridge near Cooke City ([details and photo](#)), and numerous small, human-triggered avalanches three days ago in wind-loaded terrain at Buck Ridge ([video](#)) are recent examples of this type of avalanche problem. Expect to find these drifted slopes at upper and mid-elevations. Natural avalanches, shooting cracks and collapsing are red flags indicating instability.

Whether wind-affected or not, recent snow fell on a snowpack with multiple weak layers that can fail and avalanche. Assessing and discussing these weak layers has been a staple of our field days across the advisory area ([23-24 Field videos](#)). Riders, skiers and climbers have submitted many greatly appreciated observations documenting the nearly universal distribution of this season's weak snowpack structure ([snow and avalanche observations page](#)). Knowing that weak layers are likely under your feet, dig down and test for any associated instability before considering travel on terrain steeper than 30 degrees.

The danger is rated [CONSIDERABLE](#) on wind-loaded slopes. The danger is rated [MODERATE](#) in non-wind-loaded terrain but will increase as today's snowstorm adds weight and stress to buried weak layers.

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

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

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.

We offer *Avalanche Fundamentals with Field Session* courses targeted towards non-motorized travelers in [January](#) and one geared towards [motorized users](#). Sign up early before they fill up.

[King & Queen 2024](#), **3 February 2024**. Form a team or sign up individually to hike laps on the Bridger Bowl ridge to fundraise for the Friends of the Avalanche Center.

[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.