

GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Thu Feb 27, 2025

This is Mark Staples with the avalanche forecast for Thursday, February 27th, at 7:00 a.m. sponsored by the [Bozeman Splitfest](#), [Beartooth Adventures](#) and [Bridger Bowl](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

Mountain Weather

It really feels like spring with warm sunny weather and a ridge of high pressure overhead for the next four days until Sunday night when the leading edge of a trough of low pressure arrives bringing cooler air and snowfall.

This morning temperatures are mostly in the upper teens and low 20s F; a bit warmer in the Bridgers and a bit cooler near West Yellowstone and Cooke City. The strongest winds blew two days ago, and this morning are averaging 10-15 mph with gusts in the 20s from W and NW.

Today will be another gorgeous day that will warm quickly into the 30s F under mostly sunny skies. Winds will continue at similar speeds but blow more from the SW. **The tricky thing to gauge** will be how much heat the snow receives today. A few clouds overhead with some wind could keep this snow from warming too much despite strong sunshine. There's still lots of great dry, settled powder in the mountains.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



[Southern Madison](#) [Southern Gallatin](#) [Lionhead Range](#) [Cooke City](#)

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday precipitation totals are:

- 1.3" of snow water equivalent near Cooke City
- 1" of snow water equivalent in the Taylor Fork area of the S. Madisons
- 0.5" inches of snow water equivalent near West Yellowstone and Lionhead

Persistent slab avalanches - This problem feels more like booby traps that aren't widespread but will pop up and surprise you when you least expect it. It hasn't been a widespread problem **near Cooke**, but two notable slides happened [on Saturday](#) and on [Monday](#) at 8800 feet on the northeast side of Mt Abundance. Both were 2-3 ft deep and 150-200 ft wide.

BEFORE this recent snow two slides happened in [Teepee Basin](#) and one at [Lionhead](#) generally about 2 feet deep and 100 feet wide. These slides are scary because they can happen on smaller slopes sheltered from the wind at lower elevations where you might think conditions are safer but they are not.

Wind slab avalanches - Strong winds blew Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday when snow was falling, especially near Cooke which saw widespread drifting and some surprisingly large wind slab avalanches like one [on Crown Butte](#) on Tuesday and another that fully buried a rider on the [north side of Miller Mountain](#) the same day. With lighter winds yesterday and today, wind slabs will be slowly stabilizing, but they are tricky because some may be stable while others may still need another day or so to stabilize.

The avalanche danger overall is [MODERATE](#), because many slopes have stable snow, but others can still easily produce an avalanche. Today is tricky because the likelihood of triggering a wind slab is going down but some

booby traps of persistent slab avalanches are lurking out there. Riding slopes less than 30 degrees in steepness is always a great way to avoid avalanches.

ALSO, watch for some small wet loose avalanches on sunny slopes especially ones with exposed rocks or cliff bands.



Bridger Range Northern Gallatin Northern Madison Island Park

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday precipitation totals are:

- 0.8" of snow water equivalent near Big Sky
- 0.5" of snow water equivalent in Hyalite
- 0.4" of snow water equivalent in the Centennials near Island Park
- 0.3" of snow water equivalent in the Bridgers

Wind slab avalanches are still something to watch for as strong winds blew each of those days. Wind slabs have surprised me more than any other type of avalanche because you can test some that won't move but then you jump on another that releases. Today many will be stable, but there will certainly be a few wind slabs that could still be triggered. Cornices have gotten pretty big and can trigger avalanches like [one seen in Hyalite yesterday](#). Stay far back from them as they typically break further back than you'd expect.

Watch for **wet loose avalanches** on sunny slopes especially ones with exposed rocks or cliff bands.

Today previously wind loaded slopes have a [MODERATE](#) danger. Non wind loaded slopes have generally safe avalanche conditions and a [LOW](#) danger.

Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

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

TONIGHT: February 27, 6-8 p.m. & March 1, 10 a.m - 2 p.m. Companion Rescue Clinic. Evening lecture at REI in Bozeman. Field session at History Rock. Details and signup [here](#).

TOMORROW: February 28 - March 2, [Bozeman Splitfest 2025](#) - Celebrate all things Bozeman backcountry and raise funds for GNFAC. Enjoy live music, demos, clinics, free food and beer from MAP. Connect with fellow outdoor enthusiasts and soak up the winter stoke.

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.