



Flathead National Forest

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Media Release

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Flathead Avalanche Center Offers Free Avalanche Education

KALISPELL, MONT. – Staying safe in avalanche country depends on two main components: having current hazard information and being educated on avalanche behavior. The Flathead Avalanche Center provides current hazard information through advisories and observations on its website. To facilitate the educational component, the center will host two *Introduction to Avalanche* courses.

The course targets students with little or no avalanche education but is open to everyone. The program includes two evening classroom sessions each about two and a half hours long and one day-time field session of seven hours.

The classroom portion of the December course is scheduled for the 18th and 19th from 6:00 to 8:30 PM at the Flathead National Forest Office in Kalispell, The field session will be December 21st at the Whitefish Mountain Resort.

The January course will target mechanized users and will be held on the 22nd and 23rd from 6:00 to 8:30 PM at the Flathead National Forest Office in Kalispell. Details on the field session are still being worked out and will be announced when available.

The *Introduction to Avalanche* course is more in depth than an avalanche awareness course, but less involved than a *Level 1: Avalanche Fundamentals Course*. Instruction includes avalanche terrain, weather, snowpack, decision tools, travel protocols and companion rescue (beacon, probe and shovel training).

There is no cost for either session. Contact Seth Carbonari at 387-3832 or scarbonari@fs.fed.us for additional information or to pre-register (encouraged but not required). For more training opportunities, visit www.flatheadavalanche.org.

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