



## **Level 2 Avalanche Course Syllabus**

### **Location**

The Course will be held in Cooke City, MT

### **Course Summary**

Over the course of four days, participants will be exposed to techniques and skills to become an advanced backcountry traveler and partner. The course will include a combination of lectures and field sessions where students will further their knowledge; including comprehensive evaluation of snowpack layering, terrain management, decision making, reading and understanding avalanche and weather forecasts, along with a full 8 hours of advanced companion rescue training which completes the AAA Avalanche Rescue prerequisites.

### **Thursday**

- Meet at Beartooth Powder Guides Office at 830AM
- Intro to course topics and course itinerary
- Avalanche concepts, types, key terms
- Review the different types of avalanche problems
- Review and interpret the current avalanche bulletin and local season to date snowpack summary and tracking the problems.
- Introduce various online resources
- Intro to documenting snowpack observations
- Snow Metamorphism-Faceting, surface conditions, wet snow
- Slab Mechanics and Spatial Variability
- Review BPG Communication checklist
- Gear check
- Companion rescue

## Friday:

- Avalanche Rescue Overview
- Survival rates, escape and survival techniques
- Avalanche gear and technique
- Review of companion rescue process
- Basic victim/patient care
- Recognizing needs and identifying additional resources
- Beacon, probe and shovel technique demo
- Beacon practice
- Companion rescue scenarios
- Full Profile discussion
- Pre trip planning
- Route Planning/Mapping exercise
- Travel to suitable snow pit location and demo
- Full Snowpit Profile practice
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Human factor introduction/Case Study

## Saturday:

- Mountain weather and snow climate discussion
- Terrain and its relationship to avalanches
- Terrain management and trip planning
- Avalanche forecast exercise
- Comprehensive trip plan for the days tour
- **Full Day Ski Tour**- perform comprehensive snow pit observations to verify validity and safety of proposed ski objective
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Return to office & debrief the days tour, snow pit documentation and analyze results of trip planning/days events
- Review accident case study

## Sunday:

- Review of avalanche problems
- Review of human factor and decision making
- Review of snowpack documentation and observations
- Create avalanche forecast
- Comprehensive trip plan for todays tour
- Ski tour with Full Snowpit Profile Exam
- Practice safe uphill and downhill travel protocol
- Companion rescue exercises for remainder of day
- Debrief course/remaining student questions answered
- Return back to town no later than 4pm

## **Suggested Reading**

Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain (2nd Edition), Bruce Tremper  
Snow Sense, Doug Fesler, Jill Fredston (2nd Edition)

## **Online Tutorials**

Avalanche Awareness from USFS - <https://avalanche.org/avalanche-tutorial/>  
Canadian Avalanche Center Awareness - <https://www.avalanche.ca/training#tutorial>

## **Reference for Terms**

<https://avalanche.org/avalanche-encyclopedia/#anchors>

*\*This course is based on guidelines established by the [AAA](#) and is 24 hours in length*

---

Beartooth Powder Guides  
Cooke City, MT  
406.946.2019 | <mailto:info@beartoothpowder.com>