



**USDA Forest Service**  
Inyo National Forest  
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200  
Bishop, CA 93514



## News Release

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Media Contact: Deb Schweizer  
(760) 873-2427

[debra.schweizer@usda.gov](mailto:debra.schweizer@usda.gov)

[www.facebook.com/inyonf](https://www.facebook.com/inyonf)

Twitter: @Inyo\_NF

### Winter Sport Season Also Avalanche Season, Be Prepared

Although an avalanche can occur whenever there is snow on a mountain range, avalanches most often occur between the months of December and April. It is important for visitors to be equipped with the current avalanche forecast, the proper avalanche rescue equipment, and avalanche training.

Each year millions of avalanches sweep down mountains across the United States. While most occur naturally and well away from people, sometimes wintertime sports enthusiasts trigger, get caught, and are killed by avalanches. There have already been 21 fatalities during this 2020-2021 season, which is high compared to the 2019-2020 season total of 23.

With another 2-3 months of peak avalanche season remaining, visitors should exercise increased caution when traveling out into the backcountry. Visitors can mitigate their avalanche risk by doing the following:

- Get the Forecast – access the latest avalanche forecast. For the Inyo National Forest, visit the [Eastern Sierra Avalanche Center](#) at. You can visit [avalanche.org](http://avalanche.org) for forecast throughout the west. There, professional avalanche forecasts are posted daily and highlight the level of risk in an area on a scale from 1-Low, to 5-Extreme.
- Get the Gear – Another critical component of avalanche safety [is having the appropriate gear](#). There are three essential pieces of gear: An avalanche beacon, a probe, and a shovel.
- Get the Training – Find an avalanche course provider at [avalanche.org](http://avalanche.org), and get trained up in avalanche safety. Start your training online by watching the Know Before You Go safety video at [www.kbyg.org](http://www.kbyg.org).

To learn more about avalanches and safety please visit [ESAC](#) or [avalanche.org](http://avalanche.org).

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