	Flathead National Forest	Media Release

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Avalanche Awareness Program for Skiers

The Flathead National Forest, in partnership with Glacier Country Avalanche Center, is sponsoring a free avalanche awareness and safety training program beginning Monday, January 5. The program, focused for down-hill and cross-country skiers, snowboarders, snowshoe enthusiasts and mountaineers, will consist of four evening lectures and two all-day field sessions. This program meets the American Avalanche Association Level 1 guidelines.

The evening lectures will be Mondays and Wednesdays January 5, 7, 12 and 14 at the Flathead National Forest Office in Northwest Kalispell, 650 Wolfpack Way, 6:30 – 9:30pm. (located south of Glacier High School) The Saturday field sessions will be January 10 and 17.

Flathead National Forest Avalanche Specialist Stan Bones said, "The program will include information about avalanche terrain, mountain weather and snowpack, stability evaluation and decision making, and avalanche rescue." Bones encourages participants to attend all sessions to gain maximum benefit. Registration is not required for the workshop but participants are encouraged to contact the Flathead National Forest at 758-5295 or visit www.glacieravalanche.org for more information.

A basic avalanche awareness class will be hosted Tuesday, January 6, 6:30-8:30pm, at The Wave, in Whitefish. This class is a good basic introduction to avalanche awareness, and a good yearly refresher. Registration is not needed.

REMINDER:
The Flathead National Forest issues avalanche advisories for Northwest Montana throughout the winter. Advisories are issued twice a week, on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Advisories include information about snowpack conditions, weather forecasts, and hazard evaluations. Visit www.glacieravalanche.org or call 406-257-8402 for these advisories. Anyone traveling in the backcountry will always need to make their own time and site specific avalanche hazard evaluations.

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