

West Central Montana Avalanche Center

2012-2013 Education Summary

Education

The West Central Montana Avalanche Center (WCMAC) along with the West Central Montana Avalanche Foundation (WCMAF-our friend's group) and the University of Montana Outdoor Program sponsored four Level 1 avalanche classes. National Forest permit restrictions limited the 2 Rattlesnake Wilderness classes to a maximum of 10 people each (including 2 instructors) and the Bitterroot classes were limited to 16 participants. A total of 44 individuals attended the 4 Level 1 classes.

Dudley Improta, avalanche specialist with WCMAC, taught two Level 1 avalanche classes with Yurtski, a local backcountry yurt system in the southern Swan Mountains. A total of 14 participants attended these classes.

Free avalanche awareness lectures were conducted for REI in Missoula (30), Missoula County Search and Rescue (12), Ravalli County Search and Rescue, the Rocky Mountaineers (24) and the Bitterroot Snowgoers (local sled club-30 participants).

WCMAC and the UM Outdoor Program sponsored a free public avalanche workshop that consisted of two evening lectures and a 1-day field trip. 80 people attended the lectures and 26 attended the field trip.

Steve Karkanen and Dudley Improta conducted an avalanche workshop for Forest Service lynx researchers at the Rocky Mountain Research Lab in Missoula. The workshop consisted of 6 hours of lecture and a 1-day field trip.

Karkanen provided an avalanche awareness class for Missoula area Boy Scouts and Scout Leaders. 24 attended the evening lecture, 6 attended the field session.

Karkanen taught basic avalanche safety and companion rescue to 16 UM 400 level Wilderness Studies students in Condon, MT.

Improta also taught 2 avalanche transceiver workshops for the UM Outdoor program.

Logan King provided avalanche presentations and field work for 400 6-12th grade students in area public schools and gave an avalanche awareness lecture for a University of Montana ski and snowboard class (25 students). He also assisted with 2 of our Level 1 classes and was the avalanche safety instructor for an introductory snowmobile field day for 12 young adults at Lolo Pass that was organized and sponsored by Scott Stiegler, a local school teacher and expert rider.

Carole Johnson, Superior Ranger District, provided several courses in the lower Clark Fork Valley:

Mineral County Search & Rescue- Know Before You Go - 20 people

Montana Nightriders Snowmobile Club – Basic Avalanche Review – 35 people

West Zone Snowmobile training w/Ann Hadlow – Basic Avalanche awareness-15 people

Glacier Country tourism – websites and where to find avalanche reports – 30 people

Montana Nightriders Fun ride – passed out brochures on avalanche safety-300 people

Montana Nightriders Snowmobile Club meeting-Weather and how it affects avalanche conditions-32 people

Fundraising

The “Pray for Snow” party netted \$7000 in October. This was held at Caras Park in downtown Missoula. Several hundred attended this year.

Pint Nite at the Kettlehouse (local brew pub) netted \$2000 in beer sales and raffle tickets. A full house again. This has been one of the more popular Community Unite Pint Nites since it’s inception.

The National Ski Patrol, through their Montana license plate program, donated \$1000 to missoulaavalanche.org. They also stated their intention to continue their support.

Personnel

Logan King and Darcy Chenoweth, a WCMAF instructor, attended ISSW in Alaska this past fall.

Improta, was certified as an AAA avalanche instructor in August of 2012.

Travis Craft and Logan King, WCMAF & WCMAC instructors, received professional membership with AAA this winter.

Improta, Karkanen and King attended the professional development avalanche workshop sponsored by the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center in March 2013.