Wind Slab and Persistent Slab Avalanches

Date
Thu, 02/13/2025 - 16:35
Activity
Snowmobiling

We rode into the Taylor Fork, down into the bottom of Sunlight Basin, across Carrot Basin and to the Wilderness Boundary. We saw four persistent slab avalanches that likely broke last weekend or at the beginning of the week. All appeared to be snowmobiler-triggered R1-2, D1.5-2 avalanches at broke of the January layer of near-surface facets and surface hoar. Additionally, we saw one wind slab avalanche (R1, D1) in Sunlight Basin. This slide was fresh from this morning or yesterday.

We dug a crown profile for the persistent slab avalanche in Sunlight (attached). ECTN24 on the SH layer buried 50 cm (20") deep.

We also dug above Carrot Basin on a northeast-facing slope: ECTP14 & ECTN15 on the NSF layer 50 cm deep.

Near the Wilderness Boundary on a southeast-facing slope: ECTX

Persistent slab avalanches still seem possible, but it they have reached an equilibrium on most slopes that feels like the bottom end of **MODERATE** danger. Wind slab avalanches are certainly possible with the fresh slide as evidence as well are shooting crack in a drift as we rode in. Outside of large terrain, these will not be that large.

New snow and increasing wind starting tonight will change the equation. The snowpack can take 0.5" of SWE without notching up the danger, but 0.75" with more coming would make human-triggered avalanches likely.

Region
Southern Madison
Location (from list)
Taylor Fork
Observer Name
Zinn and Marienthal