Older Avalanche and Still Reactive on Buck

Date
Tue, 12/19/2023 - 12:05
Activity
Snowmobiling

Rode from Doe Creek along Buck Ridge to McAtee Basin and the heads of Muddy and Bear Creeks. Snow cover is very marginal on the road - bounced along on the rocks periodically overheating for the first several miles. Snow depth improves as you gain elevation. Snow depth on flat or shady slopes above 8500 ft is approximately 2 ft. Sunny slopes have less snow and more rocks showing.

Dug multiple quick pits and did two snowpit profiles, one in 2nd Yellowmule and one adjacent to an avalanche that looks to have broken last week along the divide between Muddy and Bear Creek. Found the same general snow structure as the rest of the advisory area - ~12" of weak faceted snow at the ground with a slab (~12") of early December snow on top. A mix of ECTN and ECTP results in the mid-teens across the two pits. Avalanche was approximately 100 ft wide and 25 ft tall, breaking on facets just above a crust near the ground. The slide was purposefully snowmobile triggered as a test slope on Sunday, 17 December. Slabs of snow were also breaking off as we climbed up next to the avalanche, showing conditions are still primed for a slide (see video).

The December snow is weakening and faceting including on sunny slopes where the Oct/Nov facets are more crusted. Surface hoar is big and widespread.

Region
Northern Madison
Location (from list)
Buck Ridge
Observer Name
Ian Hoyer