Watch out for Wind-Loads and Warm-ups

Date
Wed, 03/27/2024 - 10:30
Activity
Skiing

We toured up the Ramp. There was 6" of heavy new snow. The wind was transporting significant amounts of the recent snow at high elevations. The wind-loads weren't occurring on the ramp and lower elevation ridge terrain in a significant way. On our drive home we saw, what I assume were, natural wind-slab avalanches on Quarter Saddle (looked like a cornice collapse) and in Argentina Bowl. Bridger Peak was obscured by heavy wind-loading. There was a small wind-slab release out of Gibbs (I think), I suspect skier triggered, but I could make out a track.

On the Ramp, we observed several isolated drifts that would crack under the weight of skis. The snow was staying fairly cool and dry, but on a rollover, I pushed a small wet loose pocket downhill. Watch out when the sun and temps blast the recent snow! It is sitting on a firm crust and I expect things to get active.

We dug a pit to the south of the Ramp proper. The basal weak layers were the least weak I have seen all year. The snowpack was most from 80 cm to the ground and the facets and depth hoar are rounding. We are not out the woods, but things are improving. ECTN 20 on near-surface facets 30 cm from the top.

Region
Bridger Range
Location (from list)
The Ramp
Observer Name
David Zinn