

Lots of Fluff, Not Much Slab

Date

Sun, 02/16/2025 - 14:05

Activity

Skiing

We toured into Beehive Basin up and over to Bear Basin down through Spanky's to the valley bottom. A foot of low-density new snow fell with very little wind. The skiing was excellent, and [stability](#) was good (for now). The new snow was not behaving cohesively (like a [slab](#)) in the terrain we visited, and loose snow avalanches or sluffs were our primary concern. We triggered some loose snow avalanches that quickly picked up speed. These would cause skiers and riders problems in steep or technical terrain but were relatively harmless in open/ non-technical terrain.

[Snowpit](#) analysis in the upper-elevation southwest-facing terrain revealed no significant instability, with ECTN scores in the teens and 20s, and no failure at the January layer of near-surface facets. Up and over the ridge on an east-facing slope was also relatively stable (and deep - 230 cm). We did get a repeatable ECTP29 75 cm down from the surface, but no failure on the January [surface hoar](#) layer.

We felt comfortable traveling in and around avalanche terrain using our safe travel practices (one at a time on the steeps, beacon, shovel, [probe](#)) and staying mindful of the loose snow avalanches.

WE ARE IN A PERIOD OF DYNAMIC WEATHER. WIND or more new snow will change [stability](#), making conditions more dangerous. Pay close attention to signs of increasing instability, such as avalanche activity and shooting cracks.

Finally, because every party needs a pooper... be cautious around tree wells. Non-avalanche-related snow immersion accidents are a very real threat right now.

Region

Northern Madison

Location (from list)

Beehive Basin

Observer Name

Dave Zinn