

new snow, wind drifts, and facets in Yale Creek

Date

Fri, 12/09/2022 - 16:35

Activity

Snowmobiling

Snowed hard all day. Lots of new snow (18" in the past 24 hours at upper elevations at 4 pm). Found 4 ft deep fresh wind drifts near the summit of Sawtelle Peak while going to work on our weather station.

Rode into Yale Creek and dug on a south facing slope at 8000 ft. HS was 133 cm. Found 2 mm facets 40 cm off the ground (similar to what we've been seeing in the Lionhead area). Interesting to note that on this lower elevation sunny slope there was a melt-freeze crust above the facets and percolation columns running down into the facets. ECTP25 on the facet layer. As we rode to the head of Yale Creek the new snow kept getting deeper until there was ~18" of new snow where we dug again at 9000 ft on a NE [aspect](#). HS was 235. ECTP8 and ECTP9 within and at the bottom of the new snow. Lower snowpack looked pretty decent and there wasn't a dramatic faceted layer. Rounded facets in the bottom meter, but 1 Finger hardness and no results in the ECT.

All this new snow and wind drifting makes for unstable conditions. More snow this weekend will make the avalanche conditions even more dangerous. Finding weak layers in the snowpack means that avalanches could break deeper, could be triggered from below, or could be triggered after multiple people have ridden the slope.

We recommend avoiding steep terrain and the runout zones below steep slopes for now.

Region

Island Park

Location (from list)

Yale Creek

Observer Name

Ian Hoyer