

Instability in the New and Wind Drifted Snow

Date

Thu, 03/06/2025 - 17:55

Activity

Skiing

We toured from the dam up the north ridge to Trapper. Light snow fell throughout the day, adding up to about 6". As we descended the east-facing bowl, cracks shot out from our skis on slopes with a subtle wind effect. Avalanches within the new and wind-drifted snow were likely, but the volume would have been relatively small and mostly concerning in technical terrain or in the presence of terrain traps. There was a new facet layer below the melt-freeze crust. It is TBD if it will be a problem.

The other problem is continued concern about avalanches breaking 2-3 feet deep on weak layers formed during the January dry spell. The snowpack structure is weak in this area, similar to the slopes that most recently produced human-triggered avalanches in Cabin Creek, Tepee Basin, and Lionhead. Pole probing indicated this poor structure was widespread. Our pit at 9000' on a northeast-facing slope yielded an ECTP28 on the 4F- facet layer formed in January. Failures on these deep layers don't seem very likely, but, for now, step back from steep terrain to let the storm play out. Once the storm ends, we will reevaluate [stability](#) and proceed from there. While the actual likelihood is debatable, the consequences of getting caught in a [slide](#) breaking on these weak layers are not.

Region

Lionhead Range

Location (from list)

Hebgen Lake

Observer Name

Dave Zinn