Cooke City Avalanche Conditions

Date
Wed, 12/21/2022 - 12:45
Activity
Skiing
Snowmobiling

Our day started with Ian watching a natural avalanche coming down from Republic Mountain from the motel door. That, combined with nearly 2 feet of snow and strong winds meant our plan was to avoid avalanche terrain entirely today. The snow wrapped up as we headed out for the morning and the visibility improved. The wind did not calm with the end of the snowstorm, and there was snow blowing out of the trees and large plumes sweeping across the hillsides.

We did some out-and-back rides to Daisy Pass and the cabins at the bottom of the Rasta Chutes. We skied up west Henderson and to Marty's slide. We had one collapse with shooting cracks at the new/ old snow interface while skinning up. There was a hardness change between the wind-drifted snow and the underlying powder that was detectable with skis and pole probing.

We rode on toward Daisy Pass as the temperature plummeted. Ian discovered that drifts up to 4 feet deep exist near the top of Daisy as he got stuck deeply a couple of times in the same drift. At the cabins below Lulu, we spotted the remnants of a small natural avalanche (probably failed last night) on Scotch Bonnett immediately to the north of the Rasta Chutes.

We were confident that human-triggered avalanches were likely today. They would be larger on wind-loaded slopes but dangerous to people in all steep terrain.

Region
Cooke City
Location (from list)
COOKE CITY
Observer Name
Dave Zinn