A dozen recent avalanches at Buck Ridge

Date
Sun, 02/18/2024 - 12:15
Activity
Snowmobiling

We rode out Buck Ridge to Muddy Creek and towards Cedar Mtn.. We went to look at the large avalanches riders remotely triggered yesterday. In addition to three previously reported avalanches, we saw at least eight recent avalanches that were not previously reported and appeared to have occurred at various times over the last 1-3 days, natural and/or remote triggered by riders. A group in the parking lot mentioned seeing many slides actively happen in this area on Friday, and a couple slides looked crisp enough to have occurred within the last 12-24 hours. We saw at least six recent slides in Muddy Creek, two in McAtee Basin, and one in Second Yellow Mule. Most were 2-3' deep hard slabs, ranging from 50'-500' wide.

We also saw a fresh avalanche that we either triggered from 750-800 feet away or it broke naturally. This avalanche happened when we were riding near the larger of the two avalanches from yesterday, on the south side of Cedar Mtn. When we regrouped at the base of the recent avalanche I was scanning all the nearby slopes and did not see any fresh avalanches, and noted a huge cornice on a low convex slope. We then rode up and parked near the top of yesterday's slide, and Doug noticed a fresh slide on the slope I had just been starring at. It was a wind-loaded slope, actively loading. The avalanche was ~130' wide with 100' of 4-12" deep new snow/wind slab and 30' wide broke almost 3 feet deep on weak snow near the ground.

Skies were overcast to partly sunny. Wind was light to moderate from the southwest-west. It snowed lightly on and off all day. There was about 1" of new snow at noon at 9,000'.

All the recent large avalanches and a freshly triggered avalanche are clear signs that the snowpack is dangerous and people should avoiding riding on and below steep slopes.

Region
Northern Madison
Location (from list)
Buck Ridge
Observer Name
Alex Marienthal