

Weak Snow on Saddle Peak

Date

Thu, 01/18/2024 - 12:30

Activity

Skiing

Alex and I began to dip our toes into a Saddle Peak [stability](#) assessment. Given the new snow and **HIGH** danger on wind-loaded terrain in the Bridger Range, we decided early to skip the summit and cross onto the edge of the Football Field from the Bridger Bowl boundary. Upper slopes had fresh drifts of wind-loaded snow and new [cornice](#) growth, but there was not as much [loading](#) as we feared there might be. We stuck to our conservative plan and skied the "Bitter End" (the closest run to the south boundary of the ski area) down to 8400' elevation before ducking out across the boundary.

The snowpack is thin and weak, with advanced facets making up most of it. Our test results did not reveal obvious instability, just weakness (ECTX). It is unreasonable to apply that same assessment across the Peak. Human-triggered avalanches are certainly possible, especially in areas with thicker slabs of wind-drifted snow (something that is quite common to find on Saddle Peak). Given the very high-consequence nature of the area, we advise patience and conservative terrain choices and decision-making.

Region

Bridger Range

Location (from list)

Saddle Peak

Observer Name

David Zinn