

Several Deep Avalanches in the Taylor Fork

Date

Sun, 03/19/2023 - 17:15

Activity

Snowmobiling

We rode into the Taylor Fork area on a beautiful, sunny day. We saw three large avalanches that likely broke approximately one week ago in Sunlight Basin, Sage Basin, and at the head of Sage Creek. Sage Basin and Sunlight Basin were [cornice](#)-triggered hard slabs that broke 2-4 feet deep on wind-loaded slopes. The avalanche in Sage Basin broke several mature trees.

The slope that avalanched at the head of Sage Creek was a heavily wind-loaded 35-40 degree slope. It failed without a [cornice trigger](#) (as no overhanging cornices were above). We investigated this [slide](#) in greater depth. It failed on a layer of [faceted snow](#) 2-4' deep. In our [stability test](#), we got an ECTP22 on the failure layer. Riders and skiers are less likely to [trigger](#) these large avalanches after four days without snow, but we don't trust these slopes. Every time it snows a little bit, we see large avalanches. They remain possible to [trigger](#) now. Choosing conservative terrain is the best management strategy - simple slopes with minimal wind-[loading](#) and fewer consequences or slopes less than 30 degrees in steepness. With more snow in the forecast, the danger will likely rise again this week.

Region

Southern Madison

Location (from list)

Taylor Fork

Observer Name

Dave Zinn