Deep storm day on Buck

Date
Fri, 01/27/2023 - 13:35
Activity
Snowmobiling

We went back to Buck Ridge to see how the big load of new snow was reacting. Rode through 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Yellowmule. Measured 13” of new snow with 0.6” SWE in 1st Yellowmule at 10 am. This brought the two day snow total to approximately 20”. Snowed all day with varying intensity and there were strong west winds along the ridge.

Visibility wasn’t great, but we saw most of the avalanche terrain in the Yellowmules. Saw one avalanche along the 2nd Yellowmule headwall that broke 100-150 ft wide just under the new snow (maybe 1-2 ft deep, it was hard to tell). Also saw a very small snowmobile triggered avalanche on a roadcut on the way out (6-12 inches deep, ~20 ft wide) that broke on facets in the thin snowpack. Rode many test slopes and got only very minor cracking. The new snow just wasn’t slabby even in the many places where it was wind affected.

With so much new snow (and having issued an avalanche warning), it was an easy decision to avoid all avalanche terrain today. Even after it stops snowing (likely sometime tonight) conditions will remain unstable and avalanches will be easily triggered for several days. The buried surface hoar layers will take longer to stabilize than new snow instabilities would by themselves.

Region
Northern Madison
Location (from list)
Buck Ridge
Observer Name
Ian Hoyer