Scary Snow on Lionhead Ridge

Date
Sat, 12/09/2023 - 13:40
Activity
Skiing

We (a group of 4) skinned up Lionhead Ridge from the ID/MT border and found troubling conditions. Several small whoomphs were observed in the shallower, bushy snow at lower elevations, and we had a massive (~100-foot propagation) whoomph on the ridge proper where the cornice met the ridge. Accompanying those whoomphs, we observed shooting cracks at multiple low-angle locations. We performed 3 separate pits, the shallowest of which was 48cm @8113' and had an ECTP10. The next two pits were 65cm deep and the SnowPilots are attached. Every single pit had sizeable (~3mm) basal faceting and a pencil-hard ice layer sandwiched with more facets above in the lower snowpack. While cutting a PST, the entire column propagated (Q1) above the ice layer at 25cm from the ground. Be careful out there, the snowpack is *super* touchy.

Region
Southern Madison
Location (from list)
Lionhead Ridge
Observer Name
Jackson Krause