

Deep Slab Avalanches in Cooke

Date

Sat, 03/04/2023 - 15:15

Activity

Skiing

Ben Zavora of Beartooth Powder Guides and the GNFAC investigated a skier triggered avalanche near Daisy Pass (3/2). It was remotely triggered (they were not on the slope) and failed on a layer of feathery [surface hoar](#) crystals that formed in early January. The [slab](#) was 4 feet thick and very dense and termed a [Deep Slab Avalanche](#). The recent snow and wind added weight and stressed this layer to its breaking point. In January we found [surface hoar](#) on all aspects, so it's a bit scary. Remotely triggering a 4' deep [hard slab avalanche](#) is dangerous. The slope angle at and near the crown was only 31-32 degrees; very shallow. [Surface hoar](#) is known to break on less steep slopes, which can catch us off-guard.

It's time to recalibrate our thinking because deep [slab](#) avalanches are deadly, yet not very widespread. It will become a *low-probability, high consequence* problem.

Region

Cooke City

Location (from list)

Daisy Pass

Observer Name

Doug Chabot