Collapsing and tensile fracturing at lower Bacon Rind.

Date
Sun, 02/04/2024 - 15:15
Activity
Skiing

Four of us (all with 20-40 years backcountry experience) skied the lower angle slopes just south of the skillet at Bacon Rind. There was a well worn skin track from past weeks and lots of old down-tracks buried beneath ~8-10" of new snow. We heard numerous large-scale collapses and witnessed the development of propagating tensile fractures on a 20°-25° slope along the skin track (see photo/video). No need to dig a pit on days like this. We did not venture onto or view any steeper terrain, so we saw no natural avalanches. The new snow seems well-adhered to the older snowpack. All instability is tied to the lowest 20-30cm faceted sequence at the bottom.

We skied this location 4 times this week. Each time, we experienced collapsing and fracturing within the snowpack and stuck to skiing conservative, low-angle lines. The takeaway? Previous skier traffic may not indicate safety or diminish avalanche danger. If conditions are even somewhat questionable, stick to low-angle slopes or go nordic skiing (on groomed trails).

Region
Southern Madison
Location (from list)
Bacon Rind
Observer Name
Tom Kalakay