

Snowing and Blowing at Buck Ridge

Date

Sun, 12/15/2024 - 12:55

Activity

Snowmobiling

We rode into Buck Ridge on December 15. It was snowing and the wind was whipping up the snow that had already fallen, so visibility was limited. We rode in to the top of First and Second Yellowmule to get a closer look. The total snow depth (where it isn't stripped down by the wind) varied from 20 inches to a little over three feet. There was 6" of new snow. Similar to other areas, new snow is falling on near-surface facets. In wind-sheltered areas, there is insufficient [slab](#) to result in widespread instability, and the critical ingredient is wind-[loading](#). We got ECTNs 5-14 on the [weak layer](#) buried 6-8" deep with no deeper failures.

I am always nervous during periods of incremental [loading](#) because we will eventually hit the breaking point. I'm avoiding wind-loaded slopes and testing the upper 2 feet of the snowpack to assess for instability before considering steeper terrain.

Region

Northern Madison

Location (from list)

Buck Ridge

Observer Name

Dave Zinn