Remote triggered avalanches, lots of cracking

Date
Thu, 01/11/2024 - 13:20
Activity
Snowmobiling

We saw a lot of action (unstable snowpack) in Taylor Fork today. At Sunlight Basin, we remotely triggered an avalanche while walking on the flat ridge above a wind-loaded slope. The avalanche broke below a 12" deep slab with 1.5" of snow water equivalent in the slab, and it failed on a layer of large (1-1.5cm) surface hoar. Video, pics, and crown profile attached. We also saw a small wind loaded slope that was triggered (remotely) by riders yesterday, and we triggered a similar slope today. These were short slopes, but the slabs broke over 1 foot deep and as wide as the terrain feature, and they were triggered from adjacent flat terrain 10-40 feet away (remotely triggered).

While riding around we frequently saw large shooting cracks on any slope with a slight wind-load/wind-effect. Near the wilderness boundary we saw these large cracks across the snow surface. In quick hand pits we easily found a weak layer of surface hoar below the recent snow that was 3-4cm long crystals, standing upright!!! (pics attached).

Wind was moderate out of the west, actively loading slopes and filling in tracks all day. Mostly cloudy/partly sunny morning. Started snowing in carrot basin around 1pm, shortly before we left.

Region
Southern Madison
Location (from list)
Taylor Fork
Observer Name
Alex Marienthal