

Big collapses

Date

Tue, 12/31/2024 - 14:55

Activity

Skiing

We skied around Sawtelle Peak today where there is a solid 4 feet of snow at 8750' where we restarted the [snow depth sensor](#) which is working now.

The good: We didn't see any recent avalanches, but we were traveling on foot and couldn't see all the terrain. The [weak layer](#) of snow that formed on the snow surface after Thanksgiving into early December is slowly gaining strength. There's also a ton of snow and coverage has improved dramatically.

The bad: The [weak layer](#) of facets is generally in the middle of the snowpack and can be found on all slopes. The recent snow is the first big test of this [weak layer](#), and it produced numerous big rumbling collapses on both an East and Southwest [aspect](#). These collapses are an obvious sign of unstable snow and told me not to trust the snowpack.

Of interest: There are several thin rain crusts within the upper two feet of snow. You'll likely feel the upper most [rain crust](#) under your [track](#) but not under skis. The attached photo shows the most recent freezing rain event on the trunks of trees.

Region

Island Park

Location (from list)

Sawtelle Peak

Observer Name

Staples & Hoyer