

Divide/Hyalite

Date

Sun, 01/31/2021 - 17:17

Activity

Skiing

I toured around the upper end of Hyalite creek with a couple friends. On the way up, we observed point release sloughs that were larger (up to 30'+ wide) and ran longer than I can remember seeing in recent memory. None stepped down to anything, or gave the appearance of forming a slab.

Our first stop was Divide Peak. Two very large sloughs had run down the main south face with no results, so we felt good about the snowpack. We dug on a south aspect at about 9400', and found 160cm of snow. The newest snow did not propagate in an ECT, but we had a failure ~40 cm down (maybe 1/17-1/18 snowfall) at ECTP18, and then on the depth hoar at ECTP22. We turned around.

The next stop was the west-facing chutes near Hyalite Lake, since I had not been on anything on that aspect yet this season. At the base of the slope, we found a highly variable snowpack, with very large-grained facets in shallower areas. A pit at 9200' had HS 155 and ECTP28, failing with a poor quality shear on large, loose facets 60-65cm from the ground. We turned around there, too.

The base of the snowpack seems to be getting more cohesive as time goes on, but the process has been very slow and the starting point was dismal. We observed dozens upon dozens of sloughs and no activity beyond the new snow, but I do not trust this snowpack. As the wind picked up in the afternoon, it transported a great deal of snow near the ridgelines.

Location (from list)

Hyalite Peak

Observer Name

Sam Reinsel