

Texas Meadows, Bridger Range

Date

Fri, 01/08/2021 - 19:24

Activity

Skiing

I have several observations from today that I will recount. My first is my ETCP17, which my partner and I did at approximately 1:30pm. We had been skiing several short low angle meadows, but there was significant overhead hazard over a meadow we wanted to ski so we dug a pit at approximately 7800" on a directly east-facing slope. To determine if we could handle this risk, we dug a pit. Our pit was approximately 85cm deep, and we were mostly concerned with the older 35cm of mainly DH and large-grained facets (picture attached) interacting with the latest 50cm of new storm cycle snow. We got a very reactive ETCP17 with a Q1 level shear (photo attached) on that interface that told us to stay far away from any overhead hazard, so we skied down a meadow without any overhead hazard. At the base of this east south-east facing meadow, at approximately 7500" I started skinning back up the meadow towards our old skin track. I heard a very loud whumpf (photo attached) but could not see any cracks or other signs of collapse near my skin track. We followed my skin track back up to the top of the same meadow I skied, but this time descended the slightly more eastern-aspect of the meadow. Almost immediately, I realized the whumpf I had heard previously remotely triggered a series of 7-8 large cracks that ranged from 30-100 feet wide. These cracks failed on the same interface we got to propagate in our ETC test. As I carefully descended the meadow, I saw many more cracks throughout the slope from the same remote trigger event. Additionally, I triggered two more significant whumpfs with shooting cracks 10-40 feet wide. We determined our remote trigger was at least 300 feet away from where the snow collapsed and cracked, on a slightly more convex eastern aspect than what we had skied the first time we skied the meadow (photo attached). We decided the was our day-ender, for sure, and promptly descended back to our car.

Region

Bridger Range

Location (from list)

Texas Meadow

Observer Name

Laura Ippolito