

Do Your Homework in Cooke City

Date

Thu, 12/21/2023 - 10:50

Activity

Skiing

Snowmobiling

We did a large loop north of Cooke City today. Signs of instability were easy to come by but we saw more of a mixed bag of test results. We started our day near Henderson Mountain, where, while ascending, we felt a few collapses. Our first [stability test](#) had ECTX results but lacked a [slab](#) on top of the weak snow near the bottom. We stopped 100' down-slope and saw different results, ECTP15 and ECTN15 above a crust. We rode across the valley, saw a very poor snowpack structure below Miller Ridge, and got varied results (ECTP15, ECTN15 x 3). Regardless of test scores, I have difficulty trusting such a weak snowpack structure.

Finally, we rode back to Scotch Bonnet to see how things had changed since Sunday when Alex was there. The poor structure Alex saw on Sunday was still there, with continued unstable test results (ECTP16 on weak snow above a crust).

My partner and I felt better about the conditions today than yesterday at Woody Ridge. The weak structure around Cooke City is widespread. Safe travel requires careful snowpack evaluation, cautious route finding, and conservative decision-making.

Region

Cooke City

Location (from list)

Multiple locations

Observer Name

Zach Peterson