Whumps/Collapses in Beehive on a saturated snowpack

Date
Fri, 04/26/2024 - 10:00
Activity
Skiing

When setting out to Beehive Basin today we only imagined wanting to bail if rain line was at the trailhead, but had not expected our seasons long standing PWL to turn us around. With a few inches of snow at the trailhead and temps just at freezing we set out. The new snow yesterday/last night capped a warm snowpack, keeping the snowpack from freezing at all (no crusts or other signs of superficial freezes up to 9,200ft where we bailed despite the mid-20's temps recorded overnight). Almost immediately out of the trailhead we got thunderous collapses so big we at first thought it was noise from control work at Big Sky. Further along we got collapses extending hundreds of feet out, valley wide and echoing up the basin. We dug to the bottom out of curiosity and found a saturated and unfrozen snowpack. The bottom 30cm was still all facets, giving the appearance that the remaining 90-110cm of consolidated snowpack was floating on air. We're assuming the whumps/collapses are traveling along this layer of basal facets.

Region
Northern Madison
Location (from list)
Beehive Basin
Observer Name
Christopher Kussmaul