

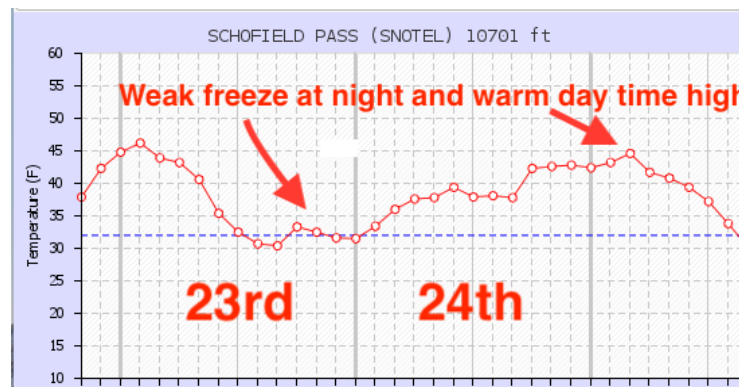
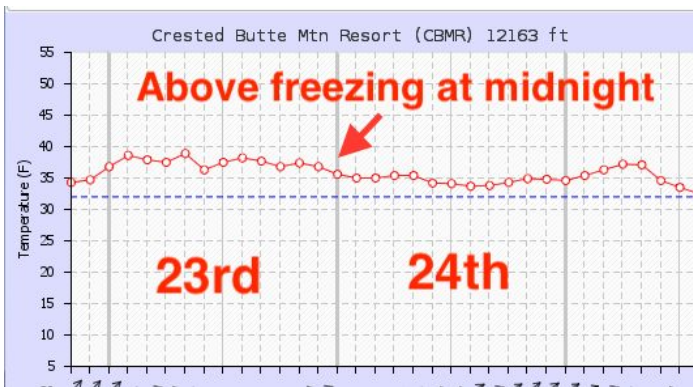
# Backcountry Weekly Summary

Intern / Forecaster:	Eric Murrow / Ben Pritchett
Week and Year	November 24-30, 2017
Backcountry zone:	Crested Butte Area

## Notable Weather Events (snowfall, SWE, winds, temps, etc.)

For the week of November 24th - 30th, the most significant weather features were the dry and unseasonably warm temperatures. No new precipitation fell during this time in the Crested Butte area. Winds were generally well behaved with little snow available for redistribution.

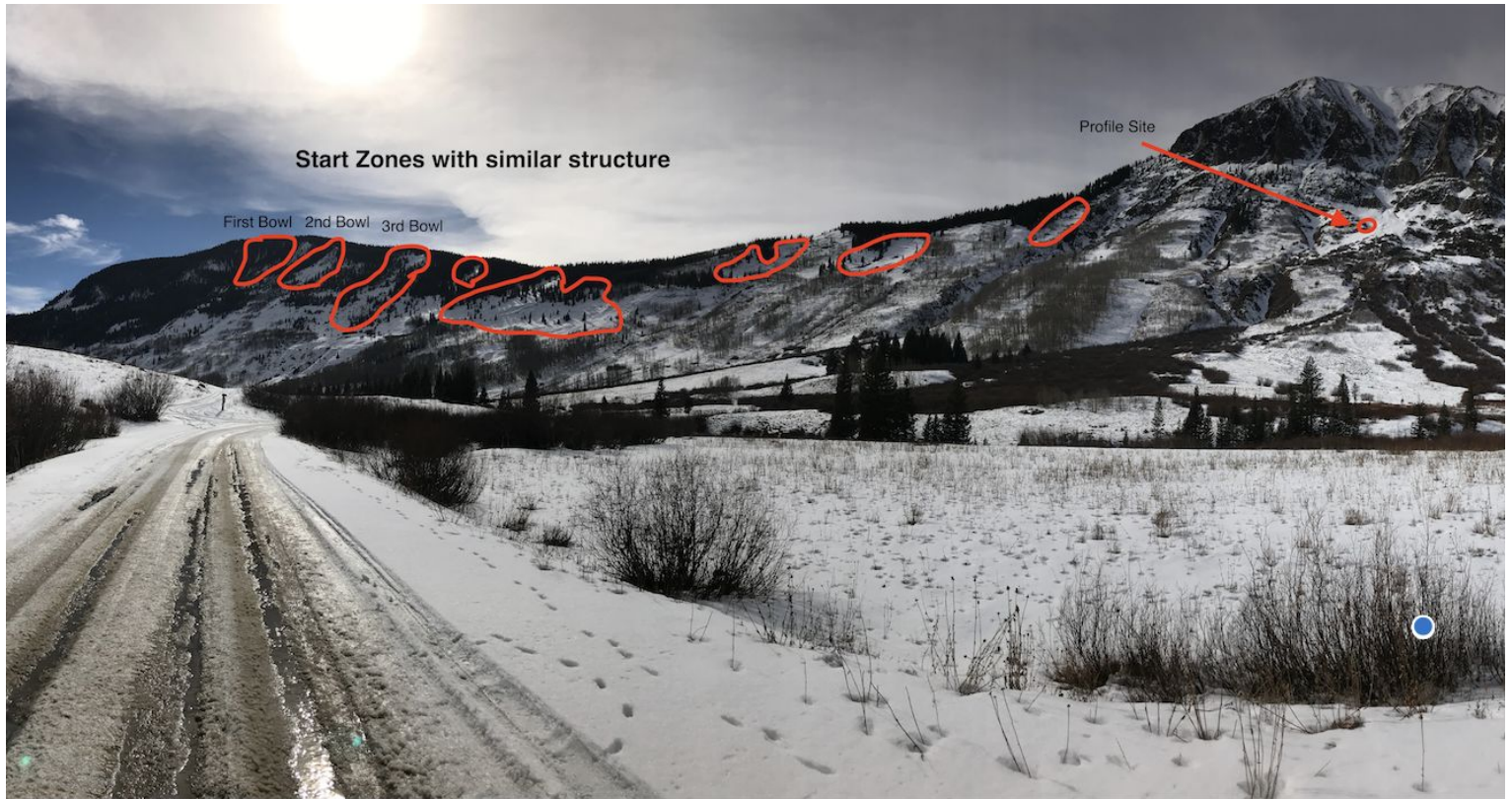
During this time period, several weather stations reported nights with above freezing temperatures at mid elevations. Valleys bottoms froze under inversions, but locations above ~10,000' stayed much warmer. The nights of the 23rd, 25th, and 26th were unusually warm. Here are two screenshots from CBMR and Schofield Pass weather stations from the night of the 23rd. This warm weather preceded one natural Wet Slab avalanche from above treeline, as well as several small wet loose avalanches.



The 28th, 29th, and 30th had more seasonal temps. All elevations froze at night, lows around 20's, and day time highs reached near or just above the freezing point. Weather during this three day period was much closer to seasonal norms.

## Snowpack (weak layer date(s) and status, structure, stability trends)

**11/17/2017 Interface:** The November 17th interface showed little activity in the Crested Butte area this week. Just one slide was reported on this interface on an East aspect above treeline. At low and mid elevations, the slab that was overlaying the interface faceted away on northerly aspects thus did not pose much of an avalanche threat. This [video](#) does a good job of describing conditions below treeline on northerly aspects. The photo below shows a spatial relationship between the video location and nearby common ski touring locations on Snodgrass. Above treeline Northerly features where the wind stiffened the November 17th storm snow may still harbor a slab over this weak layer.



Looking forward, current snow surfaces are either facets or crusts which will likely mean poor bonding with our next snowfall. The sun and warm temperatures have created strong crusts on sunny slopes. As the aspect swings away from due south to the east or west, these crusts progressively get weaker and are capping faceted grains. Temperature crusts even formed on northerly aspects. Snow surface crusts on northerly terrain are thin and weak and formed at elevations up to 11,000 ft. Current surfaces will likely become important interfaces in the future once buried.

## Avalanches

Avalanche activity in the Crested Butte area has been minimal over the past week. There were a couple of small, wet loose avalanches and one notable Wet Slab. Unusually warm weather preceded this slab avalanche. This [video](#) and the photo below provide more information about this slide.



## Incident, accidents, close calls

No reported incidents, accidents, or close calls in our area. The CAIC is reporting two human triggered avalanches during this period from around the state. Here is a [link](#) to a remote triggered slide from our neighboring Sawatch Zone from the 28th.

## Comments (anything unusual/noteworthy, thoughts on the near future)

Unusually warm temperatures have formed crusts, of varying thickness, across our terrain. Only near and above treeline northerly slopes are not crusted. These crusts are capping faceted grains with the exception of slopes that face close to due south. Slopes facing near due south have been generally wetted out to the ground. We will likely be talking about this facet/crust combination for some time to come once it is buried.