

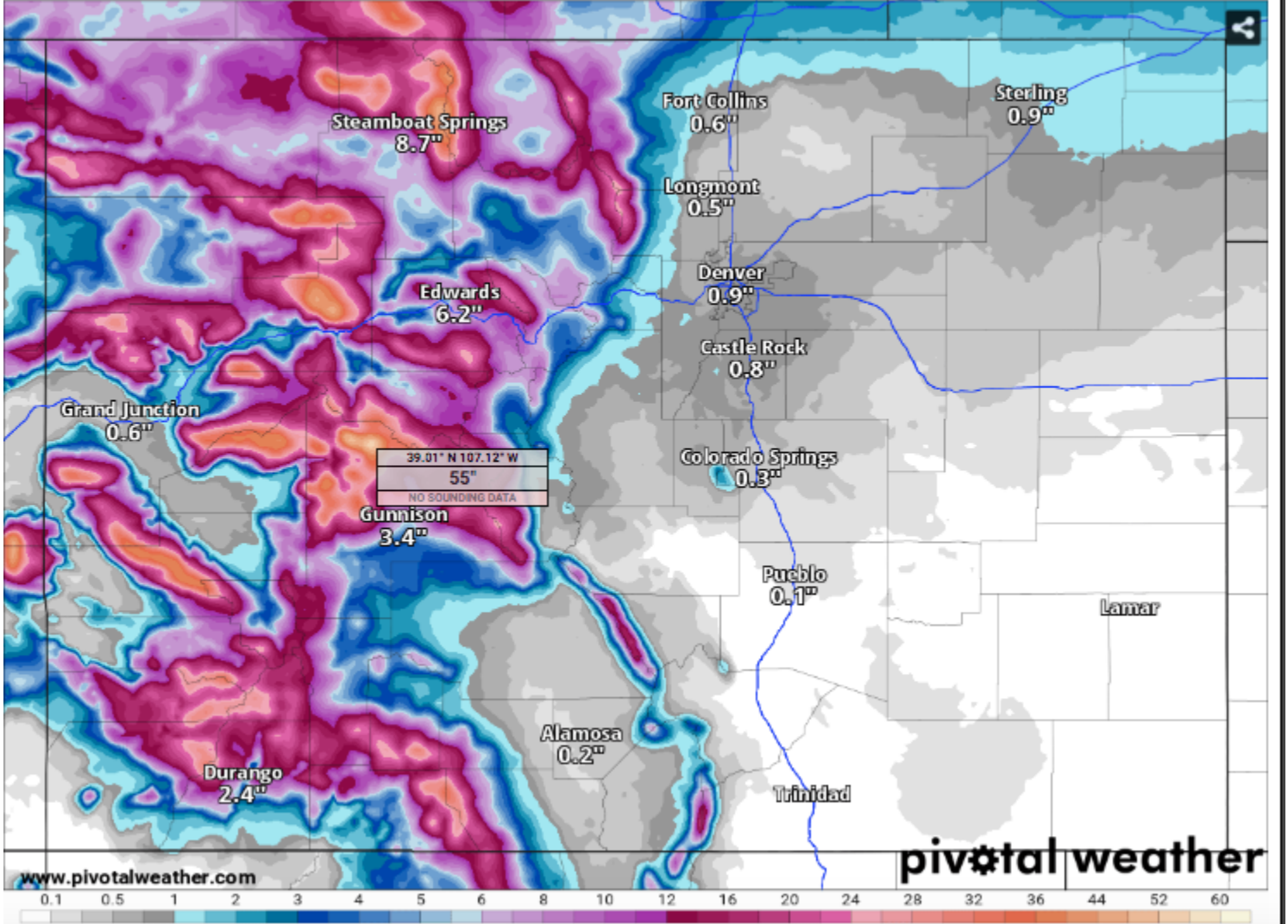
Backcountry Weekly Summary

Intern/Forecaster:	Mikey Alosio/ Zach Kinler
Week and Year	Dec.4 - Dec. 10, 2021
Backcountry zone:	Crested Butte Area

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

Total Accumulated Snowfall, Model Ratio (in)

Between Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021 at 5 a.m. MST and Sunday, Dec. 12, 2021 at 11 p.m. MST Init: Wed 2021-12-08 12z NWS Blend of Models



Model forecasted total accumulated snowfall forecast for the recent storm cycle showing multiple feet of snow north and west of Crested Butte. Note the pinpoint forecast near Schofield Pass showing the possibility of up to 55" of snow!!!!

Alas, Old Man Winter arrives.

After record high temps all week, the past weekend brought an end to our unseasonably warm spell. Thursday and Friday both brought warm and dry temperatures around 10 - 15 degrees fahrenheit above normal. Thursday, December 2 reached a high of 51 degrees in the valley floors. Followed by another calm and clear night with a low of 20-25 degrees in the Northwest mountains and a low of 25-32 degrees in the Southeast mountains. Clear skies and light winds Friday and again on Saturday were observed. Saturday night witnessed moderate north northeasterly

wind speeds in the alpine with gusts into the 30's. These moderate winds continued into Sunday as a jet stream pushed through northern Colorado. Wind speeds Sunday evening slowed as another clear night in the northwest mountains dropped to 15-17 degrees while the southeast mountains lowered to 17-22 degrees.

Excitement began Monday, **12/6** as cloud cover increased with moderate westward winds in anticipation for the return of winter. Monday's sunset welcomed a small disturbance in our forecasted zones with 1 to 3 inches of snowfall overnight in the northwest mountains and a trace to 2 inches in the southeast mountains. Accompanied with moderate westerly winds transporting snow and lows of 21 and 23 degrees, respectively. Light flurries continued till mid morning Tuesday as the mostly cloudy skies began to clear and winds calmed over Tuesday night. The onset of two back-to-back moisture rich storms kicked off Wednesday as overcast skies developed. Snow began falling on Wednesday with little break in action between the two storms. Deep moisture, jet support and a strong cold front accompanied the second wave as we saw moderate to heavy snowfall for 12+ hours from Thursday afternoon into Friday morning. Totals from Wednesday-Friday are impressive.

Storm Totals

Gothic : 30.5"/2.6" SWE

Schofield (SNOTEL): 36"/3.8" SWE

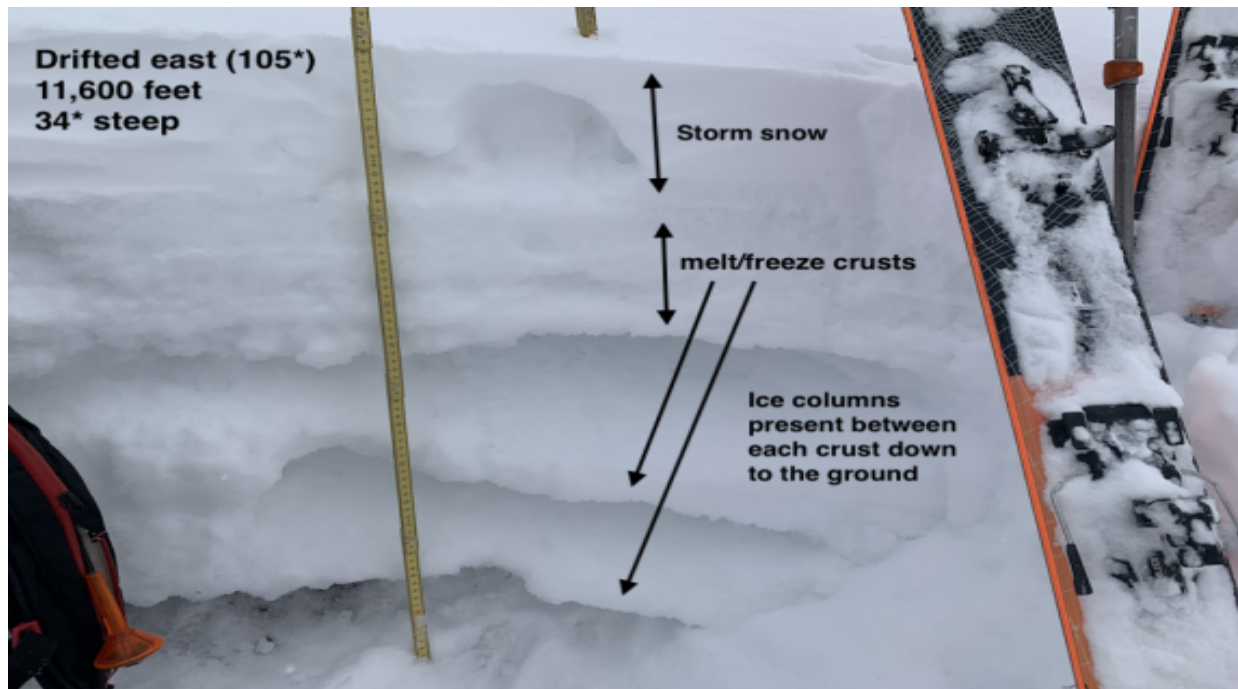
Butte (SNOTEL): 21"/2.1" SWE

Upper Taylor (SNOTEL): 17"/1.8 SWE

Town of CB: ~24"(unofficial)

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

12/6 Interface: Weak layer distribution has been very well documented in these observations from the [NW mountains](#) and the [SE mountains](#). Surface hoar and near-surface facets are plaguing the shady aspects while crust facet combos exist as you move from East and West aspects towards the sun. These weak layers are now resting under 2-4+ foot slabs and represent our first notable weak layer this season. Pictured below are 2 pre-storm profiles showing a sample of what this layer looks like. As of publish, this layer has been the culprit of several large natural and remotely triggered avalanches. This observation from [Schuykill Ridge](#) from mid-storm shows the incredibly weak nature of this weak layer as it begins to get stressed. Avalanches will continue to fail on this layer into the future





Avalanches



This slide in Thanksgiving Bowl appeared to be remotely triggered from around the corner as we approached it, about 250 feet away

As of time of publish, we have yet to get eyes on most of our terrain and will not have a handle on the nature of the natural cycle until the skies clear. However we are expecting a widespread cycle of large avalanches on the northern half of the compass with the possibility of large avalanches at upper elevations on the southern half of the compass where storm slabs may break on mid-storm non-persistent layers. Pictured are a couple examples of the activity after the first round delivered around 8-12" on Thursday.



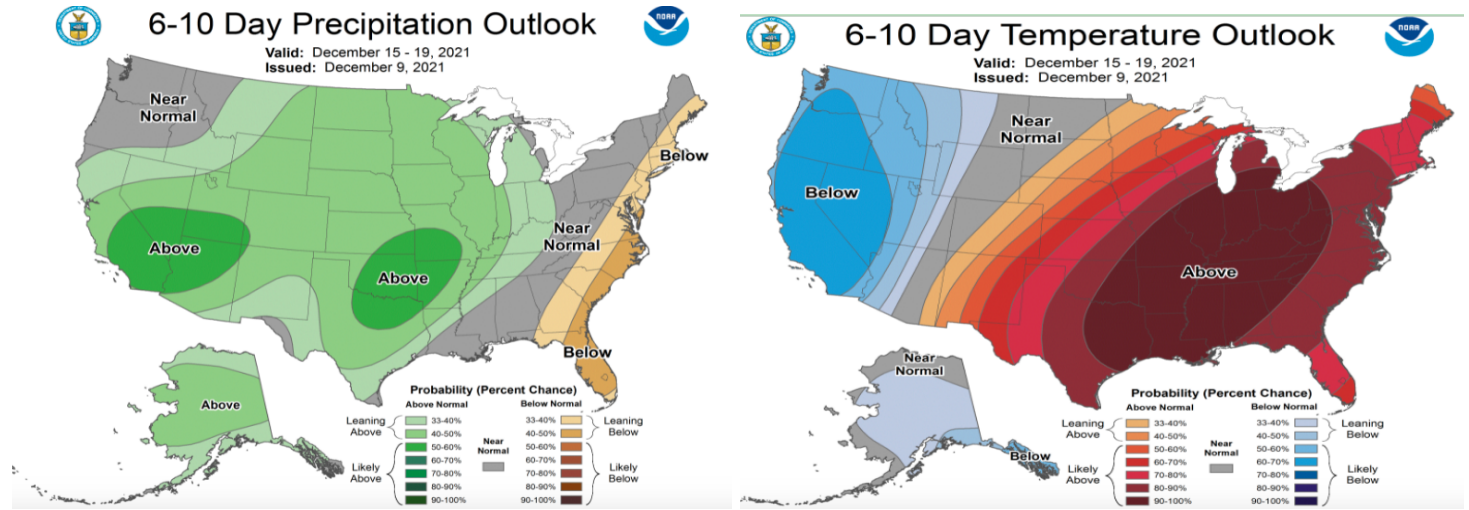
A skier triggered slide in Runaway Ski that sympathetically released two aother avalanches, one in Runaway, and one in Thanksgiving Bowl

Incident, accidents, close calls

There has not been any recorded incidents, accidents or close calls in our forecasted area this past week

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

The **12/6** interface continues to experience more loading while the storm totals crest double digits through Thursday night and into Friday. In the Northwest and Southeast mountains an Avalanche Warning has been put into effect Thursday, 12/9, at 1530 and will not expire until Friday, 12/10, at midnight. Storm slab instabilities have raised the avalanche danger to L4 (High) Friday, 12/10 at all elevations in both of Crested Butte's forecasted zones.



The week ahead with continued possibilities of moisture and near average temperatures.