

## Weekly Summary December 2-9

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Zones:	Crested Butte, Northwest & Southeast Mountains

Between the evening of Thursday 12/1 and the end of the day on Friday 12/2 the Crested Butte area received 10-15" of snow. This overloaded the snowpack and led to High Danger and an Avalanche Warning in effect. A total of 12 naturally triggered D2 avalanches were reported on NE and E aspects. The majority of these avalanches failed on the old snow that fell in November.



The storm stuck around on Saturday December 3rd, depositing a few inches in the lower elevations and up to 5 inches in some areas of the Northwest Mountains. The Southwest wind continued to transport snow as well, building up Wind Slabs over our Persistent Slab.

Observers reported widespread cracking and collapsing. In addition, a D1 avalanche was remotely triggered just off the Gothic Road.



By the end of the day on Sunday December 4th, observers had reported numerous natural D1.5-2 avalanches on North to East aspects, with a few on Southeast and South-Southeast slopes. These avalanches were found on all elevations. The slabs Near and Above Tree Line are generally 2 feet thick and sitting on top of the large, 2-3mm facets that formed in our early season dry spell.



Monday December 5th was mostly dry. Shooting cracks and collapses continued to be reported all around the compass. The weak layer(s) of facets/crusts are responsible for these cracks, collapses, and avalanches and can be found on both shady and sunny terrain.





On Tuesday 12/6 another storm rolled through that spiked the Danger to High and initiated an Avalanche Warning. Over 12" of snow fell between the evening of the 5th and the morning of the 7th. Observers reported 18 D2 avalanches following this event, the vast majority of which slid on NE aspects on the old buried facet layer. While the bulk of these avalanches ran naturally, 3 were human triggered.



Riders were also able to remotely trigger a D2 from a ridgetop that sympathetically triggered another slide in the Birthday Bowl. However, Southerly terrain that lacks the early season snow is presenting few signs of instability aside from surface snow instability. Additionally, the existing slabs in sheltered terrain are gaining strength and in some places reaching close to 1-Finger hardness.

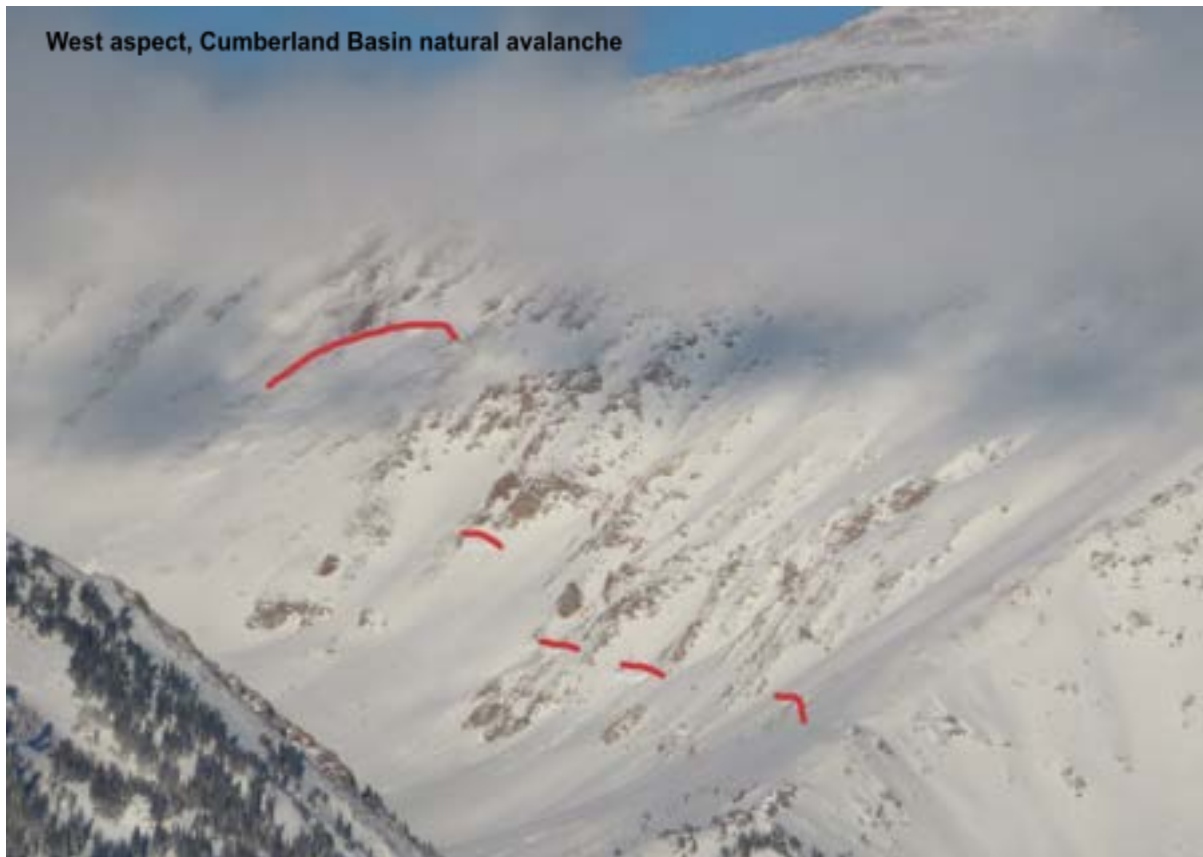


A few more inches of low density snow fell overnight into Wednesday December 7th as the winds decreased in strength. Wednesday saw on and off light snowfall and great riding conditions on lower angled terrain Near and Below Tree Line. Observers reported yet more collapses, now often running for greater distances due to the increasing hardness of the slab overlaying the weak layer of old snow.



**Remotely triggered slide, East aspect on Snodgrass**

On Thursday 12/8 another pulse of snowfall, 8" in some areas, on top of drifted snow from westerly winds overloaded the snowpack. This combination spurred another round of natural avalanches primarily on drifted terrain and High Avalanche Danger. In all, 11 D2 avalanches were reported with 10 of those occurring in the Northwest Mountains and all of them failing at the old faceted snow interface. These D2's occurred on NW-N-E terrain. An additional 4 D2.5's were reported, all failing on the same old snow interface and on N-E aspects.





This 12/6-12/8 cycle produced the first recorded D3 of the season as well.





The Belleview and Treasury areas also produced several D2.5s sometime in this 12/6-12/8 cycle.



The skies cleared overnight leading into Friday 12/9 as the system tracked to the NE. No significant snow fell on Friday and as of now Monday 12/12 looks to be the next chance for snow.

