

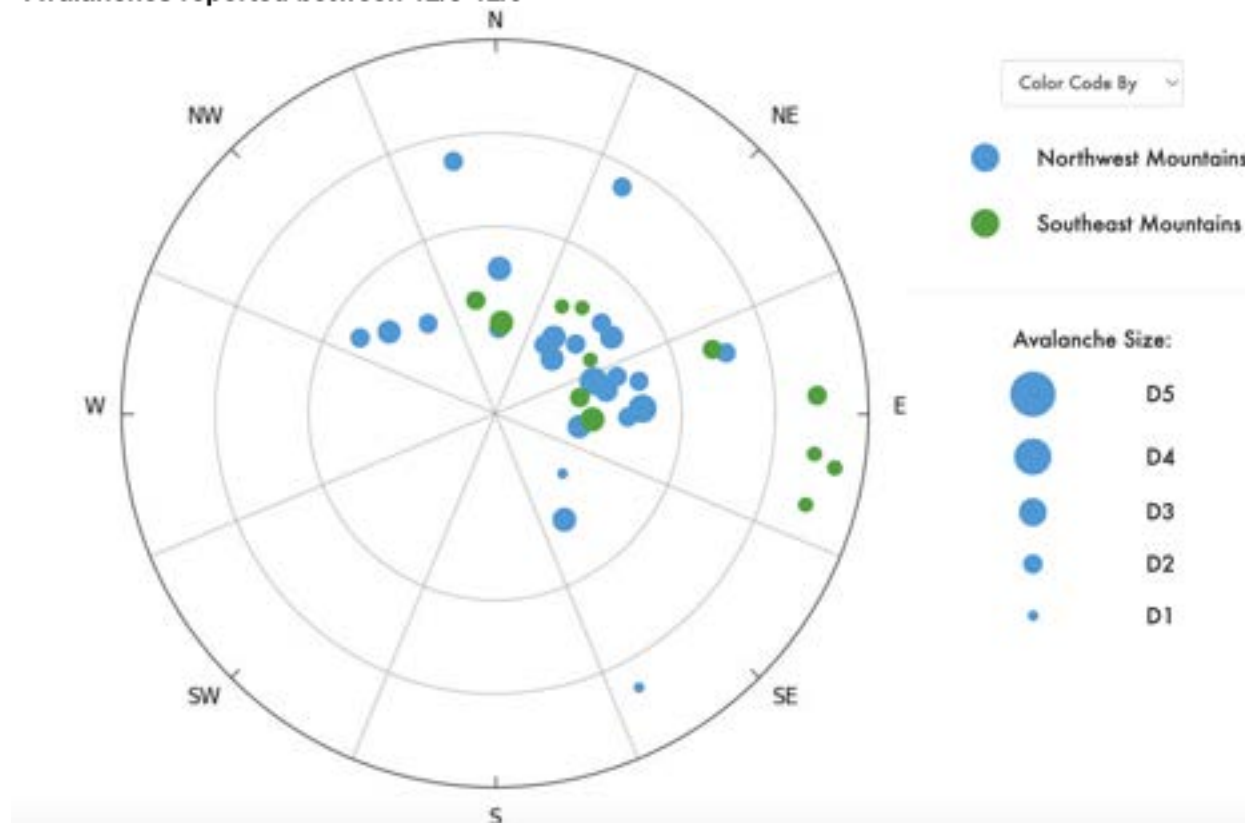
Weekly Summary December 9-16

Authors:	Dan Hohl, Evan Ross
Dates:	Dec 9-16, 2022
Zones:	Crested Butte, Northwest & Southeast Mountains

Friday 12/9

Thursday night the skies cleared as the recent system moved northeastward. Temperatures dropped and Crested Butte registered 14 below zero. Friday was generally cloudy with no new snow to report. However reports from Thursday's avalanche cycle flooded in. All but one of the reported avalanches were on W-N-SE aspects and the vast majority ran on the old snow that is our persistent weak layer. Sixteen of these avalanches were D2's, ten were D2.5's, and two were D3's, making this cycle our most powerful of the season so far.

Avalanches reported between 12/8-12/9



Saturday 12/10

Saturday was clear and relatively warm with light winds. Although no precipitation fell today, a few more reports of natural avalanches that ran either during Thursday's cycle or shortly afterward trickled in. A D3 that ran off of Mineral Point is noteworthy for the potential our snowpack currently has to produce serious avalanches.



Sunday 12/11

Sunday 12/11 was a beautiful bluebird day with light to moderate winds. No snow fell today but a skier did remotely trigger a D2 avalanche in Red Lady Bowl.



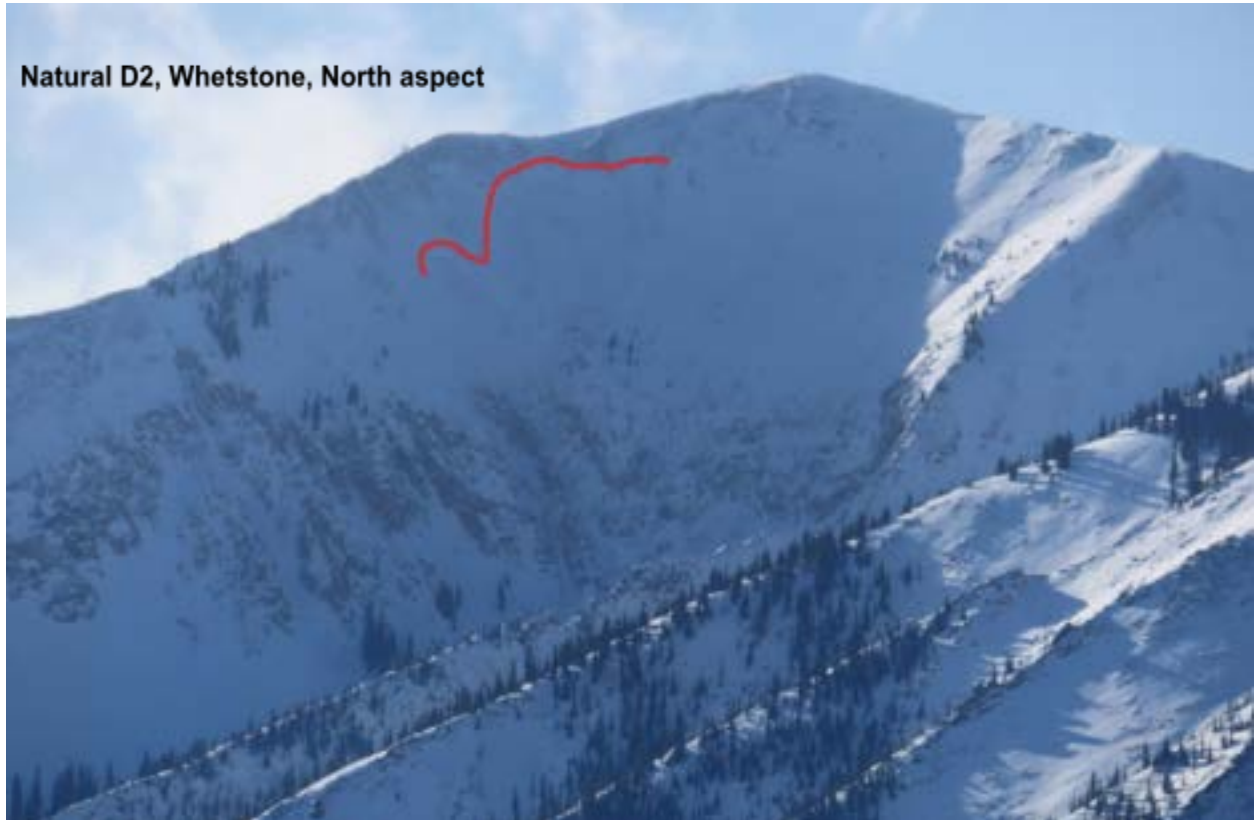
Remote skier triggered D2. Blue circle indicates location of trigger.

Monday 12/12

Monday brought on and off snowfall with light daytime accumulations. The winds were strong enough to transport snow with 20-30 mph on Scarp Ridge. Although some areas saw accumulation today, the combination of wind transport and a partial Southwest flow stifled any serious snowfall.

Tuesday 12/13

Tuesday is a different story. The snowfall picked up overnight as the flow shifted to the Northwest. Irwin reported over 10" and the Northwest Mountains as a whole averaged close to 4". The Southeast Mountains picked up a few inches as well. Northwest winds transported much of this new snow to Easterly aspects where the wind slab hazard increased. Two notable avalanches from this load were natural D2's in Barcelona Bowl on Whetstone and the Climax Chutes.





Wednesday 12/14

Wednesday was partly cloudy with cold temps but no new snow aside from a trace to an inch in a few areas. The moderate Northwest winds continued to load lee slopes and press windward aspects. No significant avalanches were observed this day. An arctic front began moving in late Wednesday evening.

Thursday 12/15

The cold temperatures from yesterday seemed mild in comparison to Thursday's low of -3F. Some areas received an inch or two of snow today but generally it was dry, cloudy, and cold. No

avalanches were reported but the wind slab problem continued to spread as Northwest winds loaded not only leeward slopes, but also cross-loaded slopes and ridgelines. This windslab problem compounded on our persistent weak layer of November facets means that while the likelihood of triggering an avalanche is slowly decreasing, the potential for an avalanche to run bigger than expected is increasing.

Friday 12/16

On Friday the temperature dropped even more with an overnight low of -7F. The skies cleared a bit from Thursday and mercifully brought us a mostly sunny day. Winds were light from the NW and no new snow fell, holding the Avalanche Danger at Considerable. Friday's clear visibility allowed for numerous observations of recent avalanches. Two notable D3's ran from Purple Ridge down to the Slate River. Several other avalanches were reported ranging from D2 to D3. All of these ran on West to North to East aspects Near or Above Tree Line, fitting into the pattern we have been seeing with these Persistent Slab avalanches.



Looking ahead to the weekend, Friday night will see the coldest temperatures of the season so far with lows in the negative teens. Fortunately, a shift in the winds to the Southwest will help warm things up slightly by Saturday afternoon and bring us out of this arctic spell. Clear skies should prevail through Sunday as the next disturbance will track to our south.