

## Weekly Summary March 17-23, 2023

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Dates:	March 17-23, 2023
Zones:	Crested Butte, Northwest & Southeast Mountains

### Friday 3/17

Friday was a mild day with light westerly winds, daytime highs in the upper teens to low twenties, and partly cloudy skies. No avalanches were observed on Friday but the clearing skies allowed for views of the previous Wednesday - Thursday natural avalanche cycle which produced 18 reported avalanches at all elevations, primarily on NE and E aspects but also W, N, SE and S.

### Saturday 3/18

Saturday was a gorgeous day of clear skies, light NW winds, and mild daytime highs in the mid 20's F. A snowmobiler remotely triggered a large avalanche on the SE face of Baldy.



### **Sunday 3/19**

Sunday was at the forefront of the weekday storms. Increasing clouds and wind speeds over the day were the name of the game. Scarp Ridge gusts increased to 30 mph out of the W and CBMR gusted to 20 mph from the WNW.

### **Monday 3/20**

The first day of the weeklong storm cycle brought low density powder to the valley. Irwin Guides reported 8" of 2% snow by the end of the day and the CBMR snow stake showed 5".

Backcountry riders reported widespread sluffing on steep terrain as the low density fluff accumulated. Users also reported that the crusts on solar aspects were still very much present underneath the new snow, more easily collapsible on easterly aspects, and gained strength on the southerly aspects.

### **Tuesday 3/21**

Snowfall continued over Monday night and Irwin Guides reported 7" of new snow by Tuesday morning. Precipitation tapered down during the day before ramping back up in the afternoon. CBMR finished Tuesday with 7", Irwin Guides topped out at 10" in 24 hours, and Schofield Pass showed just over 20" of fresh since snowfall began on Monday. Backcountry users reported widespread sluffing and small, reactive storm slabs on steep terrain near and below treeline all across the compass.



**Skier triggered storm slab on NE aspect BTL in AMR**

## **Wednesday 3/22**

Wednesday was the brunt of the storm. Snowfall rates ramped up over the course of the day to reach well over an inch per hour at times in the afternoon. Irwin Guides reported a 24 hour total of 10" and CBMR added another 6" to their storm total. Strong SW winds were active all day, Scarp Ridge gusted to 79 mph and CBMR gusted to 32 mph. Storm slabs were reported from both backcountry users and Irwin Cat Ski, these avalanches were triggered naturally and via humans and explosives. Fifteen avalanches were reported on Wednesday, the majority of which ran on NE through SE aspects. Notable among these was an intentionally triggered D2 avalanche below tree line on an east aspect of Snodgrass. As this avalanche ran downhill it propagated into a deeper weak layer and entrained more snow.



**Skier triggered avalanche that stepped down to deeper layer, on east aspect of Snodgrass**

## Thursday 3/23

Thursday was a beautiful day as the storm pushed out of the valley. Skies were partly cloudy and the winds were light out of the west. Occasional snow showers produced a trace to an inch throughout the day. Storm totals were 20+ inches for most of the valley. Several avalanches were reported that likely ran between Wednesday and Thursday. All of these avalanches ran on north through southeast terrain above tree line. Several of these avalanches were D2 or larger and one was a D3 in Barcelona Bowl. Looking ahead, Friday evening looks like the next chance for snowfall. The snow could be intense at times, especially as the winds pick up Friday evening.

