

Snowmobiler avalanche fatality on Crown Butte

Crown Butte

Cooke City

12/31/2022

Code

HS-AMu-R4-D3-O

Elevation

9800

Aspect

SE

Latitude

45.05250

Longitude

-109.96200

Notes

On December 31, 2022 a snowmobiler was killed in a very large avalanche north of Cooke City, MT. The avalanche occurred near Daisy Pass on Crown Butte on a southeast facing slope at 9,800'. Two brothers (age 17 and 21) from Washington were snowmobiling uphill on adjacent slopes. The older brother was climbing a steeper slope and triggered the avalanche 100-200' below the top. He was carried 600 vertical feet and buried 5 feet deep. The buried rider was wearing an airbag pack that was not deployed. Both riders had shovels and probes. They were not wearing avalanche beacons. A nearby group of riders rode up to the [slide](#) within minutes after it happened, saw a buried snowmobile and began to search for the rider. One rider from that group went into Cooke City to alert Search and Rescue. The buried rider was located with a [probe](#) line an hour after the avalanche happened. He was unable to be revived with CPR and AED at the site. The avalanche appeared to be 2-4' deep, 500' wide, 600' vertical, and broke on weak snow near the bottom of the snowpack. AMu-HS-R3/4-D3-O

Our deepest condolences go out to the family, friends, and those involved.

Full report available here: <http://www.mtavalanche.com/accident/22/12/31>

Number of slides

1

Number caught

1

Number buried

1

Number killed

1

Avalanche Type

Hard slab avalanche

Trigger

Snowmobile

Trigger Modifier

u-An unintentional release

R size

4

D size

3

Bed Surface

O - Old snow

Problem Type

Persistent Weak Layer

Slab Thickness

24.0 inches

Vertical Fall

600ft

Slab Width

500.00ft

Weak Layer Grain type

Faceted Crystals

Weak Layer grain size

1.50mm

Weak Layer Hardness

4F

Slab Layer Grain Type

Decomposing and Fragmented precipitation particles

Slab Layer Grain Size

0.30mm

Slab Layer Hardness

P-

Images

[Full view of Crown Butte avalanche](#)

[View down path on Crown Butte](#)

[Looking up to crown on Crown Butte](#)

[Debris of avalanche on Crown Butte](#)

[Crown of avalanche fatality on Crown Butte](#)

[Crown Butte sled in debris](#)

[Crown Butte Profile - 1 Jan 2023](#)

[Crown Butte avalanche fatality - crown](#)

[Crown Butte avalanche fatality - up from burial location](#)

[Crown Butte avalanche fatality - full slide](#)

Attached Videos

[Snowmobiler avalanche fatality, Cooke City - 31 Dec 2022](#)

Snow Observation Source

[Snowmobiler avalanche fatality on Crown Butte](#)

Slab Thickness units

inches

Single / Multiple / Red Flag

Single Avalanche

Advisory Year

[22-23](#)