


At this point, several folks are aware of historic avalanche activity in our backyard to the north (Colorado). The media attention is focused on activity on the I70 corridor. Here are some photos and stories outside the I70 corridor.

## Ouray/Silverton

After the initial snowstorm, and avalanche control work there was up to 40 feet of snow on highway 550 immediately south of the snow shed, from the running of the West River Side Slide. North of the snow shed the avalanche depositions can be pushed over the side into the Uncompaghe Gorge. South of the snow shed the gorge is stream bed perhaps 40 foot deep, and the debris cannot be pushed over the side as the stream bed is full. The next storm and avalanche cycle added more snow on top of 550.



**Colorado Department of Transportation** 7 hrs · 🌐

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#SWCODOT: We are describing it as "incredible and daunting" and it will keep US 550 Red Mt. Pass CLOSED.

Yesterday, helicopter avalanche control operations were performed on more than 20 avalanche paths on three mountain passes in SW CO. As a result of this mitigation, incredible amounts of snow and debris hit the road and require the continued and indefinite closure of Red Mt. Pass.

Of great concern is the West Riverside slide which brought down 40 to 60 feet of new snow onto the highway and filled the Riverside snow shed.

These significant runs only reinforce the high avalanche danger warnings issued this week by our partnering agency the Colorado Avalanche Information Center - CAIC, along with our decision to close this pass for safety.

#IncredibleAndDaunting #EpicAvies #US550 #RedMountainPass #Durango #Silverton #Ouray #Ridgway #Montrose #LaPlataCounty #SanJuanCounty #OurayCounty #MontroseCounty









## Crested Butte

The forecast warn of normally safe areas at the edge of town as potentially hazardous, and to be mindful of roof-avalanches.

### March 7, 2019 Crested Butte Avy Forecast

The Avalanche danger in the Crested Butte area spiked overnight as we received an additional 1.5"-3.4" of water added to our snowpack. This shows as 10"-20" of snow in the last 24 hours, meaning we had some rain and some very dense snowfall. Intense precipitation rates and extreme winds reaching over 100 mph from the Southwest have created very large and potentially historic avalanches which likely ran during the night and will continue into today. Wind slabs, storm slabs and persistent slab avalanches will all release on most, if not all aspects and elevations around the area. With the amount of recent loading we have seen expect to see full depth avalanche running in places, entraining the season's entire snowpack.

Not only is travel in avalanche terrain not recommended today, but you should be aware of any steep slope near and above you, even on commonly traveled corridors near town. This includes small hills and terrain features near the towns of Crested Butte, Mt. Crested Butte and CB South. The Caves in CB South, the Bench in Crested Butte, Peanut Lake Road, Kebler Pass trailhead and Sunlight Ridge and the Rec Path near Mt. CB are examples of areas that should be avoided today. Also be alert for roof-avalanches! While our short lived rain event early last night shed many roofs, be aware of snow falling on parked cars and pedestrians.

Today will be a great day to hit the ski area or get caught up on your shoveling. Commuters to and from Irwin, Pittsburg or Gothic should think more than twice about traveling through these backcountry corridors.



Friends of CAIC

2 hrs · 🌐

We are very sad to report Colorado's 8th avalanche fatality occurred yesterday in South Crested Butte.

Two people were clearing snow from a low-angled roof. The snow avalanched. Both were caught and buried, but no one witnessed the avalanche. About 10 minutes later, someone discovered the avalanche, called 911, and began digging. Local emergency services personnel arrived within 10 minutes. The first person was dug out and survived. The second person was buried more deeply. They were located by probing, and were not breathing when dug out. The two were buried for 20 to 30 minutes. Unfortunately the second was pronounced deceased at the hospital as a result of his injuries.

[https://avalanche.state.co.us/caic/acc/acc\\_report.php...](https://avalanche.state.co.us/caic/acc/acc_report.php...)

The day prior, March 8, 2019, a property manager was shoveling a client's property. He had just cleared a sidewalk when he heard snow avalanche off the roof above. The avalanche caught him. He was buried under 2 to 3 feet of snow on the shoveled sidewalk, which acted like a small terrain trap and allowed the debris to pile deeply.

The manager did not arrive at a later appointment. His girlfriend checked on him, found the debris pile, and called 911. Crested Butte Fire Department found and excavated the manager. He had been buried for about 2 hours. He was unconscious and hypothermic. He had a "basketball-sized" airspace near his face, created by a bent arm. The manager was transported to a hospital and released the following day.

[https://avalanche.state.co.us/caic/acc/acc\\_report.php...](https://avalanche.state.co.us/caic/acc/acc_report.php...)

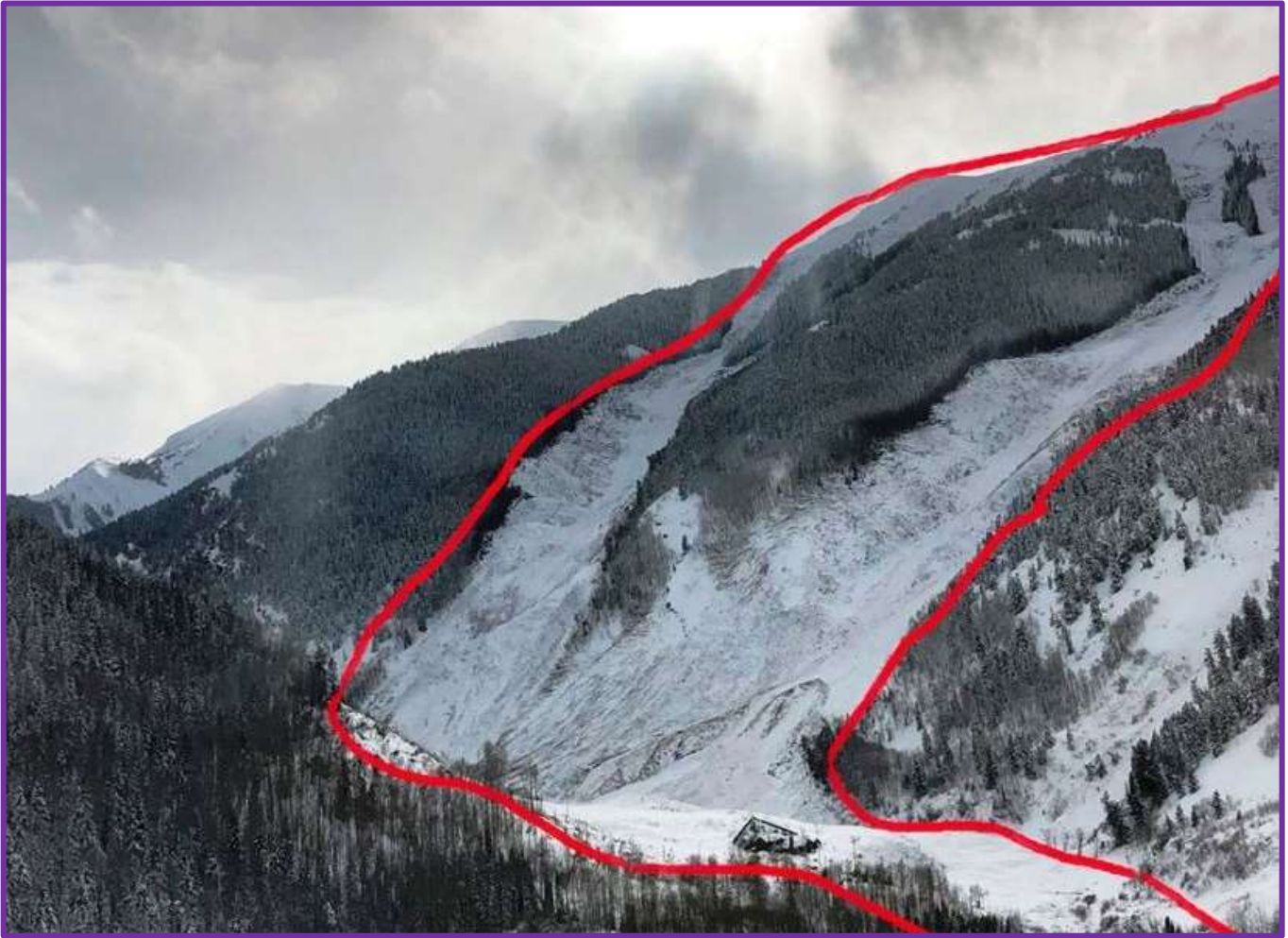
**Figure 1:** This roof avalanche caught and buried a person on March 8, 2019, in Mount Crested Butte. The avalanche came off the roof in the upper right, and the person was buried near the shovel on the left. ([see full sized image](#))





## Highlands Ridge near Aspen

Several slides run simultaneously, effectively a single event one mile wide, running 3000+ vertical feet to the valley floor.  
<https://www.aspentimes.com/news/local/historic-sized-avalanche-hits-conundrum-valley-southwest-of-aspen/>



## Montezuma Area

