

December 2nd, 2007 Avalanche Event in Washington State

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Extreme avalanche hazard is a rare but deadly event. On December 2nd, 2007 an extreme avalanche event transpired in Washington State when a weak early season snowpack was rapidly buried under snow followed by rain. This paper will be a case study in the weather and decision making on three groups traveling in backcountry terrain during that event. They came from a variety of experience levels and motivations, but all had read warnings of the impending hazard. Every member of the three examined groups was either fully or partially buried within 12 hours of each other (including both authors) resulting in five fatalities.