

SNOWPACK SPATIAL VARIABILITY IN THE CHUGACH MOUNTAIN RANGE

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ABSTRACT: A case study: how spatial variations in snowpack influence guides directing human travel patterns during a day of heliskiing near Thompson Pass in the Chugach Range of Alaska.

A. Techniques for obtaining snowpack data

Visually from air
Visually from ground
Probing
Snowpits
Descents
Ascents
Data sharing among different guides and companies

B. Data – Practices in the Field

Data assimilation
Varying data results per slope
Supporting your practice with data (courtroom)
Practice – results
Wrenches

C. Lessons Learned

Simplifying
Isolating
Adjustments
Lessons learned individually
Experience, knowledge, level of awareness to self and surroundings
Golden rules
Care of catastrophic triggers
Evolving snowpack
Wildcard

D. Summary. I'm not 100% satisfied with my summary at this time . . .
but it will include the self creating model of heliskiing practices developed in the past 13 years by
the guides and companies that descend slopes regularly in the 10 – 60 range in the Chugach Mtn.
Range.

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