

mately 100 yards wide and running about 300 yards slope distance (450 feet vertical). The fracture line was 2 feet deep for most of the width of the slide.

### **Comments**

The accident reports do not state whether the two victims had crossed under any closure ropes or passed any closure signs. However, the area was closed to touring. The victims neither checked on avalanche conditions nor

notified anyone of their plans. Had they done so, they would have learned of the hazardous conditions and of the closure.

Had Gordon been buried deeper or had he not been able to clear his face so quickly, this avalanche may have taken his life. The good fortune of the snow ranger being an eyewitness to the accident made for a quick rescue, had it been needed. Failure to check weather and snow conditions and failure to observe closures are two sure ways of risking one's life in avalanche terrain.