Difficulties encountered while collecting snow samples  
  
Trail Conditions

The most difficult aspect of the trip was the snow itself.  It was over three feet in some locations with a consistent foot and a half above 5000 ft.  The snowshoes rented from Campus Recreation Club were pretty much useless.  They consistently sank into at least six inches of snow making every step a struggle.

Downed trees blocking the trail are another issue.  Most trees are small enough that with some quick work with the hand saw, they can be removed to clear a passage.  But in the event of heavy riming and snowfall, the rhododendron are weighed down and turn into a formidable wall of ice and snow.

Collecting the samples  
 The sample collection was the easiest part of the trip.  We discovered that condensation occurred on the inside of the plastic bag that held the tupperware containers. And while using the trowel to seal the core sampler, some grasses and dirt were accidentally captured.  
  
Improvements for success  
 With better snowshoes, travel to the sampling locations would be much easier.  Gators to keep snow out of our boots and Yaktrax to provide traction are also great investments to improve safety and travel speed.  The addition of snow boards is essential for accurate measurements.  In general, being exposed at high elevations in extremely remote locations during the wintertime has its own risks that need to be planned for.  There may need to be a contingency plan in place in case of rapidly changing conditions.