

Interactive comment on “Rock glacier characteristics serve as an indirect record of multiple alpine glacier advances in Taylor Valley, Antarctica” by Kelsey Winsor et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This manuscript details a comprehensive field investigation of a very remote rock glacier in the dry valleys of Antarctica. The authors carefully assess the geomorphology of the rock glacier, examine its internal form using geophysics, and evaluate the chemical and isotopic make up of its ice and those of the meltwater ponds atop the glacier. All of this evidence suggests that the rock glacier has been stable for ~40 ky, which is an impressive amount of time, given the controversy over the dynamics of a possible glacially-dammed lake at the mouth of the valley 5-10 ky ago. One thing that continues to challenge many of the researchers in the dry valleys is how such a lake could exist with so much ice in the area (locally) remaining intact. This set of evidence and conclusion is a terrific contribution to the dry valleys cryospheric literature

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and provides an excellent example of the wealth of secrets kept in these rock glaciers, especially in Antarctica.

Minor suggestions: p. 2, line 21 – I suggest that ‘subsurface structure’ maybe be changed to ‘internal structure’, and that the authors add “(using GPR)” or something similar. The reason I mention this is that the GPR part of the Methods section sorta jumps out at the reader without much purpose. Hence, I propose putting some indication of the purpose back in the Introduction section.

p. 8, line 17 – ‘ground surface’ is a little confusing here. Do you mean where the ice (at depth) is in contact with the ground or do you mean from the surface of the rock glacier, which one must stand on. I suggest being more accurate with this and all other instances of ‘ground surface’ in the paper.

p. 10, lines 31-32 – the sentence “At this location, the rock glacier is cored by > 10 m of clean ice (Fig. 11b),” – should ‘cored’ be ‘covered’? I didn’t think that manual core collection got this deep... Oh wait, maybe you aren’t meaning this to be the verb that has to do with collecting an ice sample... I’d suggest changing ‘cored’ to ‘made up of’ or something like that so that there’s no confusion.

Interactive comment on The Cryosphere Discuss., https://doi.org/10.5194/tc-2019-135, 2019.

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