

General Advisory for Tuckerman Ravine, Saturday, May 23, 2015

A General Advisory is in effect for Tuckerman Ravine until complete melt out in early summer. You will need to do your own snow stability assessments. A new General Advisory (GA) will be issued when conditions warrant or within 72 hours. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

If you are reading this, it is likely that you are already aware that it is cold and windy today on the Rockpile. In fact, it has warmed to the current 12F (7am) on the summit after being pegged at 10F since midnight. Expect hard, icy snow to resist softening today with temperatures only rising to the upper 20's on the summit. Though the Bowl will be a bit warmer, and sunny, the westerly winds in the 40-55 mph range on the summit will conspire against good soft skiing conditions. It will be a close call but if you have flexibility in your schedule, you might wait till tomorrow or Monday. If you do come up, don't forget extra layers and consider the need for traction on your feet for security in harder snow conditions.

A SECTION OF THE TUCKERMAN RAVINE TRAIL IS CLOSED TO ALL USE. This section extends from Lunch Rocks at the floor of the Ravine to the top of the Headwall where it meets the Alpine Garden Trail. This includes no skiing or riding through the Lip area. Only this section of the trail is closed. This annual closure is due to the magnitude of the crevasses and undermining, and the severe consequences of a fall in this area.

ATTENTION AUX RANDONNEURS! Une section du sentier du Tuckerman Ravine est présentement fermé à toutes les activités. Cette section est située entre Lunch Rocks et le sommet du Headwall jusqu'où ce dernier rejoint le sentier du Alpine Garden. Cette fermeture inclut également toute activité de descente dans le secteur du Lip. Seulement cette section du sentier est fermé. Cette fermeture annuelle est due à l'ampleur des crevasses et à la gravité qu'occasionnerait une chute dans ce secteur.

BE AWARE OF THE ANNUAL SPRINGTIME HAZARDS IN TUCKERMAN RAVINE:

- **FALLING ICE.** Over the years many people have been severely injured or killed by falling ice in Tuckerman. The most hazardous locations are in the center and right side of the ravine, including Lunch Rocks, the Sluice, Lip, and Center Bowl. Warm weather and rain increase the potential for icefall to occur. There is still a lot of ice hanging waiting to fall. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as under the headwall or at Lunch Rocks.
- **CREVASSES AND WATERFALL HOLES.** These are growing larger in many locations; the most dangerous are in the Lip and Center Bowl. Give them plenty of room, since they are often much larger beneath the surface than what you can see from above. Breaking through weak snow into one of these could be fatal for you or someone in your group. The best way to avoid the hazard is by climbing up what you plan to descend and giving these areas plenty of space.
- **UNDERMINED SNOW.** As the snowpack continues to get thinner, this problem gets worse. It is most prominent in places where there is flowing water beneath the snowpack, which includes most of the gullies. While the snow may appear thick and strong on top, you won't really know how strong or weak until you cause it to collapse underneath you. If you see small holes in the snow or near large rocks, realize there may be large open spaces under the surface.
- **LONG SLIDING FALLS.** Temperatures often fall below freezing even late into spring. Additionally, age hardening can create very dense alpine ice that remains very slick even on warmer days. Snow surfaces become very hard and icy, making a slip, trip, or fall a very serious situation. Good terrain choices, as well as proper equipment such as an ice axe and crampons, are your best defense.

The Lip area has all of the hazards listed above, as well as the main waterfall hole. This terrain is a "no fall zone," where the consequences of a slip at any point can be dire. There are a number of other, safer routes than the Tuckerman Ravine trail that take you to Pinkham Notch and avoid this closed area.

Please Remember:

- Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This advisory is just one tool to help you make your own decisions in avalanche terrain. You control your own risk by choosing where, when, and how you travel.
- Anticipate a changing avalanche danger when actual weather differs from the higher summits forecast. For more information contact the Forest Service Snow Rangers, The Mount Washington Volunteer Ski Patrol, the AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters or the Harvard Cabin.
- **Posted 7:10 a.m. Saturday May 23, 2015. A new advisory will be issued when conditions warrant.**