

General Bulletin for Sunday, December 4, 2016

Expires at 12:00 midnight Tuesday, December 6, 2016

General Bulletins are issued when isolated areas of unstable snow exist within our forecast areas. Forecasts using the 5-scale danger rating system will be issued when snowfields and bed surfaces develop further. Please remember that avalanches can occur before a 5-scale forecast is issued. A new General Bulletin will be issued if conditions warrant or within 72 hours.

New snow measuring near 16" fell on the summit of Mount Washington on Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3, on prevailing westerly winds. Most of this recent snow appears to have remained on the softer side of the hardness scale. Beneath the new snow are pockets of hard, refrozen slush from previous rain and mixed precipitation events. Sizable isolated drifts and discontinuous deeper pockets of this new snow on 30 degree or steeper slopes should not be trusted. You will find areas of this new snow on and beneath many of the popular ice climbing routes. To complicate matters further, areas of pooled round, rimed particles (graupel) can also serve as weak layers in spots. Slabs below steeper sections of ice and cliffs, plus deep wind drifted areas, will make for challenging route-finding on any climb in either Ravine.

Currently, our terrain is broken up by many buttresses and ice cliffs and is not capable of producing large avalanches. However, smaller avalanches can certainly take you for a ride through this rocky terrain or bury you in a terrain trap. If you are planning to recreate in our forecast area, bring your avalanche rescue gear and your snowpack assessment skills!

The weather should be relatively calm today (Sunday) but remain foggy before more moisture enters the region from the south, bringing 3-6" more inches to higher terrain on Monday. Winds will increase, so anticipate new wind slabs to develop.

The recent snowfall totals vary drastically by elevation with only 2-3" on a firm, crusty base on The John Sherburne Ski Trail. Due to recent warm weather and rain most water bars at every elevation contain flowing water. The upper half of the trail has better coverage but lots of barely submerged hazards exist. Watch for heavy machinery, snowmobiles and uphill ski traffic on the ski trail while the bridge on the Tuckerman Ravine Trail is still underway. Use the Huntington Ravine trail detour to the Fire Road and head left, back to the Tucks Trail or the Raymond Path to Tucks Trail. Construction debris is piled near Crossover number 7 so be cautious when skiing or riding in the vicinity.

Please Remember:

- Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This bulletin 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 AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters or the Harvard Cabin.
- **Posted 8:45a.m. December 4, 2016. A new General Bulletin will be issued when conditions warrant.**

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