

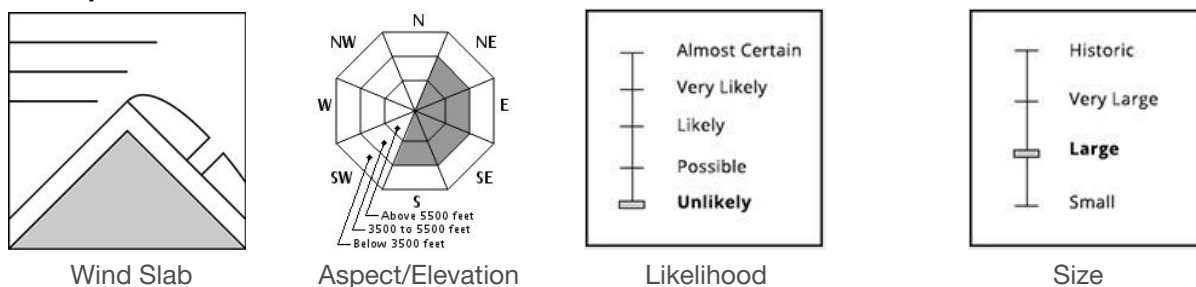
The Bottom Line

High wind speeds have deposited wind slabs that will be stubborn to human triggers today, but could produce a large avalanche. Hard wind slabs like those that exist in much of our terrain are difficult to evaluate for stability, but can be easily navigated by avoidance. Today's avalanche problem often produces no avalanches until an unlucky skier or climber ventures to find the particular weak spot in the slab. The potential size and destructiveness of an avalanche today is keeping our danger ratings elevated at MODERATE. Locations with a LOW rating (Tuckerman's Left Side and Boott Spur as well as Huntington's Northern Gullies) do contain snow that could produce an avalanche and will still require careful terrain selection.

Mountain Weather

The last recorded snowfall in our terrain was Thursday evening. Since that time, NW winds blew in the 70-100 mph range until midday yesterday. A sharp drop in wind speed took place overnight with wind currently WNW 15mph. Today, wind will be light and variable with some high level clouds. Expect sunshine for much of the day with temperatures on the summits cresting at 10F. No new snow is forecast tonight or tomorrow.

Primary Avalanche Problem



Wind slab exists primarily on the eastern half of the compass. Most of these formed on high wind speeds after a widespread avalanche cycle Wednesday night and Thursday. Most existing wind slabs will be stubborn to human triggers. Areas with a large upwind fetch at mid-elevations have the potential to produce a large avalanche should you find the thin spot of the slab. Lower elevations or wind-sheltered locations may harbor softer pockets of wind slab that may be possible to produce an avalanche, but the overall size will be smaller.

Snowpack Observations

The effect of Mount Washington's notorious wind combined with last week's 26" of snow should finally reveal itself today as blowing snow and fog finally subside. Ravines with a larger upwind fetch such as Tuckerman and the Gulf of Slides both saw significant avalanche activity, likely Wednesday into Thursday, while other ravines with a similar aspect but smaller fetch saw much less loading of wind transported snow. Wind slabs that remain in east-facing terrain will be variable in size and distribution due to terrain, the timing of recent avalanche cycles, and reloading. Making good observations of distribution while moving in the field and basing travel decisions off this will go much further than conducting stability tests while in the avalanche problem today.

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Please Remember: Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This forecast is just one of many decision making tools. You control your own risk by choosing where, when, and how you travel. Understand that the avalanche danger may change when actual weather differs from the weather 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 at the Harvard Cabin.