

General Advisory for Tuckerman Ravine

Posted Thursday, May 8, 2014 - Expires at 12:00 midnight Saturday, May 10, 2014

Expires midnight, Saturday, May 10, 2014. However a new advisory will be issued if warranted before expiration.

Tuckerman Ravine is under a General Advisory and will be in effect until complete melt out later this spring/summer. You will need to do your own snow stability assessments when traveling in avalanche terrain. General Advisories are valid for no more than three days, but may be updated earlier as conditions warrant. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

Thursday is beginning gloriously with sun, yet below freezing on the higher summits. Temperatures will rise dramatically with increasing clouds developing into the afternoon. On Friday conditions will deteriorate with a frontal passage into a witch's brew of rain showers, convective cells, scattered thunderstorms, periods of heavy rain, small hail, and possibly frequent lightning. If you're someone of atypical personality you may enjoy it, the rest of you will likely choose to avoid Friday in the mountains. Saturday...well...doesn't look all that great either, with 80% chance of rain showers forecasted for the valleys. The end of the weekend currently looks to be quite a bit nicer with some solar rays on Sunday. Watch your favorite weather forecast resources for the higher terrain of northern New Hampshire closely. Now that we are in a General Advisory we have finished our Friday afternoon "Weekend Update" postings for the season. However, we will post a series of url links on the page that will bring you to some weather sources that we like so you can monitor atmospheric changes.

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, and under the Lip-Center Bowl area. Other areas pose this threat as well, though to a lesser extent. The best advice we can give is to not spend time underneath areas where ice may fall. Warm weather and rain increase the potential for icefall to occur. Large rocks may provide some cover, but have proven to be inadequate shields for people hiding behind them. Lunch Rocks is a hazardous location when icefall is a possibility and should be avoided!

CREVASSES AND WATERFALL HOLES are another potentially deadly hazard. Each season these form in many areas, the worst being in the Sluice, Lip, and Center Bowl. Many of these holes follow stream courses under the snowpack with rushing icy water. Give them plenty of room, since they are often much larger beneath the surface than what you can see from above and can be much deeper than you might expect. Falling into these crevasses and holes has historically been lethal on many occasions.

UNDERMINED SNOW is related to the hazard above. It occurs when streams have eroded away the snowpack from below, but left behind a bridge of snow. This bridge can collapse without warning under your weight, bringing you into the icy stream below. Give wide berth to areas that have already collapsed or show signs of sagging or cracking.

LONG SLIDING FALLS are the #1 cause of injury each spring. Cold temperatures cause soft snow to refreeze into a slick alpine ice. Always think about your fall line below and pick routes that minimize going over cliffs or into rocks. We always recommend an ice axe and crampons for travel in steep terrain. You may not need them always, but if the unexpected does occur having them, with the ability to use them effectively, can save you from serious injury or worse.

The Lion Head Winter Route is still open. The bottom two-thirds of the John Sherburne Ski Trail is closed. Please cross over to the hiking trail at the closure rope and hike the rest of the way down to Pinkham.

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 AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters or the Harvard Cabin.

Posted 830 am. May 8, 2014. A new advisory will be issued no later than Sunday, May 11.

Christopher Joosen, Snow Ranger
USDA Forest Service
White Mountain National Forest
(603) 466-2713 TTY (603) 466-2856

