

General Advisory for Tuckerman Ravine

Expires Tuesday, May 13, 2014

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.

The overall sense that spring has arrived is prevalent among Hermit Lake regulars. Brief periods of heavy rain and temperatures pushing into the 50F range over the last couple of days have accelerated melting quite a bit. The Sherburne is closed now and the threat of icefall from Sluice and Center Bowl is a real menace as huge chunks of ice appear to defy gravity by clinging unsupported to the cliffs. Though rocks are appearing in Hillmans, Left Gully and Chute, skiing conditions are fine, just be sure to consider your trajectory if you fall when you are choosing your route. Traveling off trail is sketchy now with many folks punching through to their waist in unconsolidated snow when they left the packed footpaths or avalanche runouts. Wet feet, or much worse, can result from falling into these areas of undermined snow. Be sure to ask a ski patroller, caretaker or snow ranger for more info...they all want you to have a good but safe experience. Upcoming weather looks to be warm and windy but be sure to check current weather forecasts so you are prepared. Below are some of the major hazards you may face 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, 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 but will probably close soon. **The John Sherburne Ski Trail is closed.** Bare ground, rocks and open water make it impassable. Please hike down the Tuckerman Ravine trail.

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 7:15 a.m., Sunday May 11, 2014. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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