

Avalanche Advisory for Wednesday, January 14, 2015

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Tuckerman Ravine has Moderate and Low avalanche danger. The Sluice, Lip, Center Bowl, and Chute have Moderate avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are unlikely and human-triggered avalanches are possible. All other forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely, although unstable snow in isolated terrain features may exist.

Huntington Ravine has Moderate and Low avalanche danger. North Gully, Damnation, Yale, Central, and Pinnacle have Moderate avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are unlikely and human-triggered avalanches are possible. Odell Gully, South, and Escape Hatch have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely, although unstable snow in isolated terrain features may exist.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Recently formed wind slabs are the problem to watch for again today. Overall, you may find a lot of locations with good stability from firm, wind-affected snow or areas with older crusty surfaces. The wind slab problem will be most pronounced in strongly protected lee areas such as the Lip in Tuckerman or the midsection of Yale Gully in Huntington. Other areas may have firm wind slab with crust or decomposing crust beneath that could act as the weak layer. The Center Bowl is one example of where this might be found today.

WEATHER: Compared with the -10F temperatures at my house this morning, the +12F here at Hermit Lake feels downright comfortable. Light winds and sunshine will likely prevail today while temperatures rise, which will make for a pleasant day to be out on the mountain. Monday the summit recorded a little more than 4" of new snow, but lower elevations received lower amounts.

SNOWPACK: Looking at the big picture, there are plenty of options for travel where stability will be good. Old surfaces and strong, firm snow are the dominant surface characteristics, especially in Tuckerman. Usually Tuckerman has more stability concerns than Huntington, but this is reversed today. In Tuckerman, the wide open snowfields allow more options for a traveler to avoid areas where the stability isn't good. In Huntington, choke points in the gullies or wall-to-wall slab leave climbers with the choice of going up, going down, or escaping out into rock climbing. The northern gullies of Huntington have the greatest likelihood of harboring unstable snow, while the southern gullies (i.e. Odell, South, Escape) received much less of the recent snow and will have the best stability. In Tucks, Hillman's and Left Gully are similar to the southern gullies of Huntington with mostly scoured or wind-affected surfaces. Right Gully and Lobster Claw pose lesser threat due to the fact that they are still a long way from being totally filled in. The Lip and Sluice, particularly where the hiking trail crosses, are the slopes that are more likely to have unstable snow.

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 8:10 a.m. Wednesday January 14 2015. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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

