

Avalanche Advisory for Saturday, January 24, 2015

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

All forecast areas of Tuckerman Ravine and Huntington Ravine have MODERATE avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are unlikely and human-triggered avalanches are possible. Evaluate snow, terrain and weather conditions carefully. Dangerous avalanche conditions may develop after dark and overnight!

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Be thinking about **Persistent Slabs** scattered around in the Ravines as your primary avalanche hazard if you are planning to thread the weather needle today in the Ravines. This hazard earns a Low rating this morning. New snow on increasing winds beginning around noon will begin to create a **Wind Slab** hazard. The rate of new snowfall will determine the likelihood and size of the new, unstable wind slabs as well as how soon we reach the Moderate hazard rating. As the day progresses, the likelihood of natural and human-triggered avalanches will become increasingly possible, particularly in lee areas such as Central and Pinnacle Gully and where the Tuckerman Ravine trail enters Tuckerman Ravine (the Lip and Sluice forecast areas). We may reach a Considerable danger rating after dark.

WEATHER: Clouds will thicken and descend this afternoon as the storm system to our east brushes by the area. 1 to 3" (2.5 to 7.5 cm) of new snowfall is forecast this afternoon and evening followed by 1-3" more snow overnight. NW winds will ramp up as the storm moves through, building unstable wind slabs in the process. Temperatures will drop back towards 0F (-18C) tonight with strong winds complicating travel.

SNOWPACK: A generally hard, wind packed surface (P) in most areas is bridging over discontinuous areas of weak layers (4F-F) on some benches and in some lee areas which were not scoured out by avalanche activity last week end or Tuesday morning. Also, some pockets of softer slab that developed on Tuesday may remain in lee pockets. It is also worth remembering that the wet snow Sunday may be hiding some ice flows and may not be well bonded, at least in areas that did not already avalanche on Sunday. Skiers in Right Gully and Hillman's the last couple of days have found the surface carvable but firm and worthy of crampons on the ascent. Overall, the snowpack is pretty thin with lots of ice still exposed in Center Bowl and around the Open Book. The recent avalanche activity in Huntington has covered more shrubs on the approach to Odell and the firm snow has made for good cramponing and easier approaches. Ice is still somewhat thin on Pinnacle Gully.

The Sherburne Ski trail is icy on the upper half due to the freezing rain last weekend. Lots of bumps and waterbars are still around. A "dust on crust" situation will develop as the afternoon wears on. We are running the snow cat on the Tuckerman Ravine trail to Hermit Lake and part way into Huntington to try to improve SAR access so please be aware that a large steel object may be descending in the middle of the trail this afternoon.

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 8:15 a.m. Saturday, January 24, 2015. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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