

# Avalanche Advisory for Tuesday, January 27, 2015

**Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight**

**Tuckerman Ravine has HIGH and CONSIDERABLE avalanche danger.** Lobster Claw, Right Gully, the Sluice, Lip, Center Bowl, and Chute have High avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are likely and human triggered avalanches are very likely. Left Gully, Hillman's Highway, the Lower Snowfields, and Little Headwall have Considerable avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are possible and human triggered avalanches are likely.

**Huntington Ravine has HIGH and CONSIDERABLE avalanche danger.** North, Damnation, Yale, Central, and Pinnacle have High avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are likely and human triggered avalanches are very likely. Odell, South, and Escape Hatch have Considerable avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are possible and human triggered avalanches are likely.

**A Winter Storm Warning is in effect today. Avalanche conditions will be very dangerous. Travel in avalanche terrain is not recommended.**

**AVALANCHE PROBLEM:** Storm Slabs and Wind Slabs are going to be forming rapidly and with gusto as this storm intensifies and moves northward. The aspects that will receive the greatest loading face to the SW and S. In our terrain, these are the lookers' right side of Tuckerman and the northern gullies of Huntington. I am confident that naturally-triggered avalanches will take place in these forecast areas, and I would not be surprised to see avalanches in steep S-facing terrain that is outside of our forecasted avalanche paths.

**WEATHER:** This storm is what was needed to distract the news world from football inflation scandals, at least in New England anyway. While impacts are expected to be very strong up and down the east coast, what we are expecting here is simply a good old fashioned Nor'easter. It's not going to be a storm for the ages up on Mt. Washington, but it will be a good one. We are expecting total storm accumulations of 12-20" (30-50cm), which includes snow overnight and tomorrow. Today's amounts will hopefully fall into the 8-12" (20-30cm) range. Winds are one of the more interesting components to this event. Strong NE winds will persist through daylight, then a gradual shift to the NNE and N after dark. This directly impacts where avalanche danger will be greatest, so please read on...

**SNOWPACK:** All eyes are on the top of the snowpack for stability problems today. Generally good stability preceded this event. As snow is blown in on NE winds, some aspects will be directly on the windward side of the mountain. These are the areas forecasted at Considerable danger. They will not see nearly as much wind loading as the slopes facing to the S and E, and in some past storms, strong easterly winds actually removing snow from windward slopes in the Cutler River Drainage. While there will be a lesser concern in windward locations, I still would not recommend traveling here today given possibility of naturally triggered avalanches and the crisscrossing of runout paths. Areas posted at High can be expected to avalanche multiple times during the event and will probably push the runout zones farther than they have yet gone this season. Going up to the bottom of Tuckerman or Huntington Ravine will put you at risk of serious injury or death at the hands of a naturally triggered avalanche. This is true even if you are just "going to check it out" or "going to take a look," two phrases people often say to us we watch them hike up into avalanche terrain.

Winds shift further to the N and NNW tonight. With additional snow, this will keep the danger elevated. Another storm is scheduled for arrival on Friday. It'll be a good week to read the advisories before heading into the mountains.

## **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 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, January 27, 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

