

Avalanche Advisory for Tuesday, May 5, 2015

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Tuckerman Ravine has Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely. Watch for small avalanches on isolated terrain features. **Huntington Ravine is under a General Advisory.** You will need to do your own snow stability assessments when traveling in avalanche terrain in Huntington. A danger of falling ice exists, and will persist until it all comes down.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: The snow stability is generally very good at this time. Avalanches are a lesser concern than other hazards that you will need to pay attention to if traveling in Tuckerman Ravine. Looking at the water flowing down the waterfall adjacent to the Lip, I can't help but wonder about the potential for a wet slab avalanche. Currently it appears as though the water is draining well and the chances of a wet avalanche remain unlikely. However, unusual events do happen. On April 19, 2013, a chunk of ice plugged the drainage channel and unexpectedly triggered a wet slab. The pre-existing conditions then were not all that different from what we have today, but historically, these events have been rare. I am keeping the rating today at Low danger, but remember that you are the one responsible for the decisions for where you travel, and our standing recommendation is to treat avalanche terrain with respect, even when danger is low.

FALLING ICE - There is still an incredible amount of ice in the Sluice and Center Bowl area. You do not want to be below these locations when the ice breaks off. Don't underestimate the speed and random trajectory of chunks of falling ice. Reduce your time spent in Lunch Rocks, the Sluice, Lip, and Center Bowl and you will reduce your risk of injury or death due to this hazard.

CREVASSES AND UNDERMINED SNOW - The focus of the deepest slots is in the Lip and Sluice area with others located directly beneath rock buttresses above longer slopes. These glide cracks are getting larger by the day as the huge mass of snow melts and creeps downhill. Choosing a boot pack to ascend that avoids these hazards is a great way to reduce the risk of a fall into one of these holes. Aside from the prominent stream under the Lip area, most gullies in Tuckerman also have running water under the snow. Through the years we have seen the most incidents of people punching through into these smaller streams in Hillman's, the Sluice, and Right Gully.

WEATHER: Today will be another warm day on the mountain. Last night temperatures did not fall below freezing for most of the mountain, additionally, there was a warm front that passed through late last night bringing 0.19" of rain to the summit. Fog appears to be burning off already, which will allow sunshine to hasten the melting process today. This is all creating a lot of melt water and saturated snow.

For all practical purposes, the Little Headwall has fully collapsed and is unskiable. The best descent alternative is to hike back down to Hermit Lake, where you can choose to rejoin the John Sherburne ski trail. The Sherburne trail is disintegrating rapidly and is currently closed at the #7 crossover, 2 miles up the Tuckerman Ravine Trail from the parking lot. At the rope, please avoid the muddy descent and cross to the hiking trail and walk down. Do not ski on the hiking 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.
- **Posted 8:45a.m., Tuesday, May 05, 2015. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**