

General Advisory for Tuckerman Ravine Sunday, May 17, 2015

A General Advisory is in effect for Tuckerman Ravine until complete melt out in early summer. You will need to do your own snow stability assessments. A new General Advisory (GA) will be issued when conditions warrant or within 72 hours. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

The snowpack in the Ravine has melted a lot recently and Saturday night's thunderstorm with half an inch of rain didn't help. High pressure should make for mostly warm, sunny conditions before the next round of unsettled weather begins Monday night. Currently, Left Gully and Hillman's are the longest runs and also hold the least nasty spring-time hazards. Other gullies are melted at the top and bottom and make for a short run that, in the case of Right Gully, end abruptly in a pile of boulders.

A SECTION OF THE TUCKERMAN RAVINE TRAIL IS CLOSED TO ALL USE. This section extends from Lunch Rocks at the floor of the Ravine to the top of the Headwall where it meets the Alpine Garden Trail. This includes no skiing or riding through the Lip area. Only this section of the trail is closed. This annual closure is due to the magnitude of the crevasses and undermining, and the severe consequences of a fall in this area.

ATTENTION AUX RANDONNEURS! Une section du sentier du Tuckerman Ravine est présentement fermé à toutes les activités. Cette section est située entre Lunch Rocks et le sommet du Headwall jusqu'où ce dernier rejoint le sentier du Alpine Garden. Cette fermeture inclut également toute activité de descente dans le secteur du Lip. Seulement cette section du sentier est fermé. Cette fermeture annuelle est due à l'ampleur des crevasses et à la gravité qu'occasionnerait une chute dans ce secteur.

BE AWARE OF THE ANNUAL SPRINGTIME HAZARDS 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, Lip, and Center Bowl. Warm weather and rain increase the potential for icefall to occur. There is still a lot of ice that has not yet fallen. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as under the headwall or at Lunch Rocks.
- **CREVASSES AND WATERFALL HOLES** continue to grow; the most dangerous are in the Lip and Center Bowl. Give them plenty of room, since they are often much larger beneath the surface than what you can see from above. Breaking through weak snow into one of these could be fatal for you or someone in your group. The best way to avoid the hazard is by climbing up what you plan to descend and giving these areas plenty of space.
- **UNDERMINED SNOW.** As the snowpack continues to get thinner, this problem gets worse. You may encounter this problem anywhere that water is flowing beneath the snowpack, which includes most of the gullies, or where the snowpack is thinning near emerging boulders. While the snow may appear thick and strong on top, you won't really know how strong or weak until you cause it to collapse underneath you. If you see small holes in the snow or near large rocks, realize there may be large open spaces under the surface.
- **LONG SLIDING FALLS.** Temperatures often fall below freezing even late into spring. Additionally, age hardening creates very dense snow and alpine ice that remains very slick even on warmer days. Snow surfaces can be hard and icy enough to make arresting a fall difficult, if not impossible, on a steep slope. Good terrain choices, careful climbing as well as proper equipment such as an ice axe and crampons, are your best defense.

The Lip area has all of the hazards listed above, as well as the main waterfall hole. This terrain is a "no fall zone," where the consequences of a slip at any point can be dire. In addition to the Lip, the area beneath the Headwall and Lunch Rocks are threatened by enormous blocks of ice which may be more likely to release during a period of rain. There are a number of other, safer routes that take you to Pinkham Notch that avoid this closed area.

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 Mount Washington Volunteer Ski Patrol, the AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters or the Harvard Cabin.
- **Posted 7:25 Sunday, May 17, 2015. A new advisory will be issued when conditions warrant.**