

Avalanche Advisory for Sunday, February 28, 2016

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Tuckerman Ravine has Moderate and Low avalanche danger. The Sluice and Lip 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. However, watch for unstable snow in isolated terrain features. The Lobster Claw, Lower Snowfields, and Little Headwall are not posted due to a lack of snow.

All forecast areas of Huntington Ravine have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely. However, watch for unstable snow in isolated terrain features.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Areas of wind slab will be the primary avalanche problem today. In the Sluice and Lip, these areas are sufficiently large to warrant a Moderate rating. If you are looking to trigger an avalanche today, your most likely location would be in the Lip. Other areas rated Low may also have smaller areas of wind slab in sheltered areas that are worth avoiding. Examples include Right Gully, Chute, and Central Gully, but be watchful for unstable slabs wherever you travel.

Aside from avalanches, **falls in steep terrain are a very serious threat.** Vast amount of icy surfaces exist; it will be very challenging to arrest a fall on this surface. Fall lines are chock full of rocks and trees, increasing the risks associated with a fall. Consider using roped travel techniques for climbing through steep icy terrain, especially for those without significant and relevant mountaineering experience.

WEATHER: Thursday and into Friday the mountain received about 3" (7.5cm) or more of new snow. No additional precipitation has fallen since then, and it's unlikely that we'll get any more today. Light amounts of snow may fall tonight and Monday, before another potentially wet storm on Tuesday/Wednesday. Today your biggest weather issues will be thick fog and strong winds above treeline.

SNOWPACK: The rain that fell last week did a great job resetting the layers in the snowpack. For today's avalanche issues, we aren't much concerned about what is below the most recent crust. It's the little bit of snow blown into wind slabs above the crust that's the cause of our avalanche concerns. Due to the crowds on the mountain this weekend, we haven't been able to get our hands into this snow to gauge its stability directly. Skiers intent on making turns in softer snow should be aware that the only places we have concerns about the stability appear to be the most appealing skiing. Be cautious out there.

The amount of ice that is present on Mt. Washington is incredible. This is not only the steep icy surfaces already mentioned in the ravines. It's also on the lower Tuckerman Ravine Trail, the Alpine Garden Trail, the John Sherburne Ski Trail...we are strongly recommending bringing some form of traction for lower elevation trails and crampons and ice axes for anything steep or in the alpine. Skiers, you'll want to carry your skis to the top of the switchbacks before trying to skin up the rest of the way.

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 8:00a.m. Sunday, February 28, 2016. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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