

General Bulletin for Tuckerman Ravine

Posted: 8:00am April 24, 2016
Expires at 12:00 midnight Tuesday, April 26, 2016

High pressure will linger over the mountains on Sunday, creating blue skies and plenty of sun. This will also allow temperatures to stay below normal, with highs on the summits only reaching the upper 20sF. Winds will be 45-60mph out of the NW early, decreasing slightly as the day progresses. Due to low temperatures and NW winds, some surfaces may not soften on Sunday, particularly those with a N, NE or E aspect. Low pressure will approach tonight, creating clouds and similar temperatures for Monday. There is a chance of snow showers Monday night and Tuesday. This likely will not amount to much, but be aware it may cover some of the forming crevasses or opening holes. Be prepared to make your own safe travel decisions.

The southern side of the Ravine, or lookers left, has dramatically lower objective hazards and risk than the north or right side. Therefore, we recommend the left side over traveling in the center and right side of the Ravine. Left Gully is the longest run and is still connected to the Bowl proper while the Chute offers steeper and more challenging terrain.

Spring Hazards in Tuckerman Ravine:

1. **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. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as under the Headwall or at Lunch Rocks, more aptly known as "Icefall Rocks".
2. **CREVASSES, HOLES, AND UNDERMINED SNOW** – Collectively these are growing larger in many locations; the most dangerous in the Center Bowl over to the Lip on the lookers right side of the Ravine. Breaking through weak snow into one of has been the cause of numerous past fatalities. Generally, climbing up what you plan to descend will allow you to see most of these hazards for your descent and realize there may be large open spaces under the surface near these holes.
3. **LONG SLIDING FALLS** – Temperatures often fall below freezing even late into spring. Additionally, age hardening can create very dense alpine ice that remains very slick even on warmer days. Snow surfaces become very hard and icy, making a slip, trip, or fall a very serious situation. Good terrain choices and proper equipment, such as an ice axe and crampons, are your best defense.

Tuckerman Ravine Trail Closure

A section of the Tuckerman Ravine Trail is closed to all use. This is due to the severe consequences of a fall in this area. The closed section extends from the top of Lunch Rocks to the junction of the Alpine Garden Trail above the ravine. Only this section is closed. Hiking or skiing in the vicinity of the closed trail is not permitted.

Areas immediately adjacent to and under the closed Lip area have all of the hazards in the list above so travel in this area is not recommended and should be avoided. This terrain is "no fall terrain." The consequences of a slip or fall here could lead to the worst possible outcome.

Please Remember:

- A General Bulletin is issued when snow instabilities may exist, but are isolated with the forecast areas. You will need to make your own snow stability assessments when traveling in avalanche terrain. This bulletin is just one tool to help you make your own decisions. You control your own risk by choosing where, when, and how you travel.
- For more information contact the Forest Service Snow Rangers, the AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters.

Helon Hoffer, Snow Ranger
USDA Forest Service
White Mountain National Forest
(603) 466-2713 TTY (603) 466-2856