

General Bulletin for Tuckerman Ravine

Expires at 12:00 midnight Sunday, April 24, 2016

A General Bulletin is in effect for Tuckerman Ravine. You will need to do your own snow stability assessments. A new General Bulletin will be issued within 72 hours or when conditions warrant. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

Very warm air reaching 42F on the summit and 52F at Hermit Lake on Thursday, as well as skier traffic, has stabilized the several pockets of new snow from Tuesday. The expected rain today (Friday) and thunderstorms late will further assist this settling process. This puts snow instability on the back burner focusing us the traditional spring hazards as the main threat for those visiting Tuckerman Ravine. As rain and potential thunderstorms move out of the area Friday night the summits will clear through the day on Saturday. However, a dropping temperature into the low 20's during the day, reaching 10-15F Saturday night, will firm up snow surfaces. Expect Sunday to also begin cold and hard. Assure you take a close look at summit weather before heading into the Ravine as timing will be everything to avoid icy hard surfaces. Several other points you need to be aware of are:

- **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 tremendous amount of ice waiting to fall. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as under the Headwall or at Lunch Rocks, more aptly known as "Icefall Rocks".
- **UNDERMINED SNOW, HOLES and CREVASSES.** 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. The best way to avoid the hazard is by climbing up what you plan to descend and giving these areas plenty of space. 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 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, as well as proper equipment such as an ice axe and crampons, are your best defense.
- **A SECTION OF THE TUCKERMAN RAVINE TRAIL IS NOW 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. 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. This includes no skiing or riding through the Lip 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'ou 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.)
- **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.** This includes the right side of the Bowl proper from the Center Headwall, heading right to the Lip, and down to just above Icefall (Lunch) Rocks. This terrain is a "no fall zone." The consequences of a slip can be dire.

*****THE BOTTOM LINE:** Because of all the issues listed above, 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. Although they hold a level of overall general hazard they offer options with lower risk than many other Ravine alternatives.

Please Remember:

- Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This bulletin 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 8:10a.m. April 22, 2016. A new bulletin will be issued when conditions warrant.**

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