

General Bulletin for Wednesday, May 04, 2016

Expires at 12:00 midnight Friday, May 06, 2016

A General Bulletin is in effect for Tuckerman Ravine. A new General Bulletin will be issued within 72 hours or when conditions warrant. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

Mixed precipitation on Wednesday and Thursday, changing to rain at all elevations, will continue to dominate the mountains. At the ravine level you can expect mostly rain and fog. Looking at the extended forecast, we expect a brief moisture reprieve on Friday, but then rain returning for the weekend. Rain will exacerbate the typical spring hazards listed below more rapidly than we have seen recently. Anticipate falling ice to be the most significant threat in the near term due to this moisture and fog. Fog will cloak falling ice from your view until the last second, making it very difficult to mitigate. Kind of like skate boarding back and forth on a Los Angeles ten lane highway in thick Pacific murk. The bottom line is when fog is in play your risk goes up substantially.

We continue to recommend the left (south) side, such as Left gully, over traveling in the center or right side of the Ravine. Although general mountain risks should be considered on the left side the objective hazards are remarkably less than the rest of the Ravine. Areas immediately adjacent to and under the closed "Lip" area on the right side have all of the hazards listed below so travel in this area is not recommended. In addition to being the bulls-eye for icefall, it should be avoided because it's "no fall terrain" due to holes, rocks, and crevasses. The consequences of a slip or fall here could lead to the worst possible outcome.

Spring 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. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as under the Headwall or at Lunch Rocks, more aptly known as "Icefall Rocks".
- **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 injuries and fatalities. Generally, climbing up what you plan to descend will allow you to see most of these hazards for your descent. Realize there may be large open spaces under the surface near these holes.
- **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. Very hard and icy surfaces make, a slip, trip, or fall a very serious situation so good terrain choices and judgement as well as proper equipment, like an ice axe and crampons, are your best defense. The bottom sections of popular runs are also melting uphill making it possible to fall into rocks and terrain features while still in steep terrain.

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.

(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.)

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, or the AMC at Pinkham Notch or Hermit Lake.
- **Posted 8:10a.m. April 30, 2016. A new advisory will be issued when conditions warrant.**

Christopher Joosen, Snow Ranger, USDA Forest Service, White Mountain National Forest

