

General Bulletin for Saturday, May 14, 2016

Expires at 12:00 midnight Monday, May 16, 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.

On Saturday morning, drizzle at upper elevations will clear for a brief period today giving us some sun to enjoy. This will likely not last long as clouds return, slowly consuming the majority of the sky into the afternoon, creating a chance of showers by late in the day. Overnight, rain will pick up with a chance of thunderstorms and then transition to a wintry mix. For the Ravine level elevations, rain showers are likely Sunday morning before transitioning back to snow showers as temperatures fall. Generally it will be a reasonable day on Saturday, if you time it right, with Sunday's weather being a bit more difficult to enjoy. We continue to recommend the left (south) side, such as Left gully, over traveling in the center or right side of the Ravine. Left Gully is hanging in there and has the best snow coverage and longest run in Tuckerman. This side, in addition to other snowfields, continues to melt uphill so it will be difficult to ski through bushes to connect to the Ravine floor (see our online pictures). Although general mountain risks should be considered on the left side, the objective hazards are dramatically 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; travel in this area is not recommended. Ice issues continue to be a problem in all the traditional locations, albeit less than a week ago as it continues to be shed off of the rock cliffs. So it's still the Icefall mean season! In addition to still being in the bulls-eye for icefall, the center and right side of the Bowl should be avoided because it's also "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** – The most dangerous of these are in the Center Bowl over to the Lip on the looker's right side of the Ravine. Breaking through weak snow into crevasses and holes 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.
- **LONG SLIDING FALLS** – Age hardening can create very dense alpine ice that remains very slick even on warmer days. Freezing temperatures makes hard icy conditions more likely, but many people fail to understand how hard, and quick, soft snow can become when it goes into the shade on sunny afternoons. Planning ahead for the flash freeze shadow line is smart. 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 6:20a.m. May 14, 2016. A new advisory will be issued when conditions warrant.**

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

