

Avalanche Advisory for Saturday, January 14, 2017

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Tuckerman and Huntington Ravine have LOW avalanche danger. All forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely. In Tuckerman Ravine, Lower Snowfields and Little Headwall are not rated due to thin snow cover.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Recent rainfall has penetrated into our snowpack and created hard surface conditions and reduced our avalanche danger to the lower side of Low. Thin **wind slabs** built from an inch or so of snow are scattered around both Ravines but it is unlikely that these will create much of an avalanche problem. Cold conditions and extremely firm snow will be the travel challenges that you will face today. Expect the need for crampons on steep trails like the Lion Head winter route. Ice and rocks will create challenges on scoured, above treeline trails as well. The mountain will be heavily visited today and this weekend so be aware of people above and below you.

WEATHER: The current temperature on the summit has warmed through the night to -4F with -2F at Pinkham Notch. Summit winds are blowing from the northwest in the 45 mph range and will shift to the west and increase a bit through the day. Mostly sunny skies with temperatures rising into the mid-single digits above zero make for a pretty nice day for climbing or hiking. Around an inch of snow fell since the rain stopped around midnight on Thursday. Expect a return to -10F or so after dark with a west wind at 55-75mph.

SNOWPACK: Bullet hard surface conditions exist throughout our steep terrain. These firm conditions allow limited boot penetration on lower angled slopes but the need for crampons quickly becomes apparent as slopes steepen. A fall on a steep slope will quickly become impossible to arrest so anticipate the need for a rope for security earlier than you might think. We are not yet sure whether the recent ¾" of rain improved ice climbs or damaged them so keep an eye on ice dams and hollow drainage channels. If you are coming to enjoy the same good, soft skiing conditions we have enjoyed lately, you missed the boat. Steep terrain is hard, barely edgeable and would be very unforgiving of a fall.

We continue to see folks with summit fever push past their physical limits in order to summit Mount Washington. Remember that the mountain will be here another day and that self-reliance and self-rescue may be your only option should you need help. Manage your time wisely, prepare carefully and set an unnegotiable turn-around time that leaves you options. Wise and long-lived mountaineers leave time to deal with any incident and return to the parking lot without the need for a headlamp in order to avoid the epic struggle for survival that develops when things begin to go wrong.

The Lion Head Winter Route is open and the most direct route to the summit. Please be careful of bridge construction debris near crossover 7 on the Sherburne Trail when skiing or riding.

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 7:45a.m., Saturday, January 14, 2017. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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