

Avalanche Advisory for Monday, January 16, 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 rain and a solid refreeze has reduced our avalanche problem to the scattered **wind slabs** that you can see at the surface. These pockets formed from new snow yesterday morning and are generally thin and easy to identify, especially compared to the old, gray refrozen surface and drainage channels that reveal the bulletproof nature of the old snowpack. Expect good crampon traction and poor self-arresting or glissading conditions. The hard surface snow allows the kind of acceleration that Tesla engineers dream about.

WEATHER: A mild start to the day under sunny skies and light west winds in the 30 mph range will give way to rapidly increasing northwest winds this afternoon. Expect wind to ramp up quickly into the 80 mph range by dusk with gusts over 100 mph. Skies should remain clear with the air temperature at the summit reaching 20F or so. We received a trace to an inch of new snow 24-36 hours ago with no precipitation forecast until Tuesday night. Forecast models indicate 6-8" of snow down to valley elevations through the night on Tuesday. Anticipate elevated avalanche danger though at this point light winds from the south are forecast through the day on Wednesday.

SNOWPACK: Bullet hard surface conditions exist in our steep terrain with smooth pillows of softer wind deposited snow scattered around. The firm conditions that predominate in the forecast terrain allow limited boot penetration on lower angled slopes or in the new wind slabs but the need for crampons quickly becomes apparent as slopes steepen. A fall on this kind of slope will quickly become nearly impossible to arrest with just an ice ax or ski edge. As is often the case with strong west winds, Huntington Ravine is more scoured than Tuckerman Ravine. While very little new wind slab exists on climbs or approaches, a few larger pockets of smooth snow exist in the bowl below Sluice ice, beneath the chokepoint in the Lip as well as in the Chute. That said, I wouldn't expect great skiing even in those areas due to the icy but just edgeable crust lurking just below the surface and relatively small size of the areas of soft snow.

The Lion Head Winter Route is open and the most direct route to the summit from the east. 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., Monday, January 16, 2017. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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