

Avalanche Advisory for Thursday, March 9, 2017

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Huntington Ravine has MODERATE and LOW avalanche danger. Central Gully has Moderate avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are unlikely and human-triggered avalanches are possible. All other forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely. Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features.

Tuckerman Ravine has MODERATE and LOW avalanche danger. Sluice, Lip, Center Bowl and Chute have Moderate avalanche danger. Natural avalanches are unlikely and human-triggered avalanches are possible. All other forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. Natural and human-triggered avalanches are unlikely. The Little Headwall is not forecast due to lack of snow.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Wind slabs developing in terrain features downwind of strong westerlies are creating heightened avalanche conditions. Evaluate snow and weather conditions carefully if you are travelling in avalanche terrain today. Snow shower activity like we have seeing this morning at Pinkham Notch and Hermit Lake have a tendency to pile up more snow than you might expect at upper elevations. Current and projected wind speeds will move 1-3" of new snow, plus the 4.5" that have fallen in the past 48 hours, into our start zones resulting in the potential for medium sized human-triggered avalanches in moderate rated areas. Pockets of wind slab in Low rated areas could also cause problems so consider travelling on the old, refrozen snow surface exposed by wind-scouring action. Wind slabs may become increasingly sensitive today due to an increase in density of snow near the surface.

WEATHER: Current temperature on the summit is 8F and falling with 30F at Pinkham Notch. Strong west winds are blowing light and moderate snow showers on gusty winds currently blowing at 66 mph. Wind will continue from a westerly direction and increase slightly through the day. Expect 70-80mph WNW winds with gusts to 100mph through the day with a shift to NW later this afternoon. Continued upslope snow showers are expected to bring 1-3" of new snow today to add to the 4.5" of snow that has fallen in the past 48 hours.

SNOWPACK: Despite the lack of snow at lower elevations around the region, it is still game-on in the snowy Presidential Range. This is especially true of the north and east facing terrain in and around the Cutler River drainage where 220" of snow since December 1st has filled our forecast areas and developed avalanche paths to nearly maximum extent. Large and close to historic sized avalanche activity in Hillman's Highway, the Lip and Center Bowl and the looker's left in Gulf of Slides is testament to the intensity of the season's avalanche cycles. Unfortunately for snow lovers, winter temperatures have been a roller coaster with mid-winter warmth and enough rain to wreck powder but to create a solid, deeper snowpack. Going forward, expect a mixed bag of avalanche activity along with spring hazards like falling ice, thinly covered crevasses and open drainages.

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 Harvard Cabin.
- **Posted 8:00a.m., Thursday, March 9, 2017. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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