

General Bulletin for Wednesday, April 26, 2017

Unless updated, this advisory expires at 12:00 midnight Friday, April 28, 2017.

A General Bulletin is in effect for Tuckerman Ravine. You will need to do your own snow stability assessments. A new advisory will be issued when conditions warrant or within 72 hours. A general bulletin for Tuckerman will be in effect until complete melt out later this spring/summer. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

Temperatures have only dipped below freezing briefly since last Saturday's solid overnight freeze. Warm temperatures penetrating the snowpack increase the risk of **loose, wet sluffs** large enough to push a skier downhill and possibly into a crevasse, a waterfall hole, into rocks or over a cliff. Continued warm temperatures are on tap until the weekend when summit temperatures may once again drop, allowing a refreeze. Until then, count on record setting warm temperatures along with meltwater runoff to make the following hazards worse:

- **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. There is still a lot of ice hanging on the cliffs in the Sluice and Headwall. Avoid spending time in high risk areas such as in the fall line of the headwall or at Lunch Rocks.
- **CREVASSES AND WATERFALL HOLES.** These are growing larger in many locations, the most dangerous locations are in the Lip and Center Bowl. Give them plenty of room, since they are often much larger beneath the surface than what you can see from above and can be much deeper than you might expect. Breaking through weak snow into one of these could be fatal for you or someone in your group. Give these areas a wide berth when hiking up or skiing down.
- **UNDERMINED SNOW.** As the snowpack continues to get thinner, this problem gets worse. It is most prominent in places where there is flowing water beneath the snowpack, which includes most of the gullies. While the snow may appear thick and strong on top beware that the snow may be bridging a thin area over a significant drop. When in doubt probe aggressively with a ski pole or ice axe. If you see small holes in the snow or near large rocks, realize there may be large open spaces under the surface.

The Lip area has all of the hazards listed above, as well as the main waterfall holes. Travel in this area is not recommended. This terrain is rapidly becoming a "no fall zone," where the consequences of a slip can be dire. **Soon, we will be closing the Lip to skiing as well as the section of the Tuckerman Ravine hiking trail between Lunch Rocks and the Alpine Garden.** This is an annual closure due to the unique and significant hazards posed to hikers, skiers and their potential rescuers.

Exiting the Bowl is best done by hiking the trail back to the courtyard at Hermit Lake and skiing or riding from there. **The John Sherburne Ski Trail is closed at #3 crossover.** Plan to hike over to the Tuckerman Ravine trail at the rope and hike to Pinkham Notch. Please do not ski or ride on the Tuckerman Ravine trail.

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, Mount Washington Volunteer Ski Patrol, the AMC at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, or the caretakers at Hermit Lake Shelters.
- **Posted 7:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 26, 2017. A new bulletin will be issued when conditions warrant.**

Frank Carus, Snow Ranger
USDA Forest Service
White Mountain National Forest
(603) 466-2713 TTY (603) 466-2856