

General Bulletin for Thursday, May 18, 2017

Unless updated, this advisory expires Saturday, May 19, 2017 at midnight.

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. We are no longer monitoring conditions in Huntington Ravine.

On Mother's Day through the following morning, the summit received 33" (83cm) of new snow. Hermit Lake received just 10" (25cm, 25% density) during the same period of time. Warming temperatures and rain on Monday led to rapid settlement with two reports the following day of medium sized but harmless, human-triggered loose, wet avalanches in the sloppy snow. Currently, the new snow is virtually indistinguishable from the old surface. The melting will continue today with capricious spring weather. Expect record breaking high temperatures today near 60F on the summit with winds gusting to 85mph and thunderstorms developing Thursday night. Temperatures will fall through Friday, possibly bringing a freeze to the snowpack on Friday night which would set the stage for improved skiing conditions on Saturday. Both weekend days are forecast to be sunny and in the 40's F.

The summer Lion Head Trail is now open. Due to open glide cracks and undermined snow, the Tuckerman Ravine Trail is closed in the Ravine between Lunch Rocks and the Alpine Garden Trail. Please use the summer Lion Head trail if going to the summit from Pinkham. Please be aware that that snow and ice are still a concern on this trail and significant long-sliding falls have happened on the snowfield traverse near treeline. An ice axe and crampons and the ability to use them effectively are recommended. The following typical mountain hazards are also in play:

- **UNDERMINED SNOW:** Meltwater running under the snow creates hollow spaces potentially bridged by thin snow that can easily break under the weight of a person. In places, this might mean a wet foot or a minor fall, while larger holes with significant flowing water can be of much greater consequence. Listen for flowing water, look for small holes in the snow surface, and consider that our gullies drain meltwater and can hold such a hazard.
- **CREVASSES (GLIDE CRACKS) AND WATERFALL HOLES:** Many of these large, deep cracks have formed and continue to grow, particularly in Lip and Center Bowl. Give these plenty of space. These cracks are often wider than they appear or bridged by thin snow. A fall into one could be fatal.
- **LONG SLIDING FALLS:** Generally soft, wet snow with areas of concealed buried ice crusts provide varied travel conditions that can easily allow a significant fall. Be prepared for this with an ice axe and crampons for anything above tree line, and always consider the terrain below you and the associated consequences of a fall. Microspikes are very helpful in low angle terrain, but are no substitute for crampons if it's steep.

Top to bottom runs are limited mostly to Hillman's Highway and Left Gully though it is still possible to thread the needle through the glide cracks in Chute. Lower Right Gully is also skiable but there are lots of rocks in the runout. **The John Sherburne Ski Trail is closed at Hermit Lake.** Please hike down the Tuckerman Ravine Trail to Pinkham Notch.

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.
- **Posted 8:20 a.m., Thursday, May 18, 2017. A new bulletin will be issued when conditions warrant.**

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