

Avalanche Advisory for Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Huntington and Tuckerman Ravines have LOW avalanche danger. Generally safe avalanche conditions. Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: The Ravines hold a predominantly hard refrozen snow surface. Today's weather could allow some softening on south facing aspects but only for a brief window if at all. Cloud cover will likely keep solar heating and softening of surface snow to a minimum. Therefore, we don't expect wet loose sluff avalanches to be an issue today. Ice and rock fall could be an issue even with slight warming and should be on your radar as potential overhead hazards. That said, long sliding fall potential on our hard icy snow pack likely remains your greatest hazard. Rocks and other obstacles are exposed below many steep areas, particularly in Huntington Ravine. Be sure that your crampon and ice axe skills are strong if choosing to climb steep snow slopes today.

WEATHER: Following a calm, clear night temperatures are currently warmer on the summit than in valley locations with 16F on the summit, 23F at Hermit Lake, and 13F in Gorham. Aloft, southerly flow will continue today bringing clouds but only a trace of precipitation, if any falls at all. Summit level wind will be from the west today in the 50-70 mph range with good visibility at ground level under thickening high clouds. The temperature at the summit will warm to the mid-20s F with limited opportunities for sunshine in Cutler River drainage avalanche terrain.

SNOWPACK: Warming on Saturday and Sunday was followed by a solid refreeze since early Monday morning. Tuckerman and Huntington Ravines hold relatively smooth and hard snow that is difficult to kick a boot into, with only a few exceptions near rocks and vegetation. Sunny, south facing aspects saw minimal softening of the icy surface yesterday due to cool temperatures (20'sF at Hermit Lake). We expect similar conditions today as high clouds and wind will likely limit heating of solar aspects despite warmer air temperatures. The desperate may find a few reasonable turns among many icy ones, but going to the ski area or focusing on a climb may be a more enjoyable option. Take care to avoid a fall on any of our steep slopes. Even the highly skilled would have trouble arresting a sliding fall.

Winter weather, soft snow, and elevated avalanche danger will certainly return. Help ready yourself to come home safely from getting the goods by joining us at IME in North Conway this Saturday at 5:00 PM. This second event in the White Mountain Avalanche Education Foundation's Continuing Education series will focus on appropriate, strategic use of stability tests and other snowpack observations. It's free to attend!

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 7:40 a.m., Wednesday, February 14, 2018. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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