

Avalanche Advisory for Thursday, April 19, 2018

Expires tonight at 12:00 midnight

Huntington Ravine has MODERATE and LOW avalanche danger. Central Gully has Moderate avalanche danger. Evaluate snow and terrain carefully. All other forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. 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. Evaluate snow and terrain carefully to identify features of concern. All other forecast areas have Low avalanche danger. Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features. The Little Headwall has open water in the steep section as well as the stream bed above. It is not a recommended route out of the Bowl.

AVALANCHE PROBLEM: Due to the rugged ice crust on the mountain, you'll find two distinct threats to safe travelling in steep terrain. The recent sleet storm finished with freezing rain which created a thick ice crust over top of a widespread glaze of sleet, wet snow and ice. New snow fell at the end of the storm on Tuesday afternoon and was able to stick in some areas, but not very well. Due to scouring of the snow, wind exposed, scoured areas above tree-line will require crampons for safe travel while many lee areas have collected enough snow to build some wind slabs. Low visibility, and other duties kept us from gathering many observations yesterday and this morning, but it seems that the ice crust will be the dominant surface in steep terrain. In areas where the new snow adhered to the ice, hand shears low in Hillman's Highway showed that the new wind slabs failed easily in the new snow. Only a small amount (2-3") of the recent snow was light enough to be carried by the wind and blown into our terrain but the icy bed surface will up the ante if you get swept off your feet. Human triggered avalanches are unlikely today unless you seek out these areas of wind slab. Additionally, light winds may allow the 1-2" of new snow that falls to build into small but more sensitive, new wind slabs. If we receive the upper end of the forecast amount, human triggered avalanches will become more likely and increasingly widespread.

WEATHER: Just 0.7" of snow fell on the ice encrusted summit yesterday. This snow was light enough to be carried by the wind, like the inch or two which fell at the end of the storm on Monday and Tuesday. That storm brought a generous coating of sleet and ice totaling 10" of mixed frozen types and over 3" of water equivalent. A low pressure system will pass to the south today and spawn snow showers and some fog. Expect another wintry day with a high temperatures near 20F. Snow surfaces are unlikely to soften despite the warmish temperature and low wind speeds. More new snow tonight and tomorrow may create more significant avalanche concerns tomorrow and Friday.

SNOWPACK: Instabilities in the snowpack are limited to recent snow. Yesterday, 8" or more of moist rounds were found beneath a rugged 3-4cm ice crust. This ice crust was more ice than crust and was just barely bootable on sub 20 degree slopes. Anything steeper required crampons or a stubborn desire to link skinnable sections of wind deposited snow. Lower on the mountain, the Sherburne was recoated with the sleet which has covered the bare spots on the trail that had begun to emerge. The trail is very skiable all the way to the parking lot at Pinkham Notch.

Bear tracks were seen around the Fire Road and Tuckerman Ravine trail. Please use the bear boxes and keep your camp clean if staying overnight at Hermit Lake. The Harvard Cabin is closed with no camping allowed anywhere on the east side of Mount Washington except at Hermit Lake Shelters or adjacent tentsites.

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 weekends at the Harvard Cabin.
- **Posted 7:30 a.m., Thursday, April 19, 2018. A new advisory will be issued tomorrow.**

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