

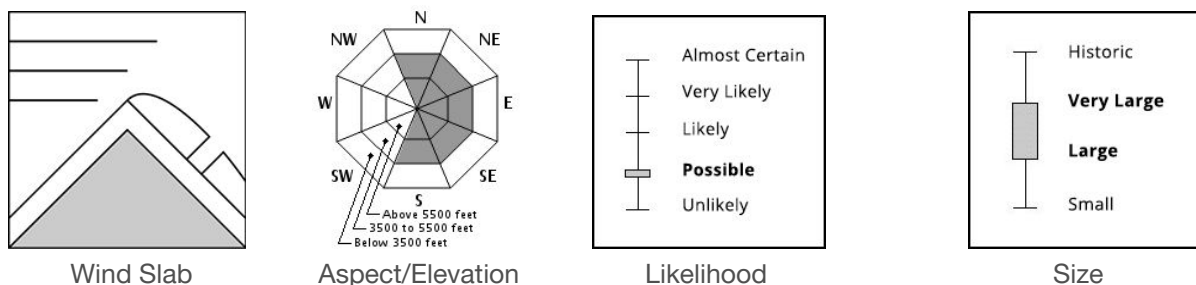
The Bottom Line

Continued wind loading raises the threat of large natural avalanches in specific east facing areas of the range today. Avalanche danger is teetering between ratings with the potential large size of natural avalanches pushing the rating to CONSIDERABLE in a few areas with the largest wind slabs. Human triggered avalanches remain possible in MODERATE rated areas due to the potential for reactive but smaller wind slabs. Remember that active wind loading can be the heavy trigger needed for a large slab to fail but the weight of a passing skier or climber may also be enough. Cautious route finding will be required to evaluate snow and terrain today.

Mountain Weather

In the past 24 hours, 7.5" of new snow brought our three day total to 21" at higher elevations. Yesterday's new snow was accompanied by strong winds averaging around 70 mph from the NW. New snow shut off shortly after dark last night but wind slowly increased through the night and is currently blowing in the 80-90 mph range. Wind seems likely to increase further with gusts over 100 mph. Skies may clear but count on blowing snow and passing fog and clouds to create challenging conditions for gathering visual observations. The current summit temperature is -9F and won't warm much before falling further overnight.

Primary Avalanche Problem



The strongest wind since Wednesday evening will add more snow load to existing wind slabs today. Confidence is high that these wind slabs will be firm and stubborn in most areas but continued snow loading keeps the threat of large natural avalanches real, particularly in specific areas like the Headwall of Tuckerman Ravine. Other east facing terrain with sufficient fetch downwind could also harbor these large but stubborn wind slabs.

Snowpack Observations

Three days of snow, wind loading and zero visibility have left us with little direct observation of our avalanche paths. A history of observations of our primary forecast terrain leads us to our current forecast. The strong wind on tap will scour and wind pack some zones while further loading sheltered areas. Continued sluffing will also build wind slabs beneath steep features like the approach to Pinnacle, the big ice slab in Odell and below chokepoints in the Chute. Both loading conditions will occur in the Headwall area of Tuckerman Ravine.

Frank Carus, Snow Ranger; USDA Forest Service, White Mountain National Forest; (603)466-2713 TTY (603)466-2858

Please Remember: Safe travel in avalanche terrain requires training and experience. This forecast is just one of many decision making tools. You control your own risk by choosing where, when, and how you travel. Understand that the avalanche danger may change when actual weather differs from the weather 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 at the Harvard Cabin.



Avalanche Forecast for Friday, January 11, 2019
This forecast expires at midnight.

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