

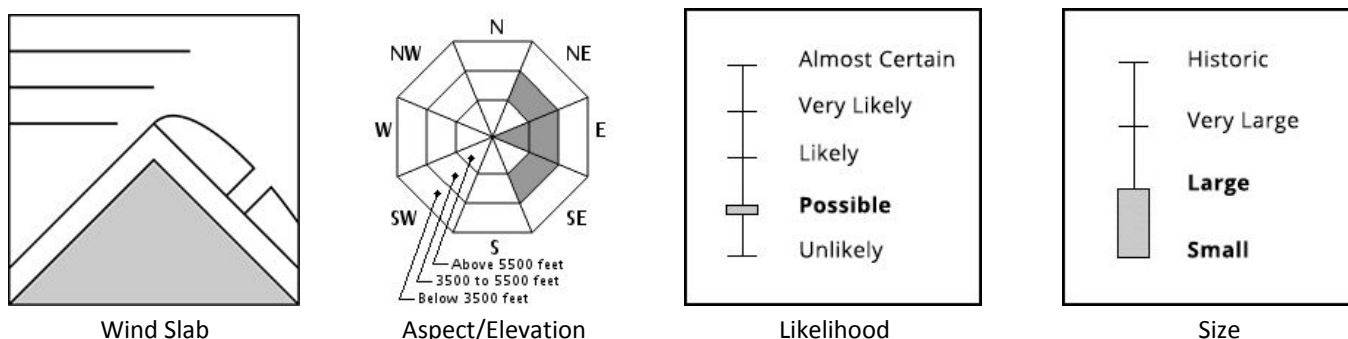
The Bottom Line

Winter weather, with regular snowfall and cold temperatures, keeps wind slab avalanches on the list of mountain hazards that you will face today. These slabs have not had enough time or warm temperatures to settle and bond so evaluate the snow carefully today if you plan to venture on or below steep, wind loaded terrain features. While natural avalanche activity is unlikely, poor visibility will make it hard to tell what kind of snow exists above you or who may be in position to trigger an avalanche onto you. A mix of soft and firm wind slabs and scoured or wind-packed snow or ice exist throughout the range with the latter often present at or near the tops of gullies, making crampon use a good idea. **MODERATE** avalanche danger exists with human-triggered wind slab avalanches possible in primarily east facing, mid and upper elevation terrain. Snow stability will improve through the next couple of days.

Mountain Weather

Cold temperatures continue today with wind remaining strong from the west. The current temperature on the summit is -18F with winds near 60 mph from the west-northwest. Summit high temperature will reach only -10F today though winds will diminish slightly to 30-45 mph mid-day before increasing again into the 40-55 mph range with higher gusts. A trace of snow fell early yesterday morning with another trace to an inch possible this afternoon. Visibility will again be challenged by summit fog today. Temperatures will moderate significantly over the next couple of days.

Primary Avalanche Problem



You are most likely to find reactive wind slabs in well-sheltered areas and beneath steep terrain features where 6" of snow has accumulated into thick slabs due to wind transport and sluffing action. Firm wind slabs that are likely to be stubborn but potentially much larger are also a concern in areas with greater exposure and a larger upwind fetch, such as across the east facing Headwall of Tuckerman Ravine and the major gullies of the Gulf of Slides.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Natural avalanche activity on Monday, some of it large, highlights the fact that there are other slopes that are loaded but did not slide. These slopes and gullies, among other reloaded ones, contain larger slabs like the ones observed in Gulf of Slides yesterday that were firm (1F+) over much softer (F) snow.

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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.