

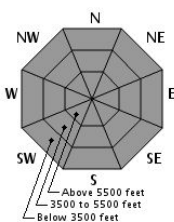
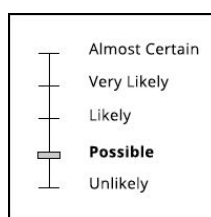
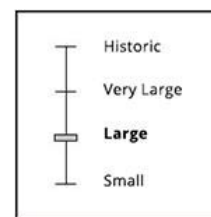
The Bottom Line

Warming will continue today, increasing the likelihood of a human-triggered wet slab. Roller balls and natural wet avalanche activity were both observed yesterday. While terrain with an easterly aspect has the most developed slide paths and could produce larger avalanches, the widespread warming on all aspects we are experiencing today pushes the danger rating for the day to **CONSIDERABLE**. All elevations and aspects could produce wet avalanche activity today. Uncertainty always comes with wet avalanches, so today's mitigation may be best done with avoidance of the terrain. Warm weather and rain also increase the chance of rock and ice fall.

Mountain Weather

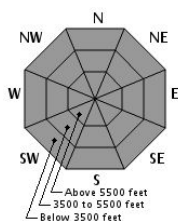
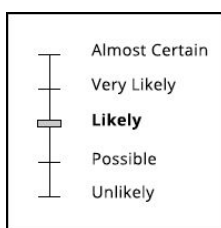
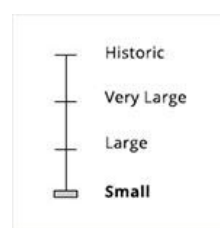
As of noon today, all elevations will have been above freezing for 24 hours, with lower elevations surpassing that mark early this morning. Some direct sunshine yesterday encouraged warming on southerly aspects, but the ambient temperature was the key yesterday and will continue to be so today. The summits will crest into the lower 40s F this afternoon. Rain should fall today, with the bulk of the forecast 0.2" coming early afternoon.

Primary Avalanche Problem

Wet Slab

Aspect/Elevation

Likelihood

Size

Continued temperatures above freezing will allow meltwater to percolate through the upper part of our snowpack. When this free water encounters an ice crust, the interface between the bed surface and overlying slab will become lubricated. This lubrication, in combination with the loss of strength in the overlying slabs due to continued warmth, has the potential to create wet slab avalanches. Thin areas of the snowpack (think extreme slopes that shed snow more readily, near rock buttresses, and lower elevations in general), particularly slopes with a degree of northerly aspect which have seen much less direct sunshine, are places that are easier for a skier or climber to trigger wet slabs.

Secondary Avalanche Problem

Wet Loose

Aspect/Elevation

Likelihood

Size

While these are often small and usually do not contain enough snow to bury a person, it can be very hard to escape once caught in this slow-moving snow that acts more like wet cement. Sluff management for skiers today will be crucial to avoiding this likely problem. Being carried over a cliff or ice bulge is often the real hazard associated with this sort of avalanche problem. Also, a loose wet avalanche could produce the required mass to trigger a lurking wet slab that skiers or climbers have not found yet.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Yesterday afternoon, the penetration of the warmth into the snowpack reached around 5". While some slopes did see direct sun, the depth of warming seemed consistent on all aspects due to the ambient air temperature. Our layered snowpack contains several ice crusts that have been producers of large avalanches this year. Digging to these crusts in several locations, well-developed facets can be found. While not widespread enough to create a persistent problem, these may lurk in shallow areas of the snowpack and offer trigger points for wet avalanches today.

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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.