

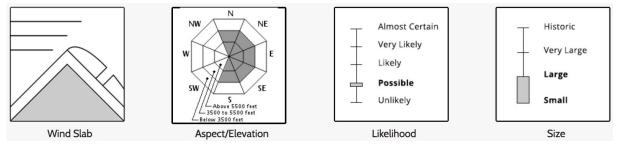
The Bottom Line

- Wind slabs that formed earlier this week are slowly stabilizing. These may be possible to trigger where they are softest, the same places that will offer the best skiing.
- Many slopes have been hit hard by the wind, either scouring to the January 25 ice crust or forming firm wind slab that has yet to produce an avalanche.
- Identifying features of concern today will help your party either avoid the avalanche problem or negotiate around it.
- Today's wind slab has a **MODERATE** rating. Places where the ice crust is visible have **LOW** avalanche danger today due to a lack of wind slab.

Mountain Weather

Yesterday, temperatures hovered in the teens F at high elevations with light wind shifting from N to SW late in the day. This morning, a W wind is blowing at 26mph and should sit there for most of the day, gusting up to 40mph. Temperatures will again linger in the teens F with clouds developing this evening. Making plans for the weekend? Expect a stable weather pattern with a chance of upslope snow showers tonight and tomorrow night that may produce up to an inch at mid and upper elevations each night.

Avalanche Problem



Soft wind slabs are the main avalanche concern today. These are most likely small in size and can be found near terrain features that can interrupt the flow of wind, such as trees, cliffs, gully walls, or rocks. Firm wind slabs can be found on more open slopes that offer a higher degree of tensile strength bridging the weak layer that can be found under all wind slabs. While firmer wind slabs will be more stubborn to trigger, these will produce larger avalanches as they will be found on larger, connected slopes. Thanks to sunshine yesterday and again today, identifying wind slab (dull, white) vs. ice crust (shiny, reflective) should be easy from afar as can be seen in Huntington yesterday.

Forecast Discussion

As the MWV IceFest comes into town this weekend, it will be good to keep in mind safe travel with your group, especially since this festival draws lots of climbers to area climbing venues. History has shown climbers tend to treat avalanches more as an objective hazard and are also willing to get in line for the classic climbs. The current avalanche problem can be managed very easily by choosing terrain appropriate for your group and goals for the day. Much of Huntington Ravine has been hit hard by the wind and is unlikely to produce an avalanche big enough to bury someone. Use this to your advantage and be willing to alter plans based on where the crowds are. Avalanche rescue gear is always worth carrying and may be used to help others who made the mistake you avoided.

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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.