



MOUNT WASHINGTON AVALANCHE CENTER

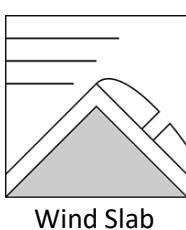
Avalanche Forecast issued on Wednesday, January 8, 2020

The Bottom Line

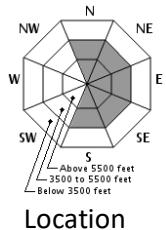
- Hollow snow over weaker snow may be triggered by a skier or climber this morning
- Natural avalanches will be more likely later today
- Do not linger in or skin up avalanche paths including the floor of Tuckerman Ravine

Avalanche danger will increase further today due to more new snow and wind loading. East facing terrain will develop wind slab avalanches which could occur without a human trigger. Don't be fooled by the small amount of snow in the forecast. The shift in wind direction and speed will access soft drifts tucked away in the alpine and contribute more snow to wind slabs that will create avalanches easily large enough to bury a person in the Gulf of Slides and Tuckerman Ravine. Other areas with less available snow could still produce dangerous avalanches. Avalanche danger will increase to CONSIDERABLE quickly early this afternoon from its already tricky Moderate rating. Cautious route finding and careful snowpack evaluation will be essential today.

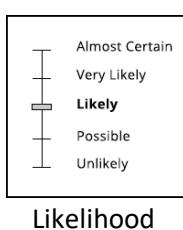
Primary Avalanche Problem



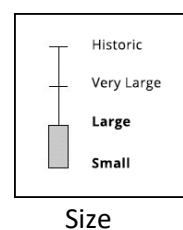
Wind Slab



Location



Likelihood



Size

New snow and light to moderate wind this morning will create sensitive wind slabs on top of our lingering wind slab problem. Remember that small amounts of new snow over the past several days have continued to stress existing wind slabs and today's new snow will only create more stress and strain on already weak bonds. The base of steep areas and lee terrain are both habitats for today's wind slab problem.

Mountain Weather

Low pressure systems passing near the area followed by upslope showers will produce 3-5" of new snow. Wind speeds will be relatively light this morning but will increase steadily through the day with effective loading speeds in the 50-60 mph range beginning in the early afternoon. Temperatures which have become seasonably cold in the past couple of days will grow even colder with mid-single digits during daylight hours dropping to -8F tonight.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

The disparity that exists in the QPF between [NWS](#) and the [MWObs](#) is largely irrelevant to the rating today. Wind loading which occurred yesterday built wind slabs which have not yet stabilized. Temperatures and time are not on our side, even this morning with human triggered avalanches certainly possible due to the recency of these slabs development. The icy layer deep in the snowpack has resisted bonding and may even be developing some early facets, though overcast conditions overnight have not made for ideal facet farming. More snow tonight, cold temperatures and further high winds will keep our stability concerns alive tomorrow and while the threat of natural avalanches may pass tonight, the fresh and thick wind slabs will keep the threat real tomorrow. Expect a solid Moderate rating and a continued need to be really wary of what appear to be stubborn hard slabs. We have limited observations from the west side but sheltered locations appear to hold enough snow to recreate on. Scouring has likely taken its usual toll in more exposed location and it is doubtful that typical streambeds are entirely closed in, though they may be close. Gulf of Slides has certainly filled in with the problematic ice bulge trigger points close to but not yet entirely covered.

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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.