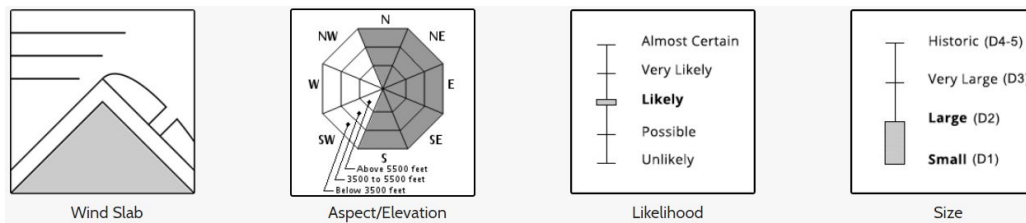


The Bottom Line

Forecast heavy snow this afternoon will arrive on an increasing and shifting wind. Natural avalanches will be possible near the end of the day with human triggered avalanches becoming likely. An avalanche in this new snow could easily be large enough to bury a person. Avalanche danger will rise to **CONSIDERABLE** this afternoon as wind and snow combine to create dangerous wind slabs. Careful snow and weather evaluation will be crucial today. Those out this morning should be looking out for a wet avalanche problem. Postholing in wet snow and snowballs rolling down slopes entraining snow are signs that you are in a developing wet avalanche issue. This problem will disappear as the day progresses and temperatures allow the snowpack to refreeze.

Mountain Weather

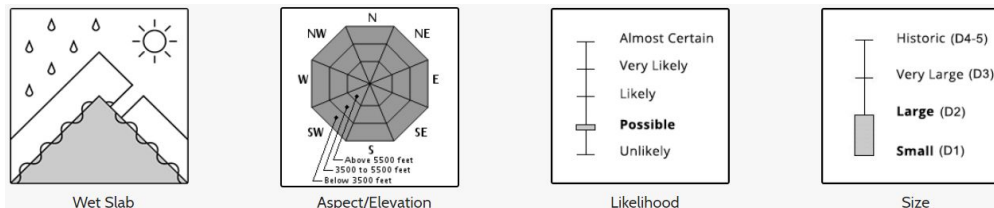
Yesterday, snowfall on the summit was largely limited to the morning, dropping 3.5" on the summit and just under 1" at Hermit Lake (3800'). Precipitation transitioned through every type of mixed precip as temperatures warmed from 9F to above freezing, with rain falling for a 4-hour period after midnight. This morning, an inversion has created below freezing temperatures in the valley [while elevations above 4000'](#) are above freezing at 7am. Today, precipitation will continue through the morning, passing through the full spectrum of mixed precip types until snowfall resumes, possibly not until this afternoon. Accumulation will be significant, with 4-8" forecast for the Presidentials and another 1-3" tonight. Wind will shift to the NW as snow picks up this afternoon.

Primary Avalanche Problem


New snow arriving through the afternoon will fall with shifting and increasing wind, creating a layered wind slab as it forms. Expect natural avalanches to become possible as we see increased accumulation and wind transport. This snow will fall on a rain-soaked ice crust that will refreeze as temperatures drop. While perhaps not the bed surface of the initial failure, this developing melt/freeze crust will likely become the bed surface once snow starts sliding downhill. While uncertainty exists in the forecast today, even the lower end of forecast snowfall total today will combine with wind to create slabs big enough to bury a person.

Secondary Avalanche Problem

Rain falling on snow and above freezing temperatures will create a widespread wet avalanche problem to start the day. Look for signs of loose wet activity (rollerballs and pinwheels) as indications the surface has become saturated. At lower elevations, expect the overall size of wet avalanche activity to be small while mid elevations could see a large wet slab due to a more developed snowpack that contains known weak crusts and weak layers.



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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.



Avalanche Forecast for Friday, February 7, 2020

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