

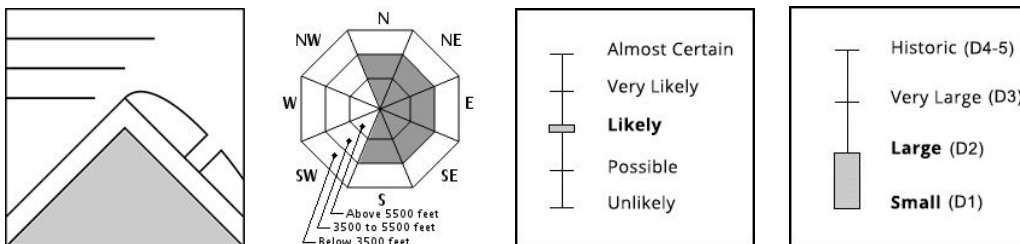
**The Bottom Line**

Avalanche danger will increase throughout the day. Expect human triggered avalanches to become likely. Forecast snow totals vary, but if we see the upper end of accumulation, natural avalanches will become possible. Poor visibility from blowing snow will make terrain management difficult unless you have an intimate knowledge of your surroundings. Conservative decision making today is recommended. As the snow accumulates, we will see avalanche danger increase to **CONSIDERABLE**.

**Mountain Weather**

Yesterday, snow started falling mid-afternoon on a west wind. Continued light snow showers produced 1.1" of 4.5% snow on the summit (closer to 2" at Hermit Lake) while wind shifted between W and SW blowing 35-55mph. Today, snow will continue to accumulate through the day. Moderate snowfall rates (1" per hour) are expected at times this morning tapering off this afternoon. [MWObs](#) is calling for 2-4" and [NWS](#) forecasts the higher side of that figure. Current SW wind in the 45-60mph range will soon shift to due W and increase to 50-70mph. While they valleys may see rain, temperatures in avalanche terrain should stay below freezing. Tomorrow may bring another round of snow, with up to 2" possible. The greatest chance of visibility tomorrow will be early morning. Temperatures may rise above freezing below 3500'.

**Primary Avalanche Problem**



Wind slabs are forming and will be reactive to human triggers. This type of avalanche problem is most unstable when forming and can often break above you. These will rest on a variety of bed surfaces, including wind slabs that formed Saturday and a melt/freeze crust from Friday. The depth of today's wind slabs will depend on the amount of snow we actually get; four inches of snow on forecast wind could produce wind slabs over two feet thick quickly, enough to bury a person.

**Forecast Discussion**

Field observations Sunday in Tuckerman and Huntington revealed a widespread melt/freeze crust that formed on Friday. The crust was topped with wind slabs in specific locations, the lee of a W wind as well as some crossloaded aspects. These wind slabs were firm and stubborn, though upside down in structure. Snow arriving today will form reactive wind slabs on top of this. It's possible that an avalanche could step down into wind slab that formed Saturday, but this stepping-down should not really factor into decision making as the real driver of instability today is the rapidly forming wind slabs.

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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.