

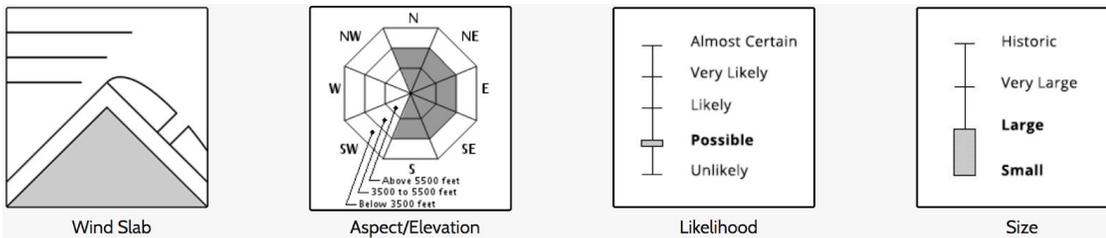
The Bottom Line

The threat of natural avalanches passed when wind loading ceased late yesterday. Human triggered avalanches remain possible today with the possibility of a very large avalanche in Tuckerman Ravine. Don't let firm, smooth but hollow snow trick you into thinking things are stable. While these slabs are likely to be stubborn, bear in mind these considerations:

- Heavy wind loading occurred throughout the day yesterday. This is a classic “red flag”.
- Very cold temperatures in the past 36 hours have slowed settlement and bonding.
- Thin spots are often trigger points that can be found along the edges of an otherwise thick slab. A crack could bring a slope down on you if you are in the wrong place.

The avalanche danger today is MODERATE in wind loaded terrain. Assess snow and terrain carefully and beware of others above you and your position below any steep, open slope.

Avalanche Problem



Wind slabs remain a threat in predominantly east facing terrain today. Though some areas, such as the higher elevation northern gullies in Huntington Ravine, are largely scoured or wind packed, other, more sheltered areas like Sluice and the Lip in Tuckerman Ravine have thick, smooth and continuous hard slabs over a softer layer of snow deposited earlier this week. Widely variable thicknesses of these layers above the most recent ice crust means that you stand a decent chance of passing over a thin, weak spot in a slab and trigger an avalanche. You'll be able to find softer, more reactive but smaller wind slabs in wind sheltered areas.

Mountain Weather -Yesterday, wind from the northwest remained solidly in the 60's mph until around dark when it finally shut down. Ambient temperatures were in the mid-teens below zero until that time also. Check out this Instagram video of yesterday's text-book wind loading scenario. **Today**, temperatures have warmed to around 0F on the summit with an inversion keeping temps in nearby valleys at -17F. Southwest flow will bring warmer air today and some high clouds later with a high of 11F on the summit. There should be good visibility through the daylight hours though snow and fog will develop overnight. **Tomorrow**, we may have an inch of snow available for increasing west and WSW winds to work with overnight. Temps will warm to the low teens on the summit but strong winds will remain through mid-day and diminish to the 30-40mph range.

Forecast Discussion

Wind slabs remain a threat in predominantly east facing terrain today. Though some areas, such as the higher elevation northern gullies in Huntington Ravine, are largely scoured or wind packed, other, more sheltered areas like Sluice and the Lip in Tuckerman Ravine have thick, smooth and continuous hard slabs over a softer layer of snow deposited earlier this week. Widely variable thicknesses of these layers above the most recent ice crust means that you stand a decent chance of passing over a thin, weak spot in a slab and trigger an avalanche. You'll be able to find softer, more reactive but smaller wind slabs in wind sheltered areas.

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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.