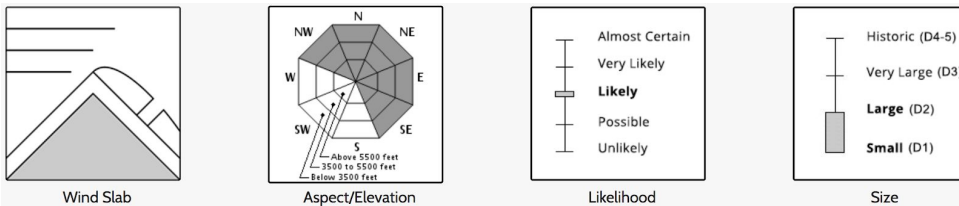


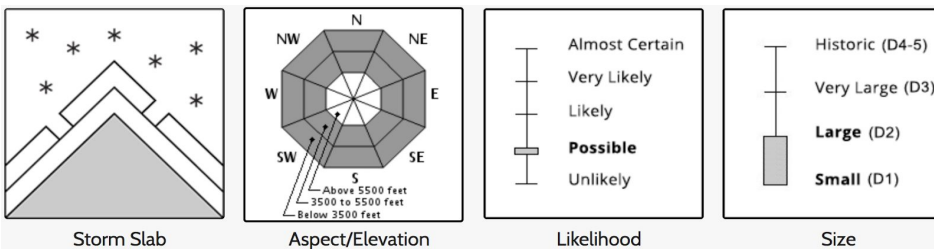
The Bottom Line A winter storm will bring 8-14" of new snow with extreme, shifting winds to the mountains. Avalanches could occur without a human trigger, starting this afternoon, particularly in places like Tuckerman Ravine and Gulf of Slides. Avalanche conditions could develop later this morning in west facing terrain and mid-elevations like Crawford Notch due to a strong east wind and heavy snowfall. Avalanche danger will be **CONSIDERABLE** today. Dangerous avalanche conditions will develop today.

Mountain Weather Today, a storm system will pass over the area and gain strength as it reaches the coast. Temperatures will fall and the snow that began around 5am at middle and upper elevations will intensify through the day. Winds are currently blowing well into loading speed, (90 mph, gusting to 129 mph), even considering the heavy, wet snow, from the E and ESE. Wind will shift quickly early this afternoon, blowing from the south for a couple of hours before shifting to the west. Wind will remain in the prime wind loading range of 50-70 mph through the day. If forecasts play out accurately, 6" snow should be available by mid-day prior to the time the wind shifts west, with 8-14" total in the forecast for today and tonight. **Tomorrow's** weather will bring a return to our standard pattern of cold temperatures and strong to extreme wind from the west. The storm system is leaving a lot of moisture in its wake with even more available from the unfrozen Great Lakes. Another 4" should fall Thursday night with another 4" possible by Saturday. Wind from the west at 50-70 mph will dump this snow into eastern facing terrain.

Avalanche Problems



Wind slabs will develop on multiple aspects and beneath steep terrain as snow accumulates today. Wet snow will form cohesive slabs quickly that will grow in size and become increasingly sensitive through the day. Though snow will start out wet and dry as temperatures cool, don't expect the snow to be "right-side up" since wind effect will counter that occurrence. Natural avalanches will become possible by mid-day with avalanches potentially becoming dangerously large by afternoon after the wind shifts west.



Wind sheltered areas will develop storm slabs as snow accumulates through the day. Be wary of steep wind sheltered terrain and check small, steep test slopes for signs of slab formation. Heavy snow can pack a punch so don't underestimate the ability of a 6-8" slab to push you someplace you don't want to go.

Forecast Discussion The powder hounds among us may be tempted to cheat the avalanche problems today to find the goods. The high wind and low visibility will hopefully lead you to the trees or resorts. Not only is wind currently hammering near treeline, the visibility will make it challenging to use visual cues to assess risk. Swirling localized winds and rapidly accumulating snow will change things rapidly today. If you do attempt to thread the needle today, keep the angle low (30 degrees or less) and avoid avalanche paths and their runouts. Timing of the wind shift and the length of time the wind blows from each cardinal point will change conditions significantly.

Frank Carus, Snow Ranger; USDA Forest Service, White Mountain National Forest; (603)466-2713 TTY (603)466-2858

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.



Avalanche Forecast for Thursday, February 27, 2020

Banking on hourly wind forecasts is a significant gamble today and probably a bet worth passing up. Seems like a good day for lift served skiing or tours in the woods.

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