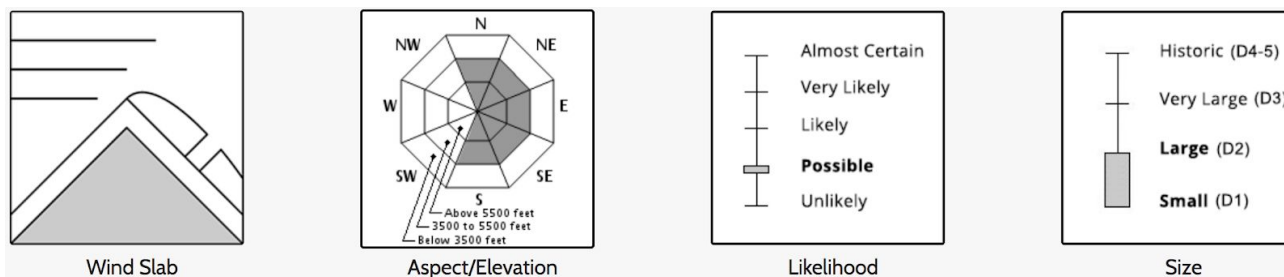


The Bottom Line

Evaluate snow and terrain carefully today for the presence of wind slabs, some of which may be reactive to a human trigger and large enough to bury a person. Consider traveling on the firmer, scoured snow to avoid these wind slabs while reducing your exposure to overhead hazards such as other people triggering an avalanche on you. Avalanche danger is MODERATE today. Natural avalanches are unlikely but human triggered avalanches remain possible.

Avalanche Problem



Wind slabs should be on your radar today. Gusty and shifting winds over the past 48 hours have deposited the upslope snowfall in a patchwork of wind slabs over firm, chalky snow. These slabs may be large on lee slopes and gullies downwind of a large fetch such as the Headwall of Tuckerman Ravine and across the Gulf of Slides. If you are on a slope over 30 degrees and see cracks shooting ahead in the snow or the snow is over your boot-tops, your risk of triggering a dangerous avalanche has increased substantially.

Mountain Weather

Yesterday, upslope snowfall continued off and on through the day ultimately adding another 1.5" to the 2" which fell on Friday. Peak gusts on the summit hit 74mph from the NW though winds were generally moderate most of the day. Today, seasonably cold temperatures continue with wind diminishing further. Expect a high just above 0F with NW winds around 30-40mph on the summit. Summit fog and clouds should clear out by midday. Tomorrow, high pressure will make way for another warm disturbance which may bring some rain to the forecast area. The freeze line is uncertain at this time but some rain seems likely at middle and lower elevations.

Forecast Discussion

Low visibility persisted yesterday with few observations from our forecast area though observations from Huntington and Gulf of Slides indicate that a patchwork of soft snow, firm and chalky snow, and some exposed ice crust is the norm. Wind sheltered areas low in east facing bowls provided some soft powder skiing yesterday and likely will today as well. Wind and more snow showers overnight likely refreshed some slopes but also may have made some of the pre-existing slabs thicker and possibly more dangerous. Ease into the terrain and bring a strong partner or partners. We've received no observations from the west but loading there seems likely to have occurred during the east winds the blew early in the storm last Thursday.

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.