

**The Bottom Line**

Hard refrozen snow that dominates our terrain continues to present long sliding falls as a greater hazard than avalanches. If you do find soft snow without a crust in the alpine, you will have found a pocket of the very small and isolated wind slab that is our only avalanche concern. All forecast areas have **LOW** avalanche danger. Long sliding fall potential on our very hard and slick snow surface should guide your terrain choices today. Crampons, ice axe, and your ability to not fall are a must for travel on steep snow in the current conditions.

**Mountain Weather**

Weather since the refreeze late Friday has done little to affect our snowpack. Summit temperatures hovered in the single digits below 0F yesterday, with our snow plots recording a high around 7F. High temperature on the summit should be just over 0F today. Wind from the WNW held in the 50-70 mph range and should remain at similar speeds while shifting NW through daylight hours. Summit fog for most of yesterday has cleared and skies should remain clear through the day. Tomorrow is forecast to be 10 degrees warmer with summit wind under 30 mph. An incoming storm will bring increasing cloud cover and significant snowfall late tomorrow into Wednesday.

**Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion**

Our surface snow is solidly refrozen and supportable in the alpine, with both breakable and supportable crust existing in the trees. Quite small and isolated wind slabs formed over the weekend may exist in our terrain; if you can find them, these are the only stability concern at this time. Most terrain is scoured to the robust melt/freeze crust. This crust is smooth and hard, presenting long sliding falls as our current key hazard. It is also likely to provide an ideal bed surface for slabs building Tuesday night into Wednesday. Avalanche paths are well developed on the east side of the range. Relatively smaller developed avalanche paths with significant terrain traps and nasty runouts can be found on the west side and at lower elevations. Keep these path development factors and the widespread smooth crust as a bed surface in mind for size and consequence of potential avalanches as significant snowfall arrives tomorrow night.

Ryan Matz, 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 or at the Harvard Cabin.