

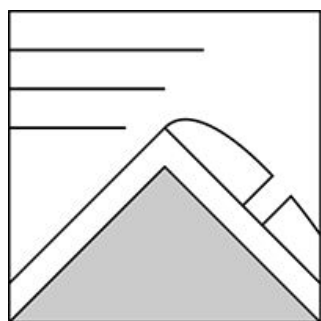
The Bottom Line

New wind slabs that are possible to trigger should be your primary avalanche concern if you brave the extreme wind and frigid temperatures today. Continued wind loading on these new slabs should also keep natural avalanches initiating in steep overhead terrain on your radar. While unlikely, recent snow and loading make it prudent to assume a natural avalanche could occur in locations with the greatest upwind fetch until you can determine otherwise. Wind affected snow can be found at lower elevations where you're most likely to find reactive wind slabs today. **MODERATE** avalanche danger exists for all forecast areas. Make careful observations of our variable upper snowpack to guide your terrain decisions today.

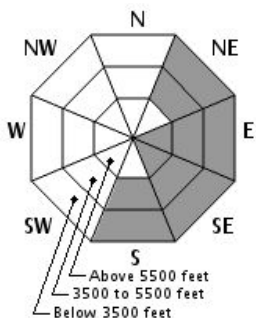
Mountain Weather

Snowfall yesterday and last night ended around midnight, totaling over 8 inches at the summit with less at lower elevations. Wind from the W and NW has been sustained at over 100 mph on the summit for all but a few hours since late Sunday night. Several hours last night were in the 120-140 mph range with a peak gust of 171 mph. Today and tonight wind should remain NW around 80 mph with temperatures in the teens below 0F. A trace to one inch of snow is forecast as clouds decrease today. Expect no snowfall tomorrow as wind speeds finally drop significantly.

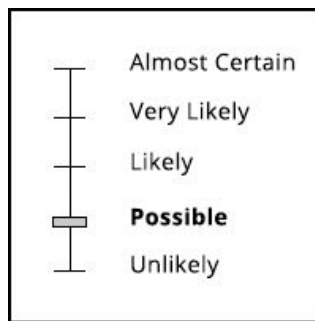
Primary Avalanche Problem



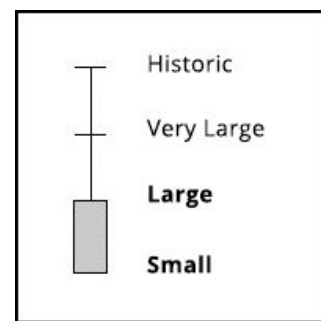
Wind Slab



Aspect/Elevation



Likelihood



Size

Fresh wind slabs are the primary avalanche problem for all elevations today. You're most likely to find them on the eastern half of the compass rose, with stubborn slabs at middle elevations and the potential for reactive but smaller wind slabs at lower elevations. No recent visual observations of higher terrain combines with wind continuing to affect the upper snowpack to provide a healthy dose of uncertainty today. Look for smooth wind drifted snow to identify the avalanche problem wherever you travel today and expect great variability in the wind's effect on the snow surface.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

The notable wind event that is tapering slightly but continuing today will make for varied upper snowpack conditions of hard wind slab, heavily wind textured snow, and scouring to old crusts. You can also expect to find wind affected snow at low elevations which is also where you're most likely to find reactive wind slab today. The unique recent weather factor was continued snowfall with significant accumulation on the extreme wind yesterday and last night. This somewhat rare occurrence of significant snowfall through peak wind speeds of a storm lends uncertainty to today's forecast. We will undoubtedly have an interesting aftermath of this snow and wind event when visibility returns. Continued wind loading today should couple with potentially wide spatial variability in motivating you to carefully and continually assess snowpack if you venture into steep terrain.

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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.