

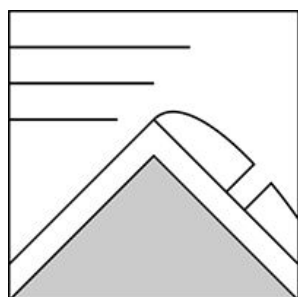
### The Bottom Line

Wind slabs that formed since Saturday are unlikely but not impossible for you to trigger. These slabs are small in many areas and larger in east facing terrain like the Headwall of Tuckerman Ravine. If you look closely, you'll be able to visually distinguish the bright white wind slab from the grey refrozen crust which is actually the more widespread snow surface. This crust is very hard and slick, so recognize that you may be drawn to travel on the current avalanche problem, wind slab, whether you're on foot, skiing, or riding. All forecast areas have **LOW** avalanche danger. Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features and realize that a small avalanche could cause a high consequence long, sliding fall. Crampons, and ice axe, and your ability to not fall are necessary for travel on snow slopes today.

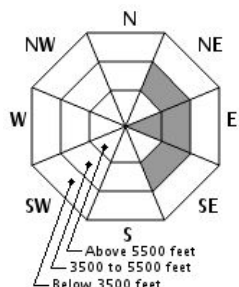
### Mountain Weather

A trace of new snow fell in our terrain last night after a mostly clear day yesterday. Wind blew from the W and WNW around 50 mph and has decreased slightly this morning. High temperatures of 3F on the summit and 16F at Hermit Lake were recorded yesterday and similar temperatures are forecast today as skies clear. Summit wind should hover around 30 mph from the W. Similar wind and mostly clear skies tomorrow are forecast to be accompanied by warmer temperatures, with a summit high near 20F.

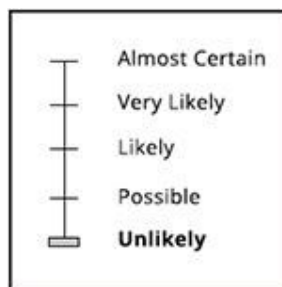
### Primary Avalanche Problem



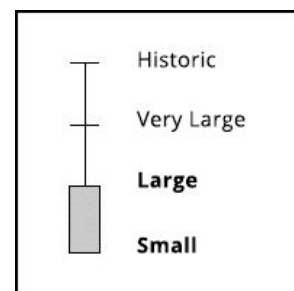
Wind Slab



Aspect/Elevation



Likelihood



Size

Almost three inches of snow has been scoured and transported by westerly wind since Saturday to build some wind slabs and scour most of our terrain to a melt/freeze crust. East facing terrain like the Headwall of Tuckerman Ravine holds wind slabs that are large enough in distribution that you may have trouble avoiding them. Other areas have much more isolated distribution of these slabs. The wind slabs seem generally unreactive to a human trigger, but remember that wind slabs are always spatially variable; triggering an avalanche is not impossible today.

### Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

A significant period of warming late last week was followed by consistently below freezing temperatures, resulting in a supportable crust in almost all of our terrain including low elevations. This refreeze limits current stability concerns to the surface wind slabs that formed since Saturday. Today may warm enough to allow for some softening on southerly low elevation slopes, but we don't expect any instabilities to result. The wind slabs you'll find have not shown themselves to be reactive to a human trigger, but continued light wind loading yesterday should help motivate you to treat them with respect. We can't overstate the importance of preventing a fall on the more dominant refrozen snow surface that a small avalanche or stumble could cause. Long, sliding fall accidents easily outnumber avalanche accidents, both fatal and non-fatal, in the Presidential range. Use strong ice axe and crampon skills to avoid falling if you're taking advantage of the sunny day today.

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.



## Avalanche Forecast for Tuesday, March 19, 2019

Don't miss our last avalanche awareness presentation of the season, free to attend, tonight at Plymouth State University!

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