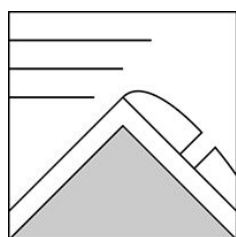
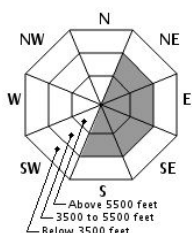
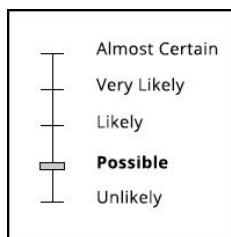
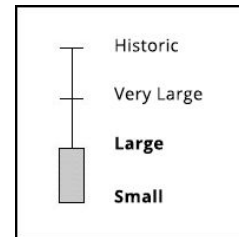


The Bottom Line

New snow and wind today will build new slabs through the day that may become large and possible for you to trigger. The potential size of avalanches today is based on snow that falls through the day, heaviest this morning, and may differ from forecast numbers. Your careful observations of this new avalanche problem forming on an otherwise stable snowpack will be crucial to guide your terrain decisions today. Look for rapidly changing conditions with any areas of drifted new snow as the avalanche problem. All forecast areas have **MODERATE** avalanche danger. Be aware that you're likely to find areas of icy, refrozen snow which could easily allow a long sliding fall which make crampons and an ice axe necessary tools in the alpine today. Also, the spring hazard of thin snow bridges and melt holes can be found above flowing streams.

Mountain Weather

Rain yesterday transitioned to snow late in the day, with a combined rainfall and snow water equivalent (SWE) of 1" on the summit. Snowfall totaled 1.6" on the summit, with less at our snow plots, and snow continues today. Snow totals forecast for today vary, with as much as 4-8 inches possible at higher elevations but also a chance that we'll receive far less. Ravine levels should receive only snow, with our lowest elevation terrain transitioning back to rain by this afternoon as precipitation tapers off and ends tonight. Wind from the W and WNW overnight has held around 100 mph on the summit with stronger gusts and should shift NW this morning before decreasing slightly through the day. Temperatures in the teens F on the summit and 20's F at 4000' should hold relatively steady today and tonight, increasing by 10 or more degrees tomorrow as wind drops significantly and clearing sky.

Primary Avalanche Problem

Wind Slab

Aspect/Elevation

Likelihood

Size

New wind slabs developing on the eastern half of the compass rose today are likely to be stubborn to a human trigger. Size of these new slabs depends fully on actual snowfall amounts today, making large human triggered avalanches possible today. You may also find scouring to a newly formed melt freeze crust. If you're lucky enough to find a window of decent visibility, travel on this crust will avoid travel on the avalanche problem. Watch for rapidly developing new wind slabs if you're in the mountains today.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Warm temperatures and rain wetted the snowpack from last Friday through late yesterday with only a few brief periods below freezing. The resulting deep penetration of moisture into the snowpack is combining with a return to below freezing temperatures to lend great stability to our existing snowpack. This refreeze should continue through today, increasing deeper snowpack stability, while new snow and wind builds unstable slabs on the surface. Today's avalanche problem depends fully on a fairly uncertain weather forecast of upslope snow showers which could produce enough snow to build large new wind slabs. It's also possible that we receive the lower end of snow forecast, which combined with extreme wind speeds could result in minimal new snow on the ground in our avalanche terrain. Snow overnight fell on a refreezing surface that was initially wet, but also on wind near 100 mph. This means that some new snow likely bonded well to the old snow before the surface froze, with some areas being scoured during this refreeze, resulting in the new crust varying across our terrain as a potential avalanche bed surface. Look for weak layers both at and above this crust. It's a very important day to make good observations of actual weather, watching for rapidly changing conditions and increasing avalanche danger through the day.

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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.