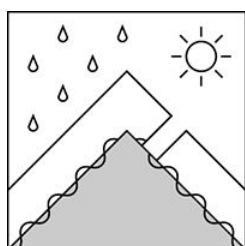


The Bottom Line

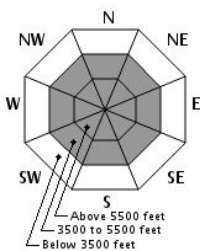
Wet avalanche types will come into play today. In addition to managing your sluff, consider that the most recent wind slabs will continue to heat up and lose strength. As our snowpack continues to warm and become saturated, the concern for deeper weak layers being impacted or water flowing onto buried ice crusts will increase. In addition to avalanche hazard, remember that falling ice and rocks, undermined snow above drainages, emerging crevasses, and moats around rocks will become a problem starting today. Consider what hazards exist overhead and beneath your feet, and don't linger in runouts. All forecast areas have LOW avalanche danger though more rain than forecast today, or greenhouse solar gain, could create more hazard. The exception is the Headwall area of Tuckerman Ravine which has MODERATE avalanche danger due to the increasing volume of flowing water there.

Mountain Weather

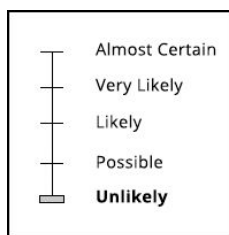
The summit temperature rose above freezing at 6pm last night. A quarter inch of rain fell overnight with another tenth of an inch possible today. High temperature on the summit will rise further and ultimately reach the high 40's F. The warm and rainy trend will continue through the weekend with heavy rain on the way Saturday and Sunday bringing up to two inches of rain to our snowpack and no freeze overnight.

Primary Avalanche Problem


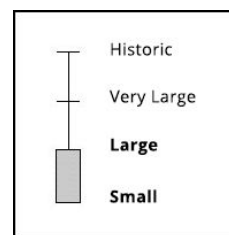
Wet Slab



Aspect/Elevation



Likelihood



Size

Newer, whiter snow that loaded in earlier in the week will be first to react to the warm-up. Be increasingly cautious when softening allows foot penetration into wet snow to reach your boot tops. Wet loose activity often precedes wet slabs. Water flowing in known drainages also increases the risk.

Secondary Avalanche Problem

Wet Loose avalanches are easy to identify and generally easy to manage except in really steep and narrow features. Plan your descent accordingly if tackling one of the steeper couloirs.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Wet slab avalanches require weather that allows extended periods of temperatures above freezing, intense solar radiation, and rain on snow, especially dry snow. The combined effect of more than one of these is greater than the sum of the parts. While our snowpack is not dry in the upper meter or so, it is likely that preserved weak layers still exist deeper in the snowpack. Wet avalanches are notoriously hard to predict. That fact, combined with a snowpack that is thicker than in recent memory, brings a lot of uncertainty to any predictions of when or where avalanche activity will occur and how large the resulting avalanche will be. Fortunately heavy rain tends to keep most people home but footprints in the snow following other warm-ups suggest that some folks can't resist the urge to be out in the weather. If that person is you, this weekend may be a good time to at least avoid major avalanche paths.

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 or at the Harvard Cabin.