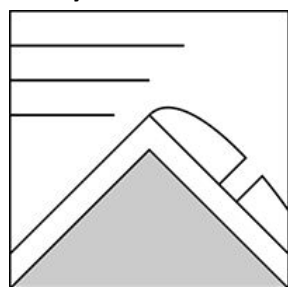


The Bottom Line

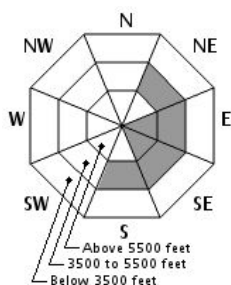
New snow and wind overnight have combined to build generally small wind slabs that you could trigger. A sharp drop in temperatures since warming and rain yesterday mean that all old snow is refrozen, and wind has likely scoured to this hard surface in many areas. A long, sliding fall which could easily be caused by a stumble or even a small avalanche is a key hazard to manage today. Bring and know how to use crampons and an ice axe to prevent a fall from happening, and consider the consequences of a fall or a small avalanche in any terrain you consider travelling in. All forecast areas have **LOW** avalanche danger. Watch for unstable snow on isolated terrain features, realizing that any drifts of new snow in the alpine are the avalanche problem.

Mountain Weather

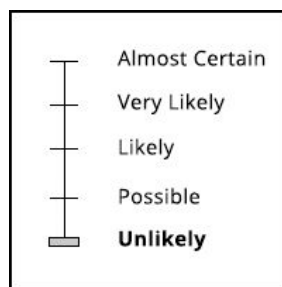
Freezing temperatures returned to the summit yesterday afternoon and the rest of our terrain followed suit overnight. This refreeze follows a period of warming that affected our upper elevation terrain for 30 hours, with our middle and lower elevations experiencing a slightly longer period of warming. Rainfall totals yesterday were approximately ½" to ¾". Precipitation transitioned to snow last night but totaled just one inch on the summit, with 3" at the Gray Knob snow plot but only a trace at Hermit Lake. Since snowfall began late yesterday, summit winds have increased from W at 30 mph to WNW at nearly 70 mph. We may receive another trace to 1" of snow this morning as precipitation tapers off. It's currently 6F on the summit and should remain so through the day under decreasing clouds, with NW wind around 70 mph. Our lowest elevation terrain may warm to just above freezing today. Tomorrow is forecast to be over 10 degrees warmer with few clouds and decreasing wind.

Primary Avalanche Problem


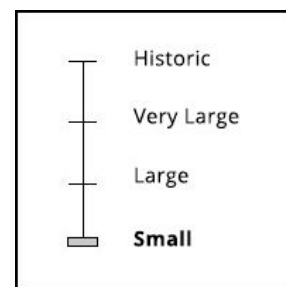
Wind Slab



Aspect/Elevation



Likelihood



Size

Following the refreeze last night, W and WNW wind has affected the approximately 1" of recent snow to build pockets of wind slab on the eastern half of the compass rose. These wind slabs should be small in size but reactive to a human trigger. Variable snowfall totals across the range mean that you may find larger wind slabs in places. Be sure to watch for unstable snow and acknowledge that you may be drawn to new, soft snow which is the avalanche problem.

Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion

Warming occurred over the weekend in all of our terrain, with middle and lower elevations experiencing several periods of warming late last week. Moisture penetrated through most, if not all, of the surface wind slabs of the past week which are above an older melt freeze crust. Last night's sharp drop in temperature has refrozen our surface snow and stabilized our snowpack. Avalanche problems today are limited to the small amount of new snow which has fallen on increasing westerly wind. Expect large areas scoured to this new and robust melt freeze crust with pockets of reactive wind slab. The Gray Knob snow plot, which is our highest elevation snow plot by 500', recorded notably more snow than either the summit or Hermit Lake. This variable snow accumulation across the range means that while we expect wind slabs to be quite small and easier to avoid, larger wind slabs may also be found.

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.