

The Bottom Line

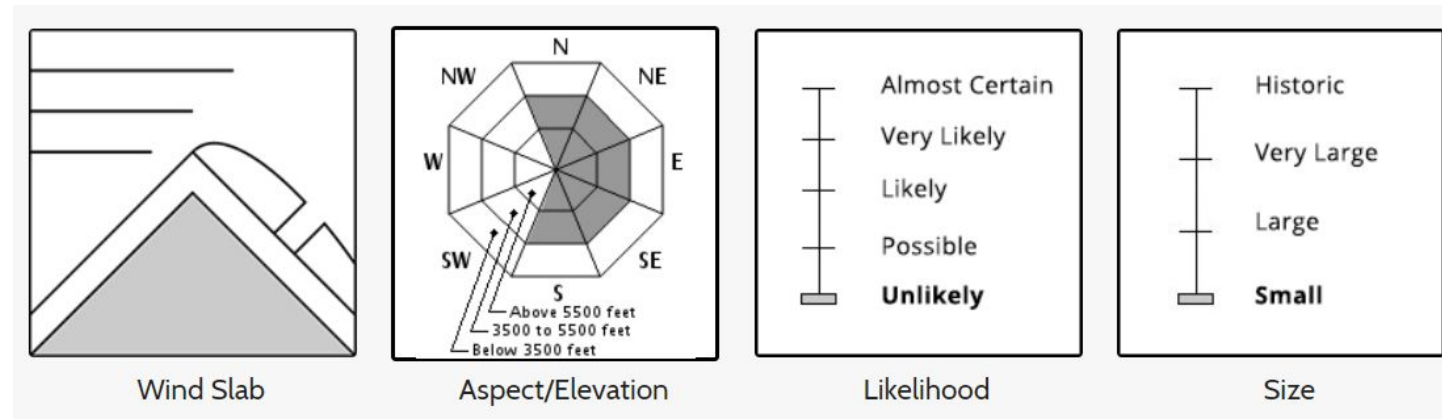
Warm rain this past weekend followed by two days of cold temperatures created a hard slick crust as our primary snow surface. While you may be able to find isolated and small pockets of wind slab from the .8" of new snow yesterday, long sliding falls on the refrozen snow surface is the greater concern. The avalanche danger is **LOW** today.

The term **Long Sliding Falls** is mentioned in this forecast from time to time when a wet snow surface refreezes. The significance and danger of a small stumble on seemingly benign terrain cannot be overstated. If you have not practiced self arrest with an ice axe you should. If you have practiced, know that the effectiveness of this skill is limited in the hard icy snow you'll encounter in the mountains today. Self arrest is a last resort and may only serve to slow you down on your way to the floor of the ravine. In these conditions, very careful movement is necessary to prevent a fall from happening in the first place. Put crampons on before slopes steepen and get your ice axe out and ready before you expect to need it.

Mountain Weather

Just under an inch of snow was recorded on the summit yesterday afternoon on a WSW wind and 1cm at the Harvard Cabin snow plot. Today we'll see temperatures in the upper teens F under cloudy skies with SW winds at 15 to 30 mph. Lingering moisture may result in afternoon snow showers: trace to less than an inch. Overnight, 1 to 3 inches of snow are possible as 30-35 mph SW wind shifts to the NW increasing to 50-70 mph. An additional inch of snow possible Wednesday morning, then 2 to 4 inches Wednesday night into Thursday.

Primary Avalanche Problem



You may be able to find small isolated pockets of wind slab today but should be sufficiently isolated in distribution to be easily avoided. If you are brave enough to be on skis today, you may be drawn to these smooth fresh snow wind slabs; keep in mind a small seemingly inconsequential pocket of new snow may trip you up and result in a high consequence sliding fall.

Looking forward, new snow tonight and the next few days will be affected by NW wind, likely resulting in increasing avalanche danger. Watch for small, isolated pockets of wind slabs becoming larger, thicker, more widespread and a more significant avalanche problem than we have today.

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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.