

The Bottom Line

Human triggered avalanches remain likely today in areas of wind drifted snow. The most likely places to trigger an avalanche today are on steep slopes and cross loaded gullies. Evaluate the snowpack carefully as you move through the terrain. Watch for signs of recent wind loading: smooth snow surface, pillows of new snow and deep sluff-pile aprons of snow at the bottom of steep gullies. Avalanche danger is **CONSIDERABLE**.

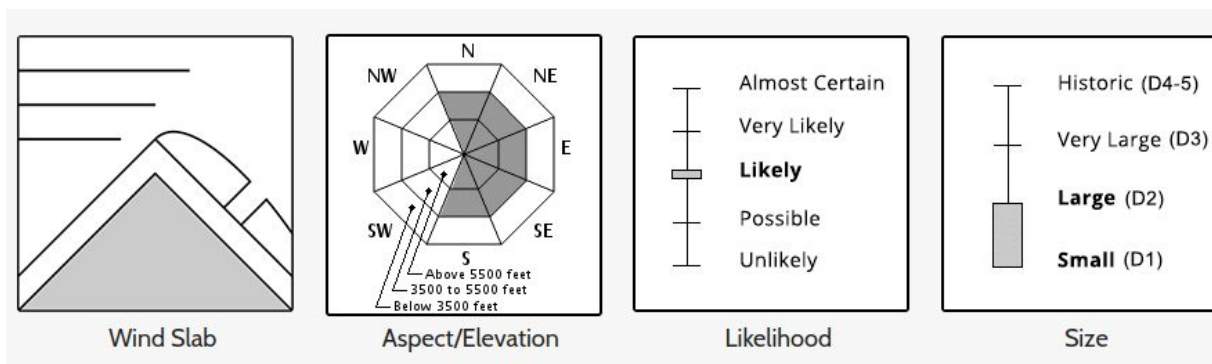
Mountain Weather

Yesterday, overnight light snow that began Sunday evening continued into the early afternoon for a storm total of 5.2" on the summit. Hermit Lake Snow Plot recorded 3.5" of 14% snow. During the hours of snowfall, a 50-60 mph SW wind transitioned to the W mid-morning and remained, finally transitioning NW in the early evening. Temperatures warmed to the teens F.

Today, temperatures will rise to the lower 20sF. SW wind at 20-35 mph will slowly shift W and increase to 45-60 mph. A trace to 2" of new snow is possible this afternoon & overnight. Tonight wind from the NW will increase to 65-85 with gusts reaching 100 mph.

Tomorrow, NW wind 65-85 will shift W and decrease to 45-60 mph. Trace to 1" new snow possible as morning snow showers.

Primary Avalanche Problem



Recent snow and wind has formed slabs that are likely sensitive to human triggers, and deep enough to bury a person. Instabilities are most likely to be found in steep slopes and cross loaded gullies above 3500'. Pay attention to surface textures and how "slabby" the snow feels and watch for shooting cracks underfoot as a red flag for sensitivity.

Forecast Discussion

Of the many factors used to determine the danger rating today, sensitivity to a human trigger was a sticking point in the discussion this morning. Looking back at the hourly records from the MWObs, we can see that the new snow was affected by 50-60 mph wind during almost the entire storm. Wind speeds directly influence the sensitivity of a wind slab; light winds will create a softer, more sensitive wind slab while strong winds will pack the snow particles down forming a less sensitive wind slab. Based on recorded wind speeds alone, we were leaning towards the slabs being more stubborn than reactive, however due to the recency of these new slabs, and observations late afternoon and this morning we concluded there's still a good chance that the slabs could be reactive to a human trigger. As always, please let us know what you find today by posting an observation.

Additional Information: The Sherburne and Gulf of Slides ski trails are snow covered to Pinkham.

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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.