



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Current Conditions in the High Peaks Region
Compiled on April 2, 2015

See the High Peaks Trail Information web page (www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9198.html)

Weather: This is the National Weather Service seven-day forecast for the Marcy Dam area of the High Peaks Wilderness on Thursday, April 2, 2015. Hikers & campers should expect and prepare for colder temperatures, stronger winds and more snow in higher elevations compared to the forecast. **Always check current forecasts before entering the backcountry as the weather forecast can change.** **National Weather Service Burlington:** <http://www.weather.gov/btv/>

- **Thursday Night:** Rain. Low around 38. Southwest wind 9 to 13 mph, with gusts as high as 28 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New precipitation amounts between a tenth and quarter of an inch possible.
- **Friday:** Rain likely, mainly before 11am. Partly sunny, with a high near 57. West wind 5 to 7 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%. New precipitation amounts of less than a tenth of an inch possible.
- **Friday Night:** Rain likely before 4am, then snow, possibly mixed with rain. Low around 25. Light and variable wind. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New snow accumulation of around an inch possible.
- **Saturday:** Snow, mainly before 3pm. High near 31. Northwest wind 10 to 14 mph, with gusts as high as 26 mph. Chance of precipitation is 80%. New snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches possible.
- **Saturday Night:** A 40 percent chance of snow showers after 3am. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 13. West wind 9 to 11 mph, with gusts as high as 24 mph.
- **Sunday:** A 40 percent chance of snow showers before 9am. Partly sunny, with a high near 29. West wind around 14 mph.
- **Sunday Night:** A 40 percent chance of snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 13. West wind 5 to 9 mph becoming calm after midnight.
- **Monday:** A chance of rain and snow showers. Partly sunny, with a high near 36. Calm wind becoming northwest around 5 mph in the afternoon. Chance of precipitation is 40%.
- **Monday Night:** A chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 25. Light and variable wind. Chance of precipitation is 40%.
- **Tuesday:** Rain and snow likely. Cloudy, with a high near 41. East wind 3 to 5 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
- **Tuesday Night:** Rain and snow likely. Cloudy, with a low around 24. Light northeast wind. Chance of precipitation is 60%.
- **Wednesday:** A chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 39. Northeast wind around 6 mph. Chance of precipitation is 50%.

BACKCOUNTRY CONDITIONS

Wilderness conditions can change suddenly. **Weather forecasts and conditions can and do change, check current weather conditions and short-term forecast before entering the backcountry.** Plan ahead - bring flashlight, first aid equipment, extra food, plenty of water and clothing. Always be prepared to spend an unplanned night in the woods.

Electronic Technology: Do not depend on electronic technology in the backcountry. Cell phone coverage is spotty at best and often non-existent. GPS signal can be poor under heavy tree cover. Batteries expire quickly in cold temperatures. Plan and prepare before entering the backcountry and carry a map & compass for navigation or at least as backup.

Late Winter Conditions: Days are becoming longer and temperatures are fluctuating above and below freezing. Temperatures are forecast to remain well above freezing Thursday through Friday night with rain overnight Thursday. Temperatures are expected to drop below freezing Saturday morning and remaining there throughout the weekend. Daytime temperatures above freezing will return on Monday. Dress and pack properly to avoid being cold & wet. Carry extra layers of non-cotton clothing. Put on and remove layers to keep comfortable. Wear an outer layer that is water & wind resistant.

Snowshoes & Traction Devices: Snowshoes are required in the High Peaks, and should be worn elsewhere, when temperatures are above freezing and the snowpack is soft. Use lubricants on snowshoes to prevent snow from clumping. Traction devices, including crampons, will be important footwear this weekend when temperatures drop below freezing. The use of snowshoes avoids "post-holing", eases travel, and prevents injuries.

Trail Conditions: Trails conditions are variable. Expect soft snow on trails when temperatures are above freezing and on sunny days. Trails will be hard and icy when temperatures are below freezing. Exposed bedrock on open, south-facing slopes may have no snow. Watch for ice and snow falling from exposed, ledge areas. Waters may be high and drainages may be flowing Friday through Saturday morning due to rains and snow melt. See **Snow Information** on next page.

Ice on Water: Slush and water are present on top of the ice on most waters. Ice has begun melting on streams and rivers. Avoid ice over or near running water, near inlets & outlets and near boathouses & docks – especially those with bubblers or other ice prevention devices.

Summits: Temperatures will be colder, winds will be stronger and snow will be deeper – especially where drifts form. Sight distance will be limited, sometimes significantly, when clouds cover the summits or in heavy falling and/or blowing snow.

Avoid Hypothermia: Stay dry and warm. Drink plenty of water, eat food and rest often.

Blowdown: Blowdown may be present on trails, especially lesser used secondary trails.

NOTICES

Snow Information

- The High Peaks received 8-10 inches of new snow between 3/28 & 3/30.
- Both snow and liquid precipitation is expected to fall over next few day, which can increase the load on the existing snowpack.
- Some spring conditions have been observed, especially on slopes that are receiving significant sun.
- Snow stake at the Marcy Dam is currently recording 30 inches and snow at the stake at Lake Colden is 39 inches.
- On Saturday 3/28 a pair of climbers triggered a wind slab avalanche in the upper end of the Trap Dike, in an area with a slope angle of approximately 30 degrees. Both climbers were partially buried, but were able to dig themselves out.
- This event highlights that even this late in the season, on moderate slope angles and relatively small snowfall amount slab formation is possible. Be aware of the spatial variability that can exist.
- If you are plan to travel in avalanche terrain be sure to:
 - Carry essential equipment – avalanche transceiver/beacon, shovel, & collapsible or ski-pole probe;
 - Dig test pits;
 - Remember the red flags;
 - Travel safely; and
 - Have a self-rescue plan and the tools to accomplish it.
- Just because you see a ski or boot track on an avalanche slope doesn't mean one cannot occur. Make your own decisions.

Corey's Road: The gate on Corey's Road is closed and the road will remain closed until the end of the spring mud season. Those seeking to access the Calkins Brook and Ward Brook Trails must park at the Raquette Falls Trailhead and traverse the 3 miles to the summer parking lot.

Clear Pond Gate: The Clear Pond Gate on the Elk Lake Road is closed and will remain closed until the end of the spring mud season. This will add 4 miles roundtrip for any excursions from the trailhead, plan accordingly.

South Meadow Road: The Town of North Elba has closed and barricaded South Meadow Road off the Adirondak Loj Road. The road will remain closed through the spring mud season.

Trap Dike: The Trap Dike is full of snow, considerably more time and effort is required to climb the dike.

Avalanche Pass Slide: The Avalanche Pass Slide is closed to public recreation of any type through the winter.

Lake Colden & Avalanche Lake: Avoid the area immediately around inlets and outlets.

Avalanche Lake Outlet: The bridge on Avalanche Lake Outlet is washed away. During low water rock hopping will be necessary to cross, during high waters crossing will require getting wet.

Marshall Herd Paths: The herd paths on Marshall do not lead to the summit. Those climbing these peaks should navigate with a map and compass rather than follow the paths created by others.

Hurricane Mountain Trail: The trail from the Route 9N trailhead has been rerouted to bypass areas flooded by beavers. The trail now extends 3.4 miles from the trailhead to the summit. The reroute and new footbridges were completed by the Student Conservation Association Adirondack Program.

Closed Campsite: The designated campsite on Big Slide Mountain Brook in Johns Brook Valley near the intersection with the Phelps Trail has been permanently closed due to site degradation. Other designated campsites are located across from the Howard Lean-to and just past Johns Brook Lodge. Signs on the hiking trail direct hikers to these sites.

Bradley Pond Trail: The first foot bridge on the Bradley Pond Trail has been dropped and is unusable. The stream can be forded /rock hopped most of time on the downstream side of the bridge site.

Northville-Placid Trail: The trail contains a large area of blowdown near the Seward Lean-to. A detour around the blowdown has been marked with pink flagging.