



Mt. Hood Climbing Conditions Report, 6/27/24:

Updated 6/28 to reflect a lack of snowfall 6/27.

A summer storm on Thursday, June 27th, brought mixed wintry precipitation prior to a few days of clear weather. No significant snowfall occurred and spring/summer hazards like long sliding falls and icefall remain key considerations for summit climbers. Watch the short-range weather forecasts for periods of wind the next few days, maybe some precipitation on Sunday, and enjoy an upper mountain that's holding excellent conditions for this time of year!

WEATHER NOTES: Typical summer weather this week changed to a storm day with mixed precipitation, clouds, and wind on Thursday. Mostly clear skies and light to moderate wind forecast Friday and Saturday might give way to increasing cloud cover, a little precipitation, and stronger wind into Sunday. Free air freezing levels should hold around 12,000', with upper mountain high temperatures in the mid-40's F, and potential for even warmer weather next week.

SNOW AND ROUTE CONDITIONS: Over a half inch of liquid precipitation at Timberline on Thursday, June 27th did not fall as snow on the upper mountain. Rime ice accumulation on westerly aspects had the greatest impact on snow surface conditions, which are now somewhat textured and rough in these areas. Many other upper mountain snow slopes continue to hold relatively smooth snow, while icefall and wet loose sluff channels developed in many gullies and under some ice cliffs over the last week. Skiers and snowboarders can still find excellent spring melt/freeze conditions on the smoother slopes.

The Old Chute area remains the preferred route options for most summit climbers. A large sluff channel and an open bergschrund makes the Pearly Gates likely out for the season after holding remarkably challenging conditions all year. A low traverse to access the Old Chute area from the Hogsback ridge, through Hot Rocks, avoids this open bergschrund and lessens your exposure to overhead hazards. Like the Pearly Gates, other gully climbs across the mountain are likely in poor condition or out for the season. More technical snow routes, like the Cooper Spur, should continue to hold good conditions.

MOUNTAIN HAZARDS: Regardless of the time of year, many hazards continue to pose significant threat to climbers.



Icefall and rockfall: Significant ice accumulations remain on the upper mountain, and it will eventually melt and fall this summer. While not a truly hot weekend, it's still warm, and that warming after new rime ice accumulation on Thursday could produce significant icefall. Snow melt continues to expose loose rock and increase rockfall from those melted-out areas. You can minimize your exposure to these overhead hazards by wearing a helmet, climbing early, and not lingering on slopes below ice cliffs or loose rock.



Long, sliding falls: Daytime thaw and overnight refreeze produces icy, firm snow that can easily allow a long, sliding fall on steep slopes. Such falls have been fatal on many mountains including Mt. Hood. Consider the consequence of a sliding fall and your ability to stay on your feet when approaching any steeper snow slopes. Crampons on stiff-soled mountaineering boots, an ice axe or two, and skills using them are crucial for any summit climb in the current conditions.



Climber congestion: Climbers above you can easily initiate icefall or rockfall, drop projectiles like water bottles, or take a sliding fall. You can typically reduce this hazard by climbing early when it's less crowded, choosing a less busy route variation, and generally minimizing you time in the fall line of other climbers on steep slopes.



Glacial features: Many crevasses opened significantly in the last week. If your plans include travel on glaciated terrain, consider this recent rapid opening and weak snow bridges as glacial features continue to open. South side climbers should know that while the bergschrund at the top of the Hogsback ridge, on the Coalman glacier, open and continuing to widen, it can be avoided by using the low traverse through Hot Rocks to access the Old Chute area.



Avalanches: Wet loose avalanches should continue to be on your radar as days heat up or during periods with poor overnight refreezes. Continue to carry a beacon, shovel, and probe if you plan on traveling in steep upper mountain terrain. The [Northwest Avalanche Center](#) does not issue forecasts in summer, but their website still provides valuable weather, observation, and planning information.

ACCESS AND PARKING: The Salmon River lot at the Timberline ski area is currently the primary point of access to the upper mountain. The Cloud Cap Road remains closed due to winter snow and the Tilly Jane ski trail is melted out to dirt.

PERMITS AND HUMAN WASTE PACK OUT: The [Mt. Hood Climbing Permit](#) is required for all travel above 9,500'. Wilderness permits are required year-round on the South Side climbing routes. Your 3-day climbing permit doubles as your wilderness permit.

Please carry a WAG bag (human waste pack out bag) and use it if you need to defecate while on the mountain. WAG bags are available free of charge at the Climbers' Registration near the entry to the Wy'East Day Lodge at Timberline.

Climbing Register forms are highly recommended. These forms are not checked to ensure that climbers have safely returned, but they provide rescuers valuable information if a rescue is initiated on your behalf.

-Ryan Matz, Climbing Ranger

REMEMBER: You are responsible for your safety. Those planning to climb should take all necessary equipment for self-rescue and extended stays on the mountain due to weather or incident. There are no emergency medical services available on the mountain. It is a remote location. Any help may be hours or days out, especially in situations where your location or weather would create an unsafe situation for rescuers. It is always advisable to leave your itinerary and estimated time of return with a third party. Climbers Registration is in the Wy'East Day Lodge at Timberline.