



## Avalanche Beacon Park AMC's Pinkham Notch Visitor Center and Joe Dodge Lodge

The Friends of Tuckerman Ravine, the US Forest Service Snow Rangers and a group from Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center have teamed up to bring and operate the only Beacon Park in the Northeast. AMC is excited to host the park on the campus of the AMC Pinkham Notch Visitor Center/Joe Doge Lodge. All backcountry adventurers are encouraged to practice and hone their beacon skills. Beacons should be tested on a regular basis before they are needed in an emergency. The park is free and open to the public during the winter seasons when there is ample snow.

- **What is an Avalanche Beacon?**  
*An avalanche beacon or avalanche transceiver is a worn electronic device that helps backcountry travelers locate a buried person who is also wearing a beacon. Beacons have a range of about 50 meters and only communicate with each other, not with cell towers, satellites, or RECCO devices. A beacon in "Send Mode" emits an electronic signal to help searchers locate the wearer if the wearer is buried in an avalanche. Beacons can also be set to "Search Mode," in which they stop sending their own signal and instead direct the wearer towards any beacon still in "Send Mode". Along with a shovel and a probe, beacons are considered essential equipment for travel in avalanche terrain.*
- **What is a Beacon Park?**  
*A Beacon Park is a set of targets buried under the snow that mimic the signal of a beacon in "Send Mode". A user of the park sets their own transceiver to "Search Mode" then seeks the targets. The search ends when the user strikes all active hidden targets through the snow with their probe. (The targets are 2x2' wooden boards—a successful probe strike will feel different than striking the ground.) A Control Box mounted nearby allows the user to remotely turn on the targets and to design the scenario they would like to practice—the park can simulate burials of between one and eight people. With each successful probe strike, the control box emits a tone.*
- **Where is the Beacon Park?**  
*The kiosk and hidden targets are located in the field behind Joe Dodge Lodge, just at the base of the John Sherburne Ski Trail (Sherbie).*
- **When is the Beacon Park available?**  
*The Beacon Park is available in winter when USFS Snow Rangers are active on Mount Washington. Depending on their workload, there may be weeks when it is unavailable. It cannot be used unless there is significant snow cover on the field. It is open at all hours and is free to the public.*
- **Can the Beacon Park be reserved?**  
*No, the park cannot be reserved, even by organized groups. If AMC Education Programs are also happening on the field, beacon park users should limit their searches to targets in the part of the field not being used for those programs.*
- **What does a person need in order to use the Beacon Park?**  
*They need their own avalanche beacon and probe. They do not need a shovel since the targets should not be dug up.*
- **Can AMC Staff teach me to use the Beacon Park?**  
*Staff can explain the operation of the beacon park but cannot teach actual avalanche rescue skills. These vital skills should be learned from a professional instructor, expert companions or by closely studying one of the quality publications we carry.*
- **What if the Beacon Park is malfunctioning?**  
*Any concerns should be brought to the attention of the Visitor Services Supervisor in the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center. Call 603-466-8116 to inquire if park is open.*