

Survey of Alaska's Beaches

In 2012 DEC contracted with Airborne Technologies, Inc. (ATI) to perform an aerial survey of marine debris along the Alaska coastline in the areas where apparent tsunami debris was expected or had already been observed.

Between July and October 2012, flying a C-185 fixed wing aircraft at altitudes of 500-1000 feet and using high resolution still cameras, ATI took more than 7000 aerial images from Cape Muzon to Tugidak Island and part of Bristol Bay to determine the impact of tsunami debris along the Alaskan coastline.

Each image was analyzed for debris density and keywords describing identifiable object were assigned. One and five mile segments of the coastline were classified according to debris impact, considering accumulation levels and critical debris types.

All the images taken during the 2012 aerial survey, and other images taken at ground level during numerous marine debris cleanups, are found on the DEC website under the [Alaska DEC Japan Tsunami Debris Survey map](#).

In 2014 ATI is updating the 2012 aerial survey by flying the same coastlines and adding coastlines missed during 2012 due to weather, funding, and time constraints. Comparing the 2012 and 2014 survey images will contribute to the understanding the movement of tsunami debris, improve predictions about future debris patterns, and assist in the planning of future debris removal operations.