



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention Preparedness and Response Program
SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SITREPS ARE DENOTED IN RED

Aero Air Plane Crash in Unalaska Bay

SITREP #: 2 and FINAL

SPILL #: 20259901601

TIME/DATE OF DISTRIBUTION: 1:00 pm on January 17, 2020

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP): Aero Air LLC

INCIDENT LOCATION: Unalaska Bay about 100 feet northwest of the end of the Unalaska runway
(Lat/Long 53.904022, -166.553060)

TIME/DATE OF SPILL: 8:00 am on January 16, 2020

HOW/WHEN SPILL WAS DISCOVERED AND REPORTED: The City of Unalaska initially reported the plane crash to the National Response Center (NRC) at 10:00 am on January 16, 2020. US Coast Guard (USCG) MSD Dutch Harbor personnel reported the pollution event to the Department of Environmental Conservation at 10:20 am on January 16, 2020. **The USCG reported all persons aboard were safely rescued.** There is a visible sheen on the water. **The sheen is estimated to be approximately 50 feet wide and 1,500 feet long.**

TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED: An unknown amount of Jet A fuel has been released at this time. The fuel capacity of a King Air B200 Aircraft is 545 gallons. The USCG reports there was an estimated 430-440 gallons of Jet A on board at the time of takeoff.

When the plane is recovered, the fuel volume remaining in the aircraft will be used to estimate the size of the release.

CAUSE OF SPILL: The plane crashed into the marine waters of Unalaska Bay shortly after takeoff from the Unalaska airport. The cause of the plane crash is unknown at this time.

SOURCE CONTROL: The plane has sunk below the water's surface into **what was initially estimated** 60-100 feet of water. The fuel vents are unsecured, leaving the source uncontrolled.

The plane has been located and is sitting in 50 feet of water. There is no effective location to place boom to contain the fuel. Divers will secure fuel vents as able.

RESPONSE ACTION: Vessel traffic has been rerouted away from the area of the crash by USCG personnel. Divers are unable to deploy to the sunken plane at this time. Wildlife have been observed in the area including **Steller's** eiders and emperor geese.



An overflight was conducted at 2:00 pm on January 16. The USCG took pictures of the sheen and estimated the size of the sheen visible on the surface of the water.

RESOURCES AT RISK OR AFFECTED: Unalaska Bay in the vicinity of the spill site supports several species listed under the Endangered Species Act likely to be present at this time, including: Western Distinct Population Segment (DPS) Steller sea lions (endangered) and Critical Habitat, Southwest Alaska DPS Northern sea otters (threatened) and Critical Habitat, and Steller's eiders (threatened). Other marine mammal species likely to be in the area at this time include harbor seals, Dall's porpoise, and harbor porpoise. Overwintering waterfowl and seabirds are also likely to be present. Unalaska Bay is considered Essential Fish Habitat for several species, including salmon, rockfish, flatfish, Pacific cod, pollock, and weathervane scallops. The spill site is a popular area for recreational rockfish and Chinook salmon fishing, but no fishing effort has been observed in the past week. No commercial or subsistence fishing efforts are currently expected in this area. Nearby lands are part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge.

In a wildlife observation report received January 16 from Department of Fish and Game (DFG), sea otters and various sea birds including harlequin ducks, glaucous gulls, cormorants, and a pigeon guillemot were observed in the vicinity of the spill. This wildlife was observed to be at least 2,000 feet from the spill and did not appear to be covered in fuel or affected by the fuel release.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: An overflight by helicopter is planned for 2:00 pm January 16 to assess the extent of the spill. The responsible party is working with a marine salvage contractor to raise the plane in the coming days, weather permitting.

The responsible party has contracted with Resolve Marine, who will be staging a barge and crane to recover the plane. The dive team has planned to deploy as early as January 18 to plug the fuel vents and prepare the aircraft to be raised, weather permitting.

WEATHER: January 16: 40°F, ESE winds 15 knots, seas <1 foot, rain and snow. High tide was at 10:33 am and the low tide is at 4:46 pm. The next high tide is at 9:37 pm.

January 17: 37°F, E winds 15-20 knots, seas <1 ft, rain and snow. High tide was at 11:01 am, low tide is at 5:45 pm. The next high tide is at 11:18 pm.

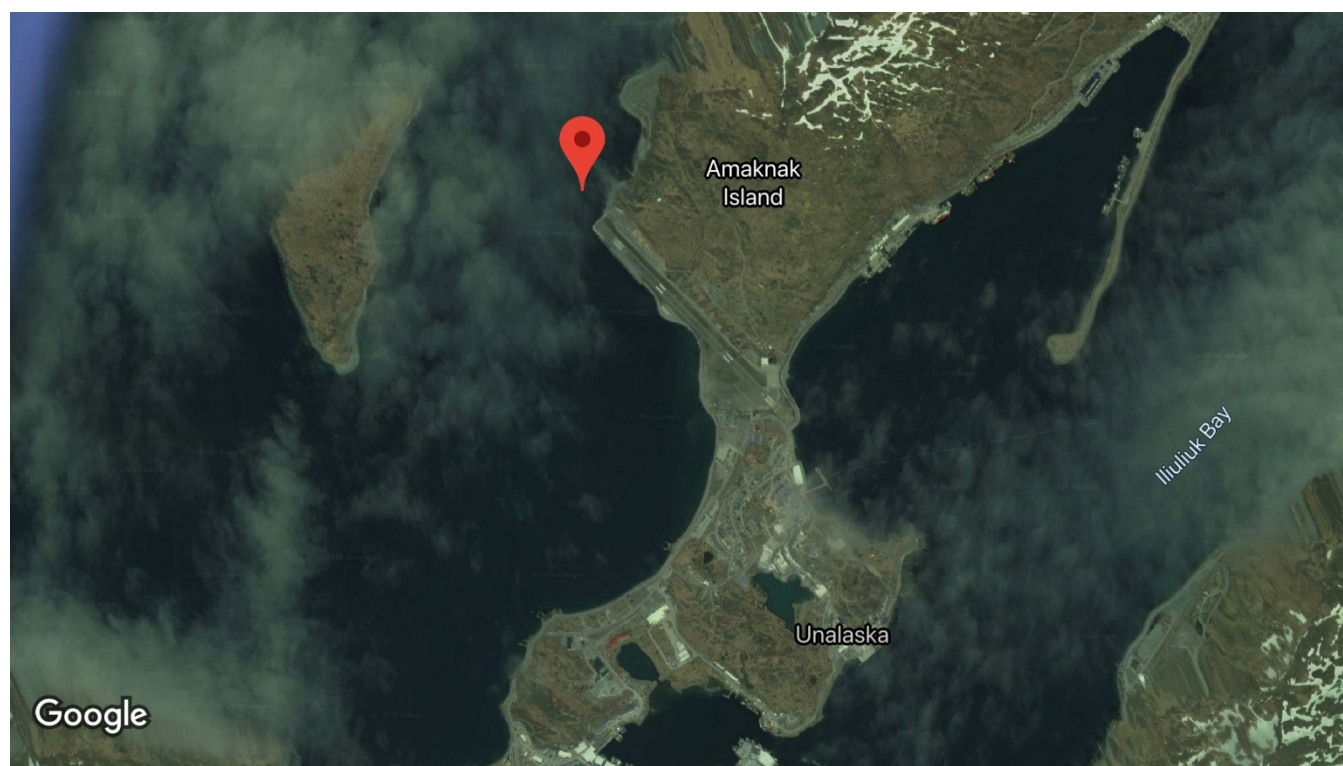
January 18: 35°F, N winds 10 knots, seas <1 ft, snow.

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT DISTRIBUTION: This is the final sitrep.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bernie Nowicki, Environmental Program Specialist, ADEC (907) 269-8149

<https://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/spill-information/response/2020/01-aero-air-plane-crash-unalaska-bay/>



Approximate location of crash site



Sheen visible from USCG overflight on January 16 (photo taken by USCG personnel)



Sheen visible from USCG overflight on January 16 (photo taken by USCG personnel)

AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST:

Please refer to the first SITREP, distributed January 16, 2020 for the agency/stakeholder notification list. The first SITREP can be found by the link in the **Additional Information** box above.