

Press Release:

Teton County Search and Rescue Helicopter Crashes

2/16/2012 2:27:37 PM

On February 15, at approximately 11:48 AM, Teton County Search & Rescue responded to a call for assistance to a snowmobile accident on the snow mobile trail system near Togwotee Mountain Lodge. The TCSO Search & Rescue helicopter was utilized to transport medical personnel to the scene. The information going in was that it was a probable one person fatality accident.

Initial investigation revealed the helicopter was hovering in search of a landing zone when it suddenly began to lose altitude prior to crash landing in a heavily treed area. The crash landing was partially viewed by parties on the ground who reported such to the Teton County Communications center.

Efforts were then started to get ground resources to the site, as well as any available aircraft in the area to conduct a fly over to confirm the crash. Approximately 45 minutes after the communications center lost contact with the helicopter, the pilot contacted the communications center and verified that the airship had in fact crash landed. The pilot stated that he was extremely disoriented and both of his passengers were injured. At approximately 2:15PM, a ground rescue team comprised of two Teton County Sheriff's deputies, two Togwotee Mountain Lodge guides, one Teton County Fire/EMS first responder, and one citizen, arrived at the crash site and began to administer aid to the injured parties. Approximately fifteen minutes later an additional ground rescue team arrived via snowmobile, followed shortly by two Bridger Teton National Forest Rangers and one Togwotee Mountain Lodge guide. Shortly thereafter a helicopter owned by Heli Express arrived with one Grand Teton National Park ranger/paramedic, one JH Fire/EMS paramedic, a heli ski guide and a TCSO Search and Rescue member. They immediately began caring for the injured. Approximately twenty minutes later, the helisking helicopter returned and transported one of the injured parties, the pilot, 62-year-old Ken Johnson, to a central command post area which had been set up in a turn off Hwy#26 one quarter of a mile west of Togwotee Mountain Lodge. Johnson was then transported by ground ambulance to the St. John's Hospital Medical Center where he was admitted and treated for his injuries.

Approximately ten minutes later, a helicopter owned by Sky Aviation manned by one Fremont County Search & Rescue member landed at the site and transported an additional passenger from the downed airship, 63-year-old Ray Shiver. Shriver, an almost 20 year veteran of the Teton County Search & Rescue Team was transported to the incident command staging area where he was pronounced dead by medical personnel.

At approximately 5:45 PM, the remaining crash victim, Jackson Hole Fire & EMS Battalion Chief and Search & Rescue member Mike Moyer, 44 years of age, was secured by on scene medical personnel and transported via snowmobile to the incident command area. Moyer was then transported via ground ambulance to the St. John's Medical Center where he was admitted and treated for his injuries.

Teton County Sheriff's Deputies and one Jackson Hole Fire/EMS first responder then moved to the scene of the deceased snowmobiler. Investigation at the scene revealed that the deceased snowmobiler, 53-year-old Steven Anderson, of Morris Minnesota, had struck a tree and suffered fatal injuries. He was separated from the rest of his party prior to the accident. This scene was processed and the deceased was transported to the incident command area.

The cause of the helicopter crash is under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board. The scene is presently secured by Bridger Teton National Forest Rangers and will remain so until the NTSB's investigation is complete.

Nothing To Follow

CONTACT:

Captain Tripp Wilson

██████████ Office

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