

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of:

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

GROUNDING/STRANDING OF THE FISH  
TENDER BARGE SM-3 IN NUSHAGAK BAY  
NEAR EKUK, ALASKA, ON AUGUST 30, 2020

\* Accident No.: DCA20FM027

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: JEREMIAH KLEJKA, IT Manager/Deckhand  
SM-3, Northline Seafoods

Via telephone

Tuesday,  
September 22, 2020

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

**Mr. Jeremiah C. S. Klejka, IT Manager, SM-3**

TAKEN ON

**September 22, 2020**

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
5	5	steamer	seiner
5	6	Beach	east
5	11	steam	sein
21	6	rate	rake
30	19	mast	math
30	20	Isn't	is

If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

NO CORRECTIONS NEED. \_\_\_\_\_  
Initials

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Person providing the above information

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person providing the above information

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPEARANCES:

██████████ Investigating Officer  
U.S. Coast Guard

R. JON FURUKAWA, Investigator in Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Jeremiah Klejka:

By CWO [REDACTED]

4

By Mr. Furukawa

38

I N T E R V I E W

(3:15 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. The time is 1515 Eastern Daylight Time  
4 on Tuesday, the 22nd of September 2020. And we're here to  
5 interview the IT manager, Mr. Jeremiah, middle name is Charles  
6 Steven, Klejka and --

7 MR. KLEJKA: Yeah. Klejka.

8 MR. FURUKAWA: Klejka. Okay. And this is a Coast Guard led  
9 investigation. And, Jeremiah, so do you acknowledge that this  
10 interview is being recorded?

11 MR. KLEJKA: Yeah. Yeah.

12 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

13 Okay. Go ahead, [REDACTED]

14 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

15 Jeremiah, again, thanks for calling in and taking time to  
16 talk to us.

## INTERVIEW OF JEREMIAH KLEJKA

17  
18 BY CWO [REDACTED]

19 Q. So all I know about you is from what Ben put on their one  
20 simple form that we have is just your name and that you're an IT  
21 manager with Northline Seafoods. So can we start first with your  
22 background in IT. How did that come to be?

23 A. Yeah. No problem. So I got a degree as an IT specialist  
24 from the University of Fairbanks while actually working for Pat  
25 Glaab, one of the -- he's the, I believe, chief of -- you know,

1 the president titles that him and Ben both have. I mix up which  
2 their positions are --

3 (Simultaneous speaking.)

4 Q. (Indiscernible).

5 A. Yeah. I was working for him on a steamer (ph.) in South  
6 Beach while I was going to school. So after I finished school, I  
7 started working for him and Ben at Northline Seafoods doing IT as  
8 well as being someone who does general line work and helping tie  
9 up boats and things of that nature with practical experience  
10 there.

11 Q. Okay. And that steam work you were doing, when was that?

12 A. That would have been from 2014 until 2017 when I started with  
13 Northline.

14 Q. Okay. That was my next question. So you started at  
15 Northline with your IT degree in 2017?

16 A. Yes. I graduated -- that was a little confusing on my  
17 graduation date, because I graduated in the fall -- I'm sorry, in  
18 the spring, but yes.

19 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

20 MR. FURUKAWA: Was that a bachelor's degree?

21 CWO [REDACTED] (Indiscernible).

22 MR. KLEJKA: And before that I did some work for Northline.  
23 So that was when I started (indiscernible) for them.

24 CWO [REDACTED] So full-time Northline in the fall of 2017?

25 MR. KLEJKA: Yes.

1 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

2 MR. FURUKAWA: Jeremiah, was that a bachelor's degree?

3 BY CWO [REDACTED]

4 Q. And so as the IT manager, the SM-3 is the vessel in  
5 particular that we're interested in. Did you have anything to do  
6 with that vessel while it was being modified in Sitka before it  
7 went into service as a processor?

8 A. Very much so. Mostly I put -- did help run some of the  
9 wiring, but I mostly did -- put a server onboard and  
10 communications equipment and things of that nature, you know. We  
11 have sort of an industrial automation program that we use  
12 throughout a lot of the barge's pumps and belts and things. And  
13 so most of my work dealt with that and dealt with the controls for  
14 that system.

15 Q. Okay. I had no idea the barge was so computerized. So then  
16 basically it ran itself, which is why you could get by with such a  
17 small crew?

18 A. Yeah. Correct. We needed a lot of it automated so, you  
19 know, you could control it from (indiscernible). And so we had a  
20 wireless network on it too, so you could walk around the barge  
21 with a touch pad and turn on pumps and belts and things as long as  
22 they were, you know, the right ones and stuff. It was a pretty  
23 cool system we'd been working on for a while. And so my job  
24 mostly onboard was to work on (indiscernible) machine system and  
25 to continuously try to make it to have less room for human error,

1 you know, to accidentally like dump all of our ice overboard or  
2 things like that.

3 Q. All right. Okay. So it sounds like an interesting project  
4 for something as simple as freezing fish. I had no idea. Okay.  
5 So you spent quite a bit of time getting the technical system in  
6 line. So the barge itself was fabricated or modified in Sitka; is  
7 that correct?

8 A. Yes. It got a new bottom from it, and during that time, the  
9 engine room got most of its equipment put in as well and the holds  
10 got put in the tank. A lot of work was done on it while it was in  
11 Sitka.

12 Q. And that's when they added the freezer on the main deck and  
13 then the accommodation, all the spaces above that was all during  
14 that same time period, was it not?

15 A. It was. The accommodations actually above the freezer were  
16 already onboard when the barge arrived in Sitka. There was a  
17 little bit of work done to those, but for the most part, those  
18 remained relatively the same.

19 Q. Okay. So the bulk of the modifications at Sitka then was a  
20 new bottom and the engineering equipment?

21 A. Yep, as well as putting new evaporators into the -- move to  
22 the freezer. So that was the majority of it. And then the back  
23 deck was worked on a little before leaving Sitka, and then more  
24 once it arrived, as well as I think they did some work on the top  
25 of the hull as well, but very little.



1 Q. Okay. And all of this would have been before the 2019  
2 season, right? That's -- this barge was actually in service two  
3 seasons?

4 A. Yes. Correct.

5 Q. Okay. Well, then when the barge left in 2019, did you go  
6 with it or did you stay back in Sitka and you can do what you  
7 needed to do remotely?

8 A. No. I went up with it. So obviously during the tow, it had  
9 to be, you know, towed by a -- without anyone onboard. So we sent  
10 it up and then we met it up in the bay and hooked it up to the  
11 same mooring buoy actually up there.

12 Q. Okay. And then the 2019 season pretty much went uneventful.  
13 So your -- IT-wise, everything worked the way you wanted it to,  
14 minus a few bugs?

15 A. Yep. Everything worked as well as we wanted it to. The one  
16 thing was with the satellite internet we had wasn't as good as we  
17 wanted. So this next -- this season, we had quite a bit more  
18 serious ones. We have better communication between the barge and  
19 (indiscernible).

20 Q. Okay. And then that 2019 season, were you out there the  
21 whole season?

22 A. Yep, all the way up until everything was put away and the  
23 barge was back on land.

24 Q. Okay. And were you primarily doing IT, or did you do some  
25 deck, general line handling type work?

1 A. I definitely did some general line handling type work,  
2 helping, you know, tie up the *Seamount*, which is our support  
3 vessel. I ended up being a deckhand on that pretty often.

4 Q. Okay. So then they pulled the barge out of the water in the  
5 fall of 2019, and then do you stay working at Northline throughout  
6 the winter, or is this a seasonal job for you?

7 A. It's -- I come on salary during the winter and I help out  
8 with things. There's not as much to do through the winter months.

9 Q. Okay. Okay.

10 A. So I do some work throughout the winter, but mostly I get  
11 time off.

12 Q. Okay. Well, that's nice. Okay. So now we're going -- now  
13 we're in the spring of 2020, and the barge is going to go back in  
14 the water. What involvement did you have with that, if any?

15 A. Relatively little. I was there for it. I was there with the  
16 team out on the support vessel after it went back in the water.  
17 But it was put back in by the company there in Naknek. I forget  
18 the name of them. They put it back in pretty uneventfully and  
19 smoothly, and then it was taken over and tied off to the anchor,  
20 which -- well, actually the anchoring system was on the back of  
21 the barge. So when we got the barge to where it needed to go, I  
22 kind of helped drop the anchors.

23 Q. Okay. So when they set *SM-3*, the mooring system was on the  
24 back of that and then they pushed it off the back of *SM-3*?

25 A. Yes. Correct.

1 Q. Okay. And when did -- they called it a holding barge. I  
2 don't know. Does that barge have a name or a number like SM-3?

3 A. It's the *Riverways-9* I believe.

4 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

5 MR. FURUKAWA: *Riverways-9*?

6 BY CWO [REDACTED]

7 Q. So it's not an SM-1 or SM-2?

8 A. Nope. It is not. I think it's -- yeah.

9 Q. Okay. So how does the company refer to it when you're  
10 talking about one barge to the other?

11 A. The holding barge. We call that one the holding barge for  
12 the SM-3.

13 Q. Okay. Just want to get the terms correct in case we're -- we  
14 all know when we're talking about the same barge. Okay. So SM-3  
15 gets put in the water. It goes out to the mooring location and  
16 drops the mooring buoy, and then the holding barge comes out or  
17 was it at the same time?

18 A. No. Then it comes out later when it's a good weather window.  
19 It comes out and we actually switch barge, because at that point,  
20 the SM-3 is on the mooring buoy because it dropped it. And then  
21 you switch off, so -- and the way we actually did that is we have  
22 a spare anchor on the SM-3 that we dropped in the water. We had  
23 added cable to it, so it had the 9-year (ph.) shift cable and a  
24 5,000-pound spare anchor. So we dropped that one and let the SM-3  
25 swing off, and then we hooked up the holding barge to the mooring

1 buoy. Then we had a second winch on the bow of the *SM-3* with a  
2 spectra line on it, and it has, you know, like 3,000 feet of  
3 spectra line plus on that. So we used that to pull us back to the  
4 other barge and hook up for our attachment system for the  
5 (indiscernible).

6 Q. Okay. And who was doing all of this? Is it Northline  
7 employees or is it contractors from another company?

8 A. It's contractors from another company brought over the barge,  
9 and then we did the pulling it together with the spectra. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. All right. So now both barges are connected together,  
11 and I've seen a drawing of that from -- what's your engineer's  
12 name in Sitka?

13 A. Drew.

14 Q. Right. And so -- yeah, he sent a design drawing of how  
15 that's arranged, so I have an idea of what that looks like. And  
16 now both barges connected to that. And now fishing season is  
17 starting. Do you recall about when that happened?

18 A. I'm bad at this. Everything sort of blurs together,  
19 especially because there's constantly fish predictions for the  
20 season. I want to say we started around August 25th with fish  
21 coming in -- I mean, I'm sorry -- what am I saying? June 25th.

22 Q. Yeah. I think August 25th is probably about the time you  
23 guys were wrapping up.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Right. Okay. We started, and is it reds is what you're

1 taking fish first?

2 A. Yep.

3 Q. Okay. And were you involved in the processing at all or are  
4 you just primarily a deckhand with (indiscernible) on each one and  
5 then IT to keep the barge equipment operating?

6 A. Part of the whole idea with being able to have that smaller  
7 crew is that, if you're onboard, you kind of end up involved with  
8 every project a little bit. So I definitely -- when we needed  
9 help in the processing room, it was expected that everyone onboard  
10 would be able to help process. So I did, I had to spend some time  
11 at the peak in the fish house helping out.

12 Q. Okay. Did you have a specific shift that worked, day, night,  
13 incoming, outgoing tides, that -- any of those, those out tides?

14 A. No. I sort of rotated my shift depending on if something in  
15 the IT department -- you know, kind of if the Wi-Fi was having  
16 problems or I needed to work on something, I tried to plan it when  
17 they wouldn't be doing -- I tried to plan my sleep so I could get  
18 sleep while they were doing processing and then work on anything  
19 like that while other people were sleeping or while there was a  
20 little bit of down time. So my schedule shifted between day and  
21 night throughout the season.

22 Q. Okay. And since you brought it up, how about your sleep  
23 schedule? Do you feel like you got an adequate amount for what  
24 you were doing? You know, I guess 6 hours in that kind of  
25 industry is a good night. But 8, you know, is medically ideal.

1 A. Right. I think, during the peak of the season, 6 hours was  
2 the goal. If I was simply processing fish, it wasn't too much of  
3 a worry. If I had to do a thinking problem, I actually would go  
4 get more sleep so that I could think about it, was kind of how it  
5 seemed to work.

6 Q. Yep. So --

7 A. It was a --

8 Q. -- for you personally, fatigue or burnout wasn't an issue?

9 A. No. I mean, I would say burnout definitely, but fatigue,  
10 I've been working on the scene there for so many years. I was  
11 used to operating long hours with little sleep.

12 Q. Right. So the industry, what fishermen do in the summertime  
13 when the fish are in.

14 A. Yep. Exactly.

15 Q. Okay. All right. So now the season's moving along.  
16 Everything's going good.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Were there any problems with mooring that you remember during  
19 this past 2020 season?

20 A. So I'm always -- I'm a worrier, so I always worry about  
21 things. So I was constantly going to the front, the holding  
22 barge, to see if we had rough weather, anything like that, to look  
23 at it. And it looked totally fine. We had -- we really didn't  
24 have any concerns about the mooring buoy breaking. Our fear was  
25 the chains that went to the mooring buoy, you know, maybe one of

1 those will break, or the lines will break.

2       So we had, you know, the chains doubled up around the -- it  
3 went around a cleat on the bow, and then we had a spectra line  
4 that we had going between where you're taking it, kind of safety  
5 line to another cleat, so it went -- a piece of the chain went to  
6 the cleat, so if the chain did break around that, it would  
7 probably catch there, too, as well as one more spare line on the  
8 mooring buoy.

9 Q.   Okay. And then, I know it's kind of hard to think about, but  
10 thinking back throughout the summer, do you remember any storms  
11 that were as bad, or near as bad as the one that finally broke the  
12 barge loose?

13 A.   No. We did not have anything near. We had rough days, but  
14 nothing like that night.

15 Q.   Okay. All right. So we're going through the season, and now  
16 we're coming up to that end of the season. What do you remember  
17 about that?

18 A.   Things wound down a lot. We had a lot less boats. We really  
19 had a lot more time for sleep and projects. So everybody was --  
20 and at that point, everyone was getting a full 8 hours towards the  
21 end, if not more. We actually were (indiscernible) complaints or  
22 processes that they weren't getting enough work to need everybody  
23 up there that wants to work as many hours as they can.

24 Q.   Right.

25 A.   So things were kind of -- had definitely wound down quite a

1 bit. And then we started debating at that point, when they put  
2 the barge up, so if we were having trouble finding a weather  
3 window to put it up because it has to go to Naknek, and that's a  
4 2-, 3-day trip. We need 2 or 3 days of good weather.

5 Q. Okay. And then so finally a window came up and they took the  
6 holding barge first?

7 A. Yes. And that one simply -- that one is 1 day away from  
8 town.

9 Q. Oh, that doesn't go to Naknek?

10 A. No. No, that one goes straight to Dillingham.

11 Q. Okay. So a day to go to Dillingham, but two to go to Naknek?

12 A. Yes. So like, kind of like one and a half to go to Naknek,  
13 so 2 days is definitely needed. Plus the tricky part with that  
14 one is, you know, we -- to haul the mooring, you need to use a  
15 crane. The winch is on the back deck of the SM-3, so we don't  
16 want to start hauling it until we have a good couple day of  
17 weather window, because it -- with how, last year, we experienced  
18 when we tried to pull anchors, they'd gotten so stuck in the mud  
19 down there. It had been such a good bottom that we had to use the  
20 tide to pull them out.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So we kind of figured that would probably -- it seemed like  
23 we hadn't moved at all during the season, that, that was going to  
24 be what we had to do again to get those anchors out of the mud.

25 Q. Right. Okay. All right. Do you recall approximately when



1 that holding barge was taken ashore?

2 A. I honestly do not. I could get the date from Drew, but I'm  
3 not sure what day that was.

4 Q. No, that's fine. How about the time from when the holding  
5 barge went ashore to the night of the storm. Was that a week,  
6 more than a week, less than a week?

7 A. I think it actually, after we got rid of the holding barge, I  
8 think it was around a week or 5 days afterwards. We didn't quite  
9 have the -- we had seen that weather coming up, and we wanted to  
10 have both of the barges moved, but that just wasn't going to be  
11 something that was possible. So we made a point to get the  
12 holding barge put up, because the *SM-3* will ride even better  
13 without, you know, having that connection between the two barges.  
14 Just having one on the mooring buoy we thought was probably the  
15 best idea.

16 Q. All right. Okay. All right. So now the holding barge is  
17 gone. *SM-3* is back on the mooring buoy. Now it's the end of  
18 August and it's the -- you said you knew that storm was coming?  
19 Do you recall how far in advance that you were made aware of it or  
20 somebody started tracking it?

21 A. We were trying to watch the weather pretty well, so we might  
22 have -- and that storm system, we were having trouble figuring if  
23 it was going to hit us or not. It looked like, for a while there,  
24 that it was going to pass by us from what we could tell looking at  
25 the wind app. Looking at -- you know, we were trying to -- so we

1 were trying to debate whether or not we were going to get the  
2 winds and what direction they would come from, because the  
3 direction they came from really affected the waves and things like  
4 that as well.

5 We had a sandbar kind of on one side of us that would offer  
6 us quite a bit of protection from the waves when it was showing,  
7 as long as they were coming from the right direction. So we -- I  
8 think we had been tracking it for about a week at that point. And  
9 it went between looking like it would miss us to dying down to, as  
10 it was leading up to the actual, probably a day or two out, it  
11 looked like it was still even going to hit us for sure. And the  
12 intensity that it was going to hit us with had continued to  
13 increase.

14 Q. Okay. And by that time, when did you go down to the six  
15 people that were left on the barge? Had they already gone because  
16 operations just allowed it, or did they go because you knew the  
17 storm was coming and you wanted to minimize the people?

18 A. They had already gone because operations could allow it. So  
19 everybody else had left because there just wasn't -- once the  
20 holding barge goes, there is -- you know, you can't process  
21 anymore fish at that point. And the barge, it can -- pretty much,  
22 (indiscernible) besides you know, one maintenance, one or two  
23 maintenance people can handle any maintenance. So I guess people  
24 handle lines and that's about it, for anything that's needed. So  
25 that's about where we were at is that we didn't have any demand

1 for anything. So we had the six of us onboard, and then we  
2 actually had two other people, Rosie and Bill, were on the support  
3 vessel, the *Seamount*. So they were still around with the *Seamount*  
4 for support.

5 Q. Okay. Did they ride out the storm next to you, or did they  
6 take the *Seamount* back to port?

7 A. No. They took the *Seamount* back to port. We didn't have a  
8 good way of them to be tied off to us in that kind of weather.  
9 And we just thought, you know, having another vessel out in  
10 something so nasty, it didn't quite make sense. At that point, we  
11 were very -- we felt pretty confident that we were going to be  
12 able to stay our mooring through it.

13 Q. Right. Okay. Okay. So now it's the night of the storm.  
14 What do you remember about that?

15 A. So they -- kind of through the day leading up to it, we sent  
16 the *Seamount* off. The weather just kind of continued to gradually  
17 pickup throughout the day and into the start of the night. And,  
18 as it did, we had things that hadn't happened (indiscernible). We  
19 had like the fridge and the stove, which all seemed very secure,  
20 started to move a little bit, so then we had to go secure those  
21 down. Things that normally fall off the shelves, fell off the  
22 shelves, so we had to get those secured. It just kind of --  
23 things that we hadn't experienced during the season, we started to  
24 experience. So it was just clearly kind of, right off the bat,  
25 rougher than anything we've been in out there.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And then so we all -- we really at that point -- you know, we  
3 had lots of clean up from the few projects that we could do, but  
4 there was no point in trying to do them with it being as rough as  
5 it was. Things were sliding around in the fish house. And we had  
6 laid down most of the carts that we put fish on. And we were  
7 really just mostly hanging out in the galley, kind of watching the  
8 waves come over the bow.

9 We could see the mooring buoy throughout the day and to --  
10 you know, as it got darker, and it seemed to be riding just fine  
11 next to us. So our moor -- our concern wasn't so much as the  
12 mooring buoy the chain would even break. At that point, we were  
13 curious if it would -- if we'd drag anchor at all because it was  
14 so rough. We have two 5,000-pound anchors on the bottom with a  
15 couple shots of chains between them going together and then coming  
16 up to the mooring buoy.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But they seemed to be pretty stable. And that was good. We  
19 actually turned off -- we have a main generator on the deck there,  
20 and we turned that one off and we turned on the one in the engine  
21 room, because so much water was coming over the bow that we were a  
22 little bit worried about it hurting that generator.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Yeah. And then I can -- that's pretty much of what I  
25 remember from events leading up to it. Do you want me to go into

1 what happened after that point now when --

2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 Q. Well, but I'm tracking with you so far. Sure, keep going.

4 A. Then we were -- I was in the rec room with Zack and a couple  
5 of the rest of the crew. I think Tessa was one of the six  
6 onboard, and she was sleeping at this point in time. She's a  
7 pretty sound sleeper, because I couldn't sleep with all the kind  
8 of rocking around we were doing. And then Pat walks by me and  
9 said -- and turns to me and says, you know, we're off our mooring  
10 buoy.

11 And at that point, not knowing how, but we did have kind of  
12 an emergency procedure for if anything like this ever happened.  
13 So he heads down, and I follow him. I start the hydraulics for  
14 the boat from -- we can start them on one of the touchscreens, so  
15 I start the hydraulics. I follow him down and we drop our -- we  
16 have that spare anchor on the back deck with the 900 feet of  
17 cable. And we went out as much scope as possible, it's pretty  
18 immediately coming off. So that anchor goes down, and we don't  
19 slow down our movement towards shore at all. We do swing around,  
20 so now we're facing stern into the waves, but we don't appear to  
21 be stopping.

22 Q. Okay. Let's all explain, there's an anchor that you drop off  
23 that came off of the stern?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. Near on the bow was where we had the -- up on the bow we have  
2 that winch with a bunch of spectra for attaching between the  
3 barges, and we can put an anchor off that if we want. But we  
4 always have an emergency anchor hanging off the stern.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Both, yeah, both sides have a pretty good rate, so they're  
7 about the same. There is a kind of a fin on the stern of the  
8 barge, but it's -- besides that, they're all totally the same.

9 Q. Okay. So you dropped the --

10 A. So we dropped that.

11 Q. Yep. Drop anchor.

12 A. It didn't seem to do anything. I'm not sure if it just  
13 couldn't catch in the mud. So we had as much scope out as we  
14 could possibly put out with that cable. We had another spare  
15 5,000-pound anchor that it's tied up and hanging off the stern.  
16 So what we did with that one was we picked it up with the crane,  
17 because we thought maybe if we could just get -- you know, we're  
18 worried about the scope. They were just pulling up too much on  
19 the anchor still even with all the scope we let out, so if we  
20 could get it to pull more straight across the bottom, maybe it'll  
21 dig in and stop us.

22 And so we got the other anchor over with the cranes and we  
23 flipped it, we shackled it onto the cable with I think a 2-inch  
24 shackle, and we dropped it down the cable with the goal being to  
25 get the cable to sit straighter on the bottom hoping that, that

1 one -- that, that anchor worked its way down as well. Because at  
2 this point we had -- well, we weren't slowing at all, so we really  
3 -- not a lot of ideas since that (indiscernible) wasn't working.  
4 So we dropped that down there, and there was still no change, and  
5 then the -- then we ran up on shore.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. When we hit --

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 Q. Well, it was (indiscernible) anyway. So both anchors were on  
10 the same cable?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. All right. So now the barge is going up on the beach.  
13 Do you have any idea what time this is?

14 A. And again, I -- my memory is worn out. So I think this  
15 was -- I think we went up on the beach at 10 at night.

16 Q. About 10?

17 A. So we were -- when we hit the beach, which we kind of all got  
18 ready to kind of brace for impact with it, but it really wasn't --  
19 the actual hitting of the beach wasn't any worse than what  
20 everything had been. So it was kind of -- once we set on it, the  
21 waves started hitting us, and the barge had no give to it at all  
22 that something out -- that we couldn't kind of ride it out. You  
23 know, we were against a hard place, and when the waves would hit  
24 us, they hit and the whole barge would shudder every time they hit  
25 us.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So --

3 Q. Did the barge go aground, and the waves did all the damage  
4 while the barge was stationary? Or did the barge (indiscernible)  
5 up and down in the surf until the tide went out, and that's what  
6 destroyed the upper deck?

7 A. We seemed -- once we hit, we seemed to not be able to -- it  
8 seemed like the barge was kind of not coming back off the shore.  
9 Because look to the side and you could see the waves going up  
10 passed us all the way up the beach and then coming back down, and  
11 I think they were lifting the barge a tiny bit. So through most  
12 of it seemed like the impact of the waves was hitting the barge  
13 and then just kind of going into everything rather than us going  
14 up and down with them.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. That was my take on it. It was hard to tell for sure  
17 because, I mean, it was pitch black out at that point.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. We could only see the waves going at a -- right before they  
20 would hit us and then as they went up the shore as well.

21 Q. Okay. And when you went out on deck, were you wearing any  
22 kind of PFD or your immersion suits or exposure suit, or any of  
23 that kind of stuff?

24 A. Yes. As we went down, I grabbed the PFD and Pat did too. We  
25 have a -- right before you leave the room, there's PFDs right



1 there.

2 Q. Okay. Backup just a little bit. You said there was  
3 emergency procedures that you followed. Were those posted  
4 somewhere or is that something that you had just talked about  
5 during like crew meetings?

6 A. So for the dropping of the anchor, that was kind of the way  
7 most of our plans worked. A lot of the people had come up through  
8 the summer don't have any practical line experience and things  
9 like that, so for our emergency procedures, most of the crew is to  
10 go, you know, get their survival suits when they hear the general  
11 alarm, and then they kind of stand by.

12 Q. Right.

13 A. And so the anchor dropping was something we had talked about  
14 within kind of the upper level. So that would have been me, Pat,  
15 and Zack. And in the emergency, we'll try to go do things to, you  
16 know, keep the barge safe and everybody else's priority is to just  
17 kind of keep themselves safe.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. So at the point of the barge coming loose, we hadn't  
20 triggered the general alarm. So at that point, and we had talked  
21 about this as a crew before the storm kind of hit is that, even if  
22 we came -- and this is one of the fear of us dragging anchor: even  
23 if we were dragging anchor, nobody's in any immediate danger,  
24 because the barge would simply float. Even if it floats out to  
25 sea, that's okay, because so long as it's -- you know, we're not

1 in any danger. If it looks like we're in danger of sinking,  
2 that's a different story compared to just floating around.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. So we talked about that. And everybody was kind of wondering  
5 what we were doing as far as dropping the emergency anchor. So me  
6 and Pat put on lifejackets and went down there and dropped that  
7 anchor.

8 Q. Okay. How about drills in general? Did they do them  
9 throughout the season when you were out there regularly?

10 A. We ran drills with everybody at the -- when we do the safety  
11 briefings with everybody at the start of the season in depth and  
12 had them all don their survival suits and kind of walk through,  
13 you know, fire, flooding, you know, man overboard, anything that  
14 we thought could happen during the season, and walked through the  
15 procedure for going out to the holding barge.

16 During the season, we had plans to run a drill, and we kind  
17 of ended up running a drill because we had a mini-fire onboard.  
18 It was a good test of the emergency procedures we had put -- and  
19 this was -- the fire happened, you know, in July. So we hadn't  
20 run a drill during August, but we gave everyone an orientation in  
21 June, and then we had a small -- somebody dropped a cigarette, so  
22 there was just really smoke coming from part of the house. And so  
23 we tripped the general alarm and had everybody go to kind of  
24 designated stations, which was everybody goes across -- during the  
25 season, everyone goes to the holding barge because that's -- in

1 the event of a fire or anything like that, that's the safest place  
2 to be. It has the *Seamount* tied up to it, and it's kind of the  
3 spot.

4 So we ran, we did that, and we went, okay, that kind of  
5 worked in a good drill. And then we talked about that within  
6 management for kind of what we could have done better amongst  
7 ourselves. But it seemed like we got a good idea that everybody  
8 listened really well and went to their station, so that was good.

9 Q. Okay. Yeah. That's good. All right. So go on. Sorry to  
10 get you sidetracked there for a second, but I had that question in  
11 the back of my mind. I wanted to ask before I forgot. Okay. So  
12 let's go back to, now the barge is on the beach. Do you remember  
13 which side of the barge was closer to shore?

14 A. Yes. That would have been the starboard side.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. The starboard side is up against shore. We had put dock  
17 sections on top of the barge on the housing up there just as we  
18 had done last year. We have a floating dock that we put out, and  
19 the dock sections had all -- most of them had fallen off and were  
20 now in the water next to us going up on the shore and then coming  
21 back and smashing into the barge.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. Okay. Yeah. So the -- we kind of went back up into the  
24 house. When we went back up to the house immediately after  
25 hitting shore, and we're kind of like, okay, well, this is where

1 we're at. And then we started to notice that it seemed like that,  
2 yes, something about, you know, how we were was causing the  
3 housing to falling apart in a way we hadn't anticipated.

4 Q. Okay. Was that a slow crumbling of the superstructure? Was  
5 it real loud, like the whole barge was falling apart?

6 A. At that point, it was real slow crumbing. If the waves would  
7 hit, you know, things were shifting. But you could see, you know,  
8 dust was coming off the walls and they were kind of shifting ever  
9 so slightly. At that point, we didn't -- at that point, even we  
10 didn't think the superstructure would fail. And we seemed to be  
11 pretty solid now on shore at this point, as well. We didn't think  
12 it was going sliding back out at all.

13 So we said, all right. You know, like we -- I went to get  
14 Tessa up. Everyone was already -- when me and Pat had gone down  
15 to do the anchors, I think Zack and everybody else put on rain  
16 gear and float coats mostly because -- not survival suits because  
17 we didn't think that we were going to end up in the water at this  
18 point, but more as a ways if they needed to do something on the  
19 back deck to help out, they could.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So then that was everybody who was in the rec room. I went  
22 and got Tessa and had her get into a rain jacket and a life coat  
23 on. And we all kind of gathered up. And then we had talked about  
24 it. And Pat decided, yeah, there was maybe a possibility that the  
25 housing could come apart, so we should all move to somewhere safe,

1 and the only safe location at that point would then be in the  
2 hold.

3 Q. Okay. So you didn't -- the crew didn't go down into hold  
4 until after the barge had already gone aground?

5 A. Yes. Correct.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So then we all went down into the hold. At that point, I had  
8 a free moment because things were kind of -- I mean, not calm but,  
9 you know, there was nothing for any of us, our hands to do. There  
10 was nothing to grab or do.

11 So I messaged -- I sent a message to both Ben and Drew, kind  
12 of informing them of where we were at that point in time, letting  
13 them know that I was not sure if we had communications if the  
14 housing did fall because, you know, it would probably take out  
15 radios and things, but that we seemed to be in a safe spot and  
16 that I would check back in with them as soon as I had a way to.  
17 But also so that they were aware that, hey, if anything, if you  
18 don't hear back from me, you should get things going in the  
19 emergency response category.

20 Q. Do you remember about what time that was?

21 A. No. I might actually even be able to go through my phone and  
22 get you a time if you want. I think that was around 11:30 at this  
23 point. So everything had happened, we went from our mooring to  
24 shore within a half hour of it occurring. And then the rest of  
25 it, you know, didn't take very long at all. So it all occurred

1 within like an hour and a half.

2 Q. From the time you broke loose to the time it was pretty much  
3 over and the barge was hard ground?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. All right. So now you sent the message and it's  
6 becoming daybreak, and where did you go from there?

7 A. Well, so at that point, it's like 11:30 at night at that  
8 point. So we're kind of down, and I had sent out the message.  
9 And then at that point, Pat is checking the engine room, and he  
10 finds that we are -- that the freezer unit that covers the engine  
11 room has broken off, and now water is coming into the engine room  
12 through that every time a wave comes over. So at that point, now  
13 the house -- and then as he kind of finds that out, the housing  
14 and everything does seem to be shifting to a degree where we are  
15 nervous to come out of the hold, because we want to make sure that  
16 we're not above deck if anything does fall.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. So Pat comes and kind of -- Pat does -- turns off the  
19 generator because now the generator's in a spot where it's getting  
20 water all in it, as well as, you know, all the control panels are  
21 like sealed for water resistance, but they're not made to have  
22 water, resting water on them, and neither is the generator.

23 Q. Right, come with it.

24 A. Yeah. Exactly. And so we, then worrying about, you know,  
25 making things more dangerous by having the generator running and

1 having electricity, you know, it may start a fire or just getting  
2 someone hurt with the electricity, we decided to shut off the  
3 generator. So we shut off the generator.

4 Now we're kind of in the dark, and then we decide to all sit  
5 in the middle hold there and wait until daylight to -- and not  
6 until daylight necessarily, but until the tide goes out, which it  
7 will go out at like -- high tide was at like 2:30. So we had to  
8 wait until high tide came and went for the waves to stop pounding  
9 into us or for the housing to stop coming apart.

10 Q. Okay. (Indiscernible).

11 A. Yep. And then we closed the watertight hatches that we had  
12 in between each of the holds, and we all hung out in the -- we've  
13 got Bay 1 at the engine room. Bay 2 is a fish tank hold. We hung  
14 out in Bay 3.

15 Q. Okay. Which is -- what's in Bay 3?

16 A. Bay 3 again is a fish tank. We didn't hang out in Bay 4  
17 because there were shelves and tanks and things in there that Pat  
18 was -- we were aware that the barge couldn't roll, as like get  
19 into a roll because when it's been towed up, you know, the mast  
20 isn't done on what it would take to roll a barge.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. And just the center of weight was so darn well on the thing,  
23 but kind of being kind of -- I think because we all had our  
24 adrenaline rolling, as the house kind of came apart above us, it  
25 kind of sloughed off to the side of us. And being kind of onshore

1 and having half of us floating and the other half securely stuck  
2 in the mud, it was enough to make it seem like we had a pretty  
3 serious list going. So we had -- you know, at this point a lot of  
4 things had happened that we didn't think could happen, so we  
5 decided to move into Bay 3 in case it did roll, then we would be  
6 in a spot where nothing could fall on us, because there's nothing  
7 loose and heavy within Bay 3.

8 Q. Okay. That makes sense.

9 A. So we went into there. We had, you know, a couple different  
10 ways that we could get out in the eventuality that it rolled, as  
11 well as we had let people know that we were out there. So since  
12 we didn't have a fear of the barge going underwater at that point,  
13 since it was securely on deck, and since the hull and everything  
14 seemed to be holding just fine our main concerns with that being a  
15 danger.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. So we went into there and then we waited, and we just sat in  
18 there, staying in the dark and listen to the barge fall apart  
19 above us, which at some point the noises did change to it even  
20 more sounded like it was tearing itself apart. And then we were  
21 down there until daybreak, when we all came out of the hold and  
22 surveyed the damage.

23 Q. Okay. So now you're on the main deck at daybreak. How did  
24 you get off of the barge?

25 A. Well, it's got ladders down the side that go to where the



1 swimming dock was. And on the side that was closest to shore, it  
2 also had one of these big -- the inflatable bags that we use to  
3 hold the barge up on the shore. We had -- with COVID, we had  
4 decided that those were a great way to keep kind of separation  
5 between us and the fishermen this season, so we put those on the  
6 sides of the floating dock. And they are huge rubber inflated  
7 bags that the the boats can pull up to. They kind of act as a  
8 safe buoy. And once we pulled the float, we pulled the float dock  
9 through the season.

10 But we actually kept the bags, because the bags are actually  
11 -- they ended up being a great way for the *Seamount* to tie up to  
12 us and ride out, you know, worse weather so they can bounce off  
13 that buoy and have more give. So we left that tied up on the  
14 side. So we had a ladder down and then we had this little -- this  
15 big buoy bag still on the side, still inflated so you could kind  
16 of step on and step off of it onto shore.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And at that point -- what was that?

19 Q. Well, actually that was convenient of that being in this  
20 location.

21 A. Yeah, it did, it worked out great.

22 Q. And then?

23 A. And at that point, Ben had sent someone out from the village  
24 of Ekuk to check on us because, you know, with my message, he was  
25 obviously concerned.

1 Q. Right.

2 A. So he sent out a call with a fisherman. He drove down the  
3 beach and he stopped, kind of, you know, checked on us. We told  
4 him everybody was okay and fine. And then he -- we decided, you  
5 know, we'll send two people in with him right away, which we sent  
6 Zack and Victoria, and then the rest of us kind of tried to remove  
7 some water in the engine room. We thought maybe, you know, stuff  
8 in there was still salvageable. So we pumped out the immediate  
9 water that was good. Yeah.

10 There was -- at that point, there didn't appear to be any oil  
11 or anything to that effect in the hull or in the water that was  
12 floating around. But we had quite a few oil soaks, but we keep  
13 all our spare oil soaks in the engine room, which is bags and bags  
14 of them. They were all floating around, so -- and it was not  
15 intentional but probably helped contain anything that may have  
16 been there that shouldn't have been at that point.

17 And we pumped it down a little, but then we left probably 3  
18 or 4 feet of water, because at that point, there was a lot of  
19 debris from like the flooring that had been smashed apart in  
20 there, because that had kind of gotten enough water entering the  
21 float things and they had kind of floated around, smashed into  
22 things, broken things. And so we were like, okay, that's probably  
23 the best we can do with what we've got. So we left that, and we  
24 disembarked, because they came back and picked us all up.

25 Q. So then what did you use to pump with if you had no power?

1 Did you have hand pumps?

2 A. We had a Honda pump. It had been near the fish house but --  
3 so everything had collapsed kind of on top of it. It had been  
4 something we debated when we went down to the hold. When we got  
5 into Bay 3, we debated going and getting that pump and putting it  
6 in the engine room and pumping over the engine room as things were  
7 occurring. But within the fish house we weren't sure that there  
8 was a way to safely get it without risking being in the fish house  
9 while the building collapsed on top of it.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. And we decided that, that was probably, you know, trying to  
12 save equipment for risking life, which is not worth it at that  
13 point.

14 Q. Right, (indiscernible).

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 A. Yeah. In the morning though, it had been kind of at a corner  
17 of the fish house. So it was actually visible enough to pull out  
18 and start.

19 Q. Okay. That makes sense. After all of this, the crane had  
20 broken up and was in the sand. Do you know when that broke off?  
21 Was it part of the wave action smashing during the night, or was  
22 it part of the combination sloughing over that broke this from the  
23 deck? Any idea how that broke off?

24 A. No idea. We were -- like that was a shocking sight to see,  
25 but yeah, somehow it came off and it fell down in front of the

1 barge, too. My best guess is that it did come off as the housing  
2 kind of sloughed off, and it just pulled on that crane and ripped  
3 it free. Yeah. It was a pretty interesting and odd sight.

4 Q. I bet. Okay. And you said nobody was injured. Has anybody  
5 been to any kind of medical care since?

6 A. I don't believe so. Everybody walked themselves off of the  
7 barge, and nobody was up in the housing when anything collapsed.

8 Q. Okay. And Tessa, she slept through the whole thing?

9 A. She slept through the going ashore part of it, so yeah. And  
10 she came relatively -- I mean, the big perspective like, it didn't  
11 -- the weather was so bad, it didn't seem like much had changed  
12 even when we hit shore. The waves were just a little bit harder  
13 at that point, and it just didn't settle up on the water. But she  
14 -- I think she thought that, you know, things had gotten worse  
15 out, and that was about it.

16 Q. Well, okay. So after you got to Ekuk, what -- where did you  
17 go from there? Everybody go in separate directions, or did you  
18 muster back in Dillingham or in Sitka? How did it all finally  
19 come to an end?

20 A. We stayed there after that night, everybody got warm, got  
21 good food. And then we kind of went back to the barge. We  
22 cleaned up the beach by putting anything that we could back on the  
23 barge that looked like it would immediately float away. Zack and  
24 me went into the housing and grabbed people's personal belongings  
25 and, you know, that we felt were safe to get.

1           The rooms were definitely were no longer accessible, like  
2 where like the galley was no longer a safe place. Most of the  
3 housing wasn't safe, but it seemed sturdy enough to walk about  
4 around in. So we got a minimal amount of people's personal  
5 belongings and then sent them home that day, too. So then they  
6 went back to Dillingham, and then the next day, they flew out and  
7 went home.

8 Q.    Okay.

9 A.    And so at that is mostly it wrapped up. Me and Pat stayed,  
10 and that day when we went and got some people's personal stuff, we  
11 also tied the barge to the crane that was in the sand there in  
12 front of. It seemed to be kind of a perfect anchoring system.  
13 And that was kind of where we both chained one side of it with  
14 some of the chain that had gotten left when it ripped off the  
15 mooring buoy, and then we tied the line to it as well. And then  
16 me and Pat stayed behind for a couple days while everybody else  
17 went home, and we came in and took a look at the barge.

18 Q.    Okay. So a few days later, when they sent that salvage  
19 assessment crew out, I know Pat was there. Were you there as well  
20 for that?

21 A.    I was. I stayed behind in Ekuk while they drove out to the  
22 barge, because we didn't have quite enough room in the car. And I  
23 wasn't quite -- yeah, we weren't quite sure if I'd be any, you  
24 know, help at that point. Pat could answer any of the questions  
25 as well as I could. So they all drove out there and took a look,

1 and then they left after that.

2 Q. Okay. Have you seen the mooring buoy since the night of the  
3 accident?

4 A. I have not seen it. I have only seen the top of it that was  
5 left sitting on the chain for the barge. It looked like it was  
6 peeled off like a pop can.

7 Q. Yeah, right. Yeah, that one piece. So yeah, there's not  
8 much else to look at, at the buoy, other than you had mentioned  
9 the piece that you saw ripped off of that. And now there's a hole  
10 in the top of the buoy that -- where that -- I think there's  
11 another piece that may have become separated. Because I don't  
12 think the hole in the barge -- the buoy is bigger than that piece  
13 that's hanging from the mooring chain.

14 A. Yeah, it -- yeah, totally possible. So this is -- so yeah, I  
15 was kind of curious to look at it, but I never got a chance to  
16 look at the mooring buoy to see what it looked like.

17 CWO [REDACTED] Yeah. Okay. All right. Well, I got a really  
18 good idea of what you experienced that night anyway. And some of  
19 the things you told me I didn't know at all, and some of those  
20 confirmed what the other -- we've talked to a couple of the other  
21 crew, yet we haven't talked to everybody.

22 But not -- I haven't heard from Tessa. She hasn't replied  
23 back to that original email I sent. But if she slept through the  
24 whole thing, I don't know if she would have much to offer anyway  
25 but what she did just in general as a worker on there.

1 But other than that, I don't think -- I don't have any more  
2 questions. But I know Jon has been listening the whole time, and  
3 I'm sure he's got some follow-up questions he'd like to ask.

4 So go ahead, Jon.

5 MR. FURUKAWA: Thanks, [REDACTED]

6 So, Jeremiah, let's see. You graduated from the University  
7 of Fairbanks --

8 CWO [REDACTED] You still there Jon?

9 MR. FURUKAWA: Yes. Can you hear me? Can you hear me? Can  
10 you hear me? Hello?

11 CWO [REDACTED] Now I can.

12 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. I must have muted myself.

13 CWO [REDACTED] Okay.

14 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

15 CWO [REDACTED] Yeah. If you want to ask anything, Jon, go  
16 ahead. I'm finished with what I had to ask.

17 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

18 BY MR. FURUKAWA:

19 Q. Jeremiah, you graduated from the University of Fairbanks as  
20 an IT specialist. Was that a Bachelor of Science degree or an  
21 Associate of Science degree?

22 A. Associates.

23 Q. Associates. Okay. And that was in 2017. But you said you  
24 had some years on (indiscernible). How many years of fishing boat  
25 -- how many years of fishing experience do you have?

1 A. Six.

2 Q. Six years. Okay. And since 2017, so 3 years with the  
3 company now; is that correct, 6 years fishing experience and 3  
4 years with the company?

5 A. Yes. And there's some slight overlap there, too, because I  
6 worked for Northline in 2017, then I also had just finished up  
7 fishing. So I started working for them in the fall. I fished  
8 that summer.

9 Q. Okay. So all your fishing experience has all been with  
10 Northline? Or did you work for somebody before that?

11 A. I worked -- before that, I was on a gill-netter with -- on  
12 the *Joe Dan* (ph.) out in Sitka. And then after being on the *Joe*  
13 *Dan* for a summer, I switch over to the *Noral* (ph.), which is Pat  
14 Glaab's, so -- and he ended up being -- starting Northline at  
15 around the time I was finishing up my degree.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. And you said the holding barge's name is  
17 *Riverways-9*; is that what I heard?

18 A. Yeah. But we all end up referring to it as the holding  
19 barge, but yeah.

20 Q. Okay. And the *SM-3*, you refer to that as the processing  
21 barge or the tender, the barge tender or --

22 A. We all -- I mean, honestly, we all do end up just calling it  
23 the *SM-3*.

24 Q. Okay. Let's see. Oh, the VM -- let's see, in the report of  
25 marine accident, I think it said something like winds were 50



1 knots and gusts up to 70. Did the vessel have an anemometer?

2 Or was this a guess?

3 A. No, it did not. No.

4 Q. No anemometer. Okay. Did you -- what do you estimate the  
5 winds at?

6 A. I would definitely say that they were -- I do think the gusts  
7 were up to 70 to 75 miles, because it was -- and it seemed to be  
8 resting too. We had struggled to get the front door open when the  
9 winds were hitting, and it wasn't -- it really wasn't safe to walk  
10 around outside on the bow or up onto the net deck. We decided  
11 that pretty quickly as the winds picked up, because it was just  
12 hard to keep yourself standing.

13 Q. Okay. What do you think the regular winds were?

14 A. What was that?

15 Q. So you said the gusts were 70 to 75 miles per hour. What was  
16 the sustained winds do you think?

17 A. I think they were probably around 50 or so. It seems right  
18 because it was -- you could walk in, but -- it was kind of hard to  
19 walk into it, but it was manageable. And then the gusts could  
20 like take you off your feet. They were not -- certainly you  
21 needed to be holding on to something.

22 Q. Okay. Let's see. So what time were you guys in the rec room  
23 when Pat told you that you guys were off the mooring buoy?

24 A. I believe that was 10 o'clock.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I might be wrong on that time, but that's what I believe.

2 Q. Okay. And then, let's see, and then you were on the beach  
3 about what time, aground?

4 A. I believe we ended up -- I think we ended up on the beach  
5 about like 10:30, 10:45.

6 Q. Okay. So it only took about 30 to 45 minutes to run aground.

7 A. Yeah. It happened pretty quick. We had the anchor deployed  
8 within minutes of coming off of our mooring buoy, but it just  
9 didn't -- it didn't seem to make a difference.

10 Q. Okay. So you guys said that you got off the barge at  
11 daybreak. About what time was that, that you guys got off and  
12 went up to the beach?

13 A. I couldn't say for certain. I think it was probably around  
14 7, 6 to 7.

15 Q. 6 or 7. Okay. And let's see. So you guys, you rode it out  
16 in Bay 3. Can you go over again the bays and the engine room of  
17 the SM-3?

18 A. Sure. Bay 1 is the engine room. Bay 2 is a tank holding.  
19 And then Bay 3 is more tank holding. And then Bay 4 is -- it's  
20 tools and where the fish elevator is and things like that.

21 Q. Okay. And which is -- is Bay 1 -- is that the bow or the  
22 stern?

23 A. The bow.

24 Q. Okay. Okay. You guys took shelter in Bay 3. Okay.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay. So about what time did -- I guess Zack and Victoria,  
2 did they leave for Ekuk Point -- or Ekuk, they left --

3 A. Yes. Right, Ekuk. That happened pretty quick after we all  
4 came up. At that point, I think the people of Ekuk had been  
5 waiting until the tide went out. They -- when we went to the  
6 village, we found the village had actually been pretty beaten up  
7 by the storm as well. The water had gotten up to people's houses  
8 and fish camps and washed things away, so they -- everyone at the  
9 town had been dealing with it as well. And so after the tide went  
10 out and had probably been out for an hour, they came and checked  
11 on us and picked up Zack and Victoria.

12 Q. Okay. So but at -- but what time was that you think?

13 A. I think that was around 7.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And so I'm trying to go to the best off of -- I just -- I'm  
16 mostly trying to base everything about, around, I know that high  
17 tide was at like 2:30, and so everything is kind of off of that.

18 Q. Right. Okay. And about what time were all you guys in Ekuk,  
19 so the rest of you?

20 A. I think we were all in Ekuk about -- we were all in Ekuk  
21 probably by 12:30, 1-ish. We all got back there just as the tide  
22 was coming all the way back up.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. So Ekuk is like a village. I thought I read  
24 somewhere it has a population of two people, you know, all year  
25 round.

1 A. Yeah. It is a set net village. It's kind of interesting.  
2 It's a -- there's a bunch of -- so during the summer, it's full of  
3 people for set netting, and they do processing on there, too, so  
4 there's a lot of buildings and people's houses and stuff, and kind  
5 of fish camps for the summer. But then during the winter, it  
6 sounds like it's pretty darn dead.

7 Q. Okay. So where'd you guys stay in Ekuk?

8 A. We stayed at Tom's -- and I keep forgetting his name, and I  
9 feel terrible about it.

10 Q. You stayed at his house?

11 A. Between Tom and another fisherman's house. Yeah. They both  
12 had pretty nice houses.

13 Q. Okay. Okay. And let's see. Okay. I think that's about it.  
14 Oh, the fire, you said that there was a fire on the barge in July.  
15 You said it was in the accommodation house -- in the accommodation  
16 area or the --

17 A. Yeah. And it wasn't -- there was no actual flame, but  
18 somebody -- it appeared somebody had dropped a cigarette, and it  
19 kind of started a little like smoldering fire. So we had -- we  
20 tripped the general alarm. Everyone went to their stations, and  
21 we put it out.

22 Q. Okay. So where exactly was it? Was it in clothing or the  
23 laundry room, the galley?

24 A. It was on the outside wall of the *SM-3*. It appeared somebody  
25 had somehow -- we're really unclear, and then somehow it appeared,

1 like it started under the kind of siding for the SM-3. So like  
2 the housing has like metal siding on it, and somehow it had gotten  
3 something under the siding and started a little smoldering fire.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. It didn't appear to be electrical or anything of that nature.  
6 Just a little smoldering fire. So we actually cut a little chunk  
7 out of the siding of the house to make sure that like there wasn't  
8 an active fire within the wall kind of thing after dousing it with  
9 water.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. So we had to cut a little thing and then had to patch that  
12 up.

13 MR. FURUKAWA: Uh-huh. Okay. Okay. I think that's it for  
14 me.

15 MR. KLEJKA: It was -- okay.

16 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. Back to you, [REDACTED]

17 CWO [REDACTED] I don't have anything else. You got any  
18 questions for us, Zack, or want to add anything that you think  
19 that we might have forgot to ask?

20 MR. KLEJKA: No. Jeremiah.

21 CWO [REDACTED] Oh, yeah. Sorry.

22 MR. KLEJKA: Yeah. No worries. No. I think that's it.  
23 Yeah.

24 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay.

25 CWO [REDACTED] Okay. Yeah. Well I'd like to thank you for

1 taking the time to talk to us.

2 And, Jon, you can go ahead and end this recording any time  
3 you're ready.

4 MR. FURUKAWA: Okay. The time is 1427 Eastern Daylight Time  
5 on Tuesday, the 22nd of September 2020. And we're ending our  
6 phone interview with the IT manager of the SM-3, Mr. Jeremiah  
7 Klejka.

8 (Whereupon, at 2:27 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:                    GROUNDING/STRANDING OF THE FISH  
   TENDER BARGE SM-3 IN NUSHAGAK BAY  
   NEAR EKUK, ALASKA, ON AUGUST 30, 2020  
   Interview of Jeremiah Klejka

ACCIDENT NO.:                        DCA20FM027

PLACE:                                 Via telephone

DATE:                                  September 22, 2020

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.



---

Romona Phillips  
Transcriber