



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Noreen Price
Aviation Accident Investigator
Alaska Regional Office

Date: March 25, 2019
Persons Contacted: Mr. Steve Perrins, owner Rainy Pass Lodge
NTSB Accident Number: ANC19FA038

Narrative:

Mr. Steve Perrins owns and operates the Rainy Pass Lodge that is located in the Alaska Range in the area that N7469A Cessna 172 went missing. His wife Denise is a weather observer and provides observations for the Rainy Pass Lodge Airport (6AK). A phone interview was conducted on March 25, 2019. This is a summary of his statements.

- On March 6, the morning weather was bad, with low visibility, but it cleared up by the afternoon.
- The last weather observation was at 1648: wind 250/04, 20 mile visibility, clouds broken at 2,700 ft, temp -2°C, dewpoint -2°C, altimeter 29.80 inches mercury.
- The last of the Iditarod airplanes left the airport at 1730. The airplanes had good weather to fly in. There was plenty of altitude to fly. He was unsure whether the airplanes were headed east or west. The Ptarmigan Valley was clear at 1730. The clouds were high.
- Mr. Perrins recommended that we contact the Iditarod Airforce to find out what airplanes were flying through the area that evening.



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Date: April 10, 2019
Persons Interviewed: Laurie Thorpe, Rohn Iditarod crew member
NTSB Accident Number: ANC19FA038, N7469A

Narrative:

Ms. Thorpe reported hearing a loud noise in the area that the Cessna 172 airplane went missing on March 6. This is a summary of her statements.

Ms. Thorpe has been an Iditarod Trail volunteer at the Rohn check point for many years. She is not a pilot, but has experience flying through the Alaska Range as a passenger on many occasions. On March 6, she recalled that while they were demobilizing the site after the last mushers departed, a single engine airplane flew over the Tatitna Airstrip while hugging the western ridge line in the river valley. The airplane was headed south over the South Fork of the Kuskokwim River. She noted that the weather at that time, looked bad to the south in the direction of Ptarmigan pass. The ceilings were low in what looked like a snowstorm and she thought "that's a bold pilot!" She was not sure what time that was, but sometime between 3 and 5 pm.

She recalled that after she saw the airplane, she heard a loud boom followed by another boom about a second later on the evening of March 6, 2019. She stated that it did not sound like an avalanche because it was louder and sharper. She has heard avalanches in the mountains, and they sound like a rumble vice a loud boom. The sounds she heard were unusual and did not sound natural. She asked other volunteers if they heard the unusual noise and she knows of two other people who recalled the unusual noise. The sound came from the west side of the Kuskokwim valley. She believes that the loud sound was about 5 but was not sure. She was certain that it was the evening before the C-130 and black hawk helicopter were overhead searching for the missing airplane.

It could not be verified that the airplane that she saw was the accident airplane.



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Date: March 25, 2019
Persons Contacted: Stephanie White, Iditarod Trail volunteer
NTSB Accident Number: ANC19FA038

Narrative:

A phone interview was conducted with Ms. White on March 26, 2019. Ms. White was a ground volunteer at the Iditarod check point of Rohn, which is located in the Alaska Range along the expected flight route of the missing Cessna 172 N7469A. This is a summary of her statements.

Ms. White had been a Rohn check point volunteer for 15 years. She recalled that on the evening before the search aircraft were overhead, she took a hike out to the frozen confluence of the South Fork of the Kuskokwim River and the Tatitna River between 3 and 5 pm. The mushers were gone, and she was enjoying some free time. She recalled that it was dark and overcast and the clouds were just below the mountain peaks. The wind was blowing about 10 to 15 knots. While she was out on the ice, she heard two loud sounds that came from the direction of Ptarmigan pass, but she wasn't sure what direction because sound bounces around in the mountains and the second sound was probably an echo. She stated that the sound was very unusual and did not sound like a rock slide or typical natural sounds. She believes the sound would have been between 1700 and 1715, because she hiked back to the cabin after the event to prepare dinner that was scheduled for 1800.

Ms. White stated that after that night, the weather deteriorated, and snow and wind prevailed in the range. The group had to change their plans and travel back to McGrath (northwest) instead of Rainy Pass and beyond (southeast).