

Tragic Plane Crash Claims 39 Lives Near Iliamna Village

A tragic Wien Consolidated Airlines airliner crash near the village of Iliamna took the lives of 39 persons, most of them

from the city of Anchorage, last Monday morning.

An eyewitness has said that a big ball of black smoke and

flames came from the plane before it spiralled down and crashed on a beach of a lake 23 miles from Iliamna.

Rescue and investigating efforts on the crash scene have been prevented by below zero temperatures and high winds in the area.

Last Wednesday, a federal investigator, Frank Malone, National Transportation Safety Board, managed to reach the crash site in a Cessna 180.

He reported that the ill-fated plane came to rest on the banks of a frozen lake. A portion of a broken wing had broken through the ice. He said he could not see the left engine nor the elevators of the plane.

It was thought possible that the engine and the elevators might be in the water of the lake.

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Crash . . .

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The preliminary investigation showed that there was scattered debris in the crash area and two bodies were lying outside of the plane's cabin. Other dead passengers were in the plane.

The F-27 airliner was enroute to Dillingham and way points when it crashed Monday morning.

Yesterday, recovery teams reached the crash site to remove the bodies and to identify them, gather their luggage and to arrange for transportation to Anchorage.

The recovery team that reached the site composed of five State Troopers headed by Lt. William Nix.

Commissioner Mel J. Personett of the Department of Public Safety said the recovery job should be completed today.