

Native Firefighters Die in Crash

The death of two firefighters Saturday night brought to five the number killed by the crash of a Bureau of Land Management chartered plane near McGrath Friday.

Three, including the co-pilot were killed on impact.

The aircraft, a DC-3, was carrying a 25-man Helitack crew from Stebbins to fight a fire north of Galena.

Inaugurated this year, the Helitack Operation is designed to place men and equipment at trouble spots within a short time by flying both to the site of the trouble.

The cause of the crash was initially listed as engine failure

(Continued on Page 6)

Firefighters . . .

(Continued from page 1)

but investigations by the Federal Aviation Administration and the BLM are now underway.

Firefighters who died Saturday night were Gregory Pete and Edwig Pete, both of Stebbins Village. Gregory Pete's death was attributed to a skull fracture and Edwig Pete's to multiple burns.

Edwig Pete is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Xavier Pete of Stebbins.

Killed Friday were firefighters Cyril Pete, brother of Edwig, Roy Kirk, and co-pilot Michael A. Benna.

The plane's pilot was taken to Elmendorf Air Force Base hospital with multiple fractures and the rest of the firefighters to the Alaska Native Medical Center.