

To Report a Missing or Overdue Person Call 911 or 907-545-HELP (4357)

11.15.18 BSAR River Report:

"Swiss Cheese"

WARNING—DANGER!

Summary:

Another late, drawn out freeze up is occurring along the Kuskokwim River during a time when People used to be busy everywhere out on the ice managing and setting nets.

BSAR has been monitoring the ice at the Hospital Landing every day since November 9th. At that time the ice thickness in that area was 3" thick. In the days since with cool, but not cold weather we observed the ice slowly growing to 5-1/2".

Today a small BSAR team checked ice conditions from the hospital landing to the lower end of the Bethel Island.

What they observed was very concerning.

While the ice is generally OK to walk on where there is no snow cover or a light even coating of snow they found that wherever there is a snow drift – even very small ones – there is very little or NO ice underneath. Ice picks go right through the insulating snow into deep open water. Close observation showed that the River ice is pocketed with countless holes and thin areas of all sizes hidden under these seemingly harmless little snow drifts.

With this information Bethel Search & Rescue recommends:

NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES ON THE ICE IN FRONT OF BETHEL AT THIS TIME. ANYONE WALKING OUT TO MANAQ OR SET A NET SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL – STAY AWAY FROM THE SNOW DRIFTS AND HAVE AN ICE PICK OUT IN FRONT OF YOU CHECKING THE ICE.

This is our first report of these season and we understand that People are anxious to get out on the River to start their winter activities but it looks like we all have to be patient and wait for cold weather.

Be Safe & Thank you



Ice pick goes right through snow into open water underneath

Each one of these is open water that was hiding under a small snow drift—there are thousands of these!

