



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



EXTREME DANGER: Ice Blow Out in the Main Channel Just Below Napakiak—picture taken from an altitude of 500 feet

2.10.19 Kuskokwim River Update:*

"She's Trying Heal"

Summary:

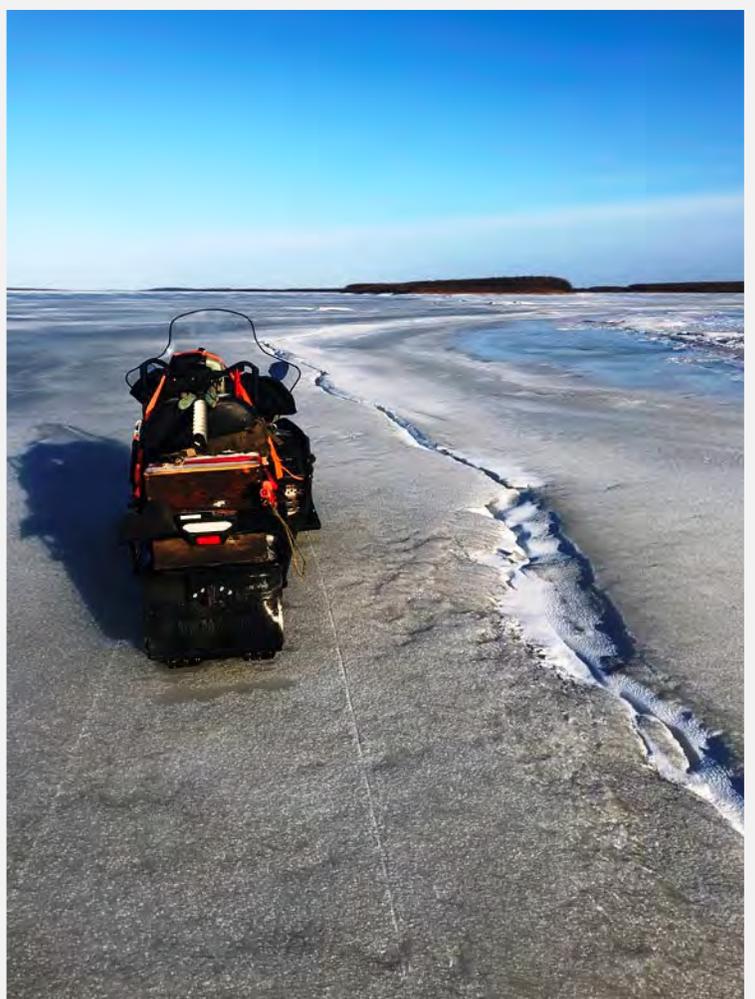
A warm February combined with what seems like a never ending series of storms has damaged the River making travel difficult and even dangerous.

On Friday in between storms BSAR did an aerial survey from the mouth of the Johnson River upstream to Tuluksak. Saturday another storm passed through with heavy rain. On Sunday less than twelve hours after the front passed, with clear skies, and slightly cooler temperatures, BSAR traveled by snow machine doing an assessment of conditions in the general Bethel area upstream as far as the Gweek River. This is what was observed:

- **There is EXTREME DANGER in the channel between Napakiak and the mouth of the Johnson River.**
- **There have been two ice blow outs in this area—most likely caused by the pressure and weight of deep over flow on top the ice breaking it. These blowouts are nearer to the north shore. Napakiak SAR has been asked to mark them. There is also major cracking of the ice in this same stretch of the River.**
- Deep pools of **BLUE** meltwater can be found scattered throughout the River—even in the middle - these will need longer to drain and freeze
- Large areas of the River are flooded with shallow, half frozen overflow on top of the ice from bank to bank. This is a danger to those traveling at high speeds—Please GO SLOW & CAUTIOUSLY if you must travel.



Pools of Deep Blue Meltwater are Scattered Throughout the River: L—as seen from the air, R—as seen from the ground



Crash Danger: Large Areas of Shallow Half-Frozen Overflow

Following the Tide Crack Where It's Dry

Ice Measurements:

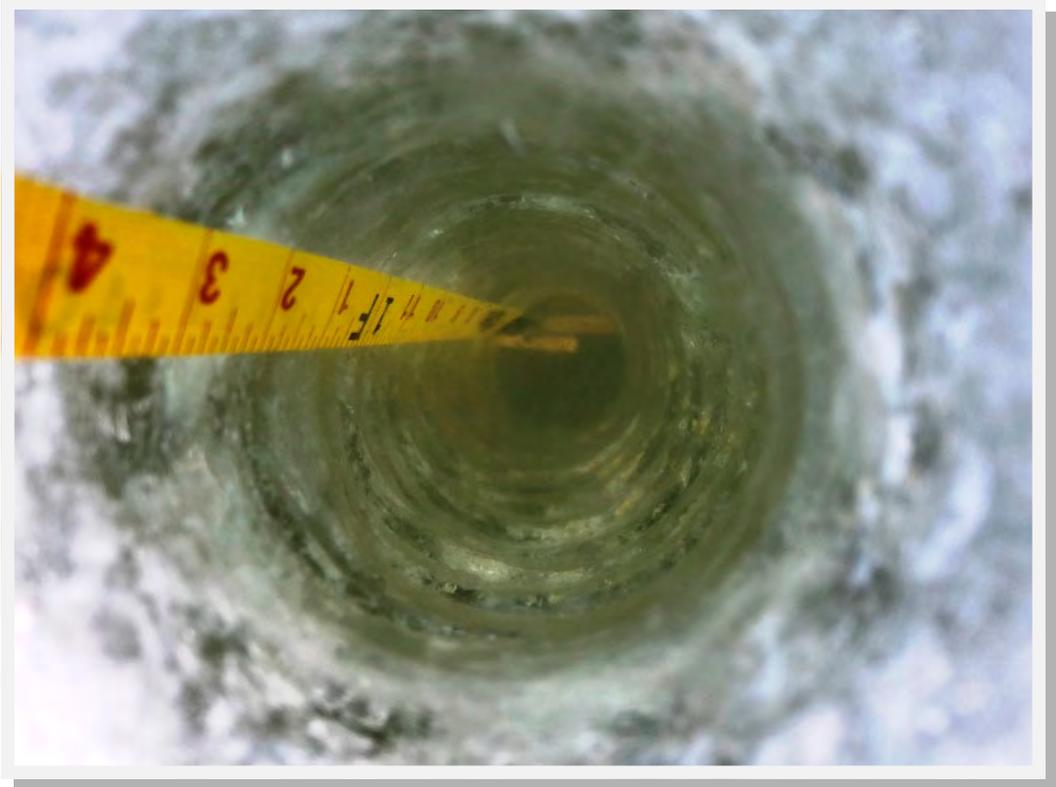
It's important to note that today's ice measurements were very preliminary. When things fully dry and freeze up we will run the ice radar to get a better picture of the overall ice conditions. Right now it appears that ice thicknesses in the general Bethel area are still OK for normal activities BUT the ice thickness is far below normal for Mid-February. See the following pictures.



20 inches was commonly seen



The ice on the plowed road usually gets thicker—here it is 24"



Way Below Normal: Only 15 INCHES of Ice at the Lower End of Straight Slough

The Healing:

The ice has lifted and overflow is finding its natural ways to drain off through the ice.



L: *Natural Drainage—there are many of these drain holes scattered throughout the River where the water is going back where it belongs—under the ice. If you look closely you can see the sand that came out when the water was rising being sucked back down. Water under the ice was 4 feet deep to the River bottom.*

R: *Water on top the ice drained through all of the holes we drilled*



Caution the water is deeper on the ice road. Please stay off. It will be nice and smooth when it freezes solid

Closing:

The River is trying to heal herself up and make it safe for travel again. She, like all of us, just needs a break from the warm, stormy weather. But it sounds like there's another big low in the near future.

If you must travel under these conditions please be cautious, sober and alert.

Thank you and safe travels from BSAR

*** Please note that this report is for informational purposes only and is not an advisory that it is safe to travel**