

# SITREP 1, November 2-12, 2009

Matthew Kippenhan (RPSC), Ken Taylor (SCO) and Bruce Vaughn (SCO Rep)

NOVEMBER 2, 2009 – Matthew Kippenhan

The put-in team, led by camp manager Theresa "T" Tran, arrived yesterday (November 2, local time) at WAIS Divide via Basler (5.5 hour direct flight from McM) after 10 days of weather delays. Onsite temperature was -49 degrees C. Skiway is in good shape and should be able to accept LC-130 Hercules flights within a couple of days after a good grooming and touchups are completed.

Good news is all cargo, modules, and equipment wintered well with minimal drifting allowing them to get the CAT 953 and one Tucker up and running in record time. Our experiment with wintering over the power poles and service cable worked fine, but the poles did create significant drifting that will need to be groomed down. The arch is as expected - still buried with some new winter drifting.

The overall schedule remains behind by 10 days at this point, however, once the carpenter crew arrives and camp construction gets started in the next several days, T will be able to better evaluate the schedule and any opportunities to get it back on track. For now, expect equal delays in any major activities scheduled for WAIS Divide until further notice. There is still a long way to go before any basic structures are up and running to accommodate additional persons.

NOVEMBER 9, 2009 – Kendrick Taylor

The ten person put-in team, led by camp manager Theresa "T" Tran, arrived at WAIS Divide on November 2. It was a 5.5-hour flight in the Basler and the temperature at WAIS Divide was -49C. This was 10 days later than our most optimistic plan due to weather delays. All the cargo, modules, and equipment wintered well with minimal drifting allowing them to get the CAT 953 and one Tucker running in record time. The power poles created significant drifting that will need to be cleared. The arch has some new winter drifting and it will be a while before anyone can get inside.

Major storms have prevented any other flights. So in twenty days of trying we have only gotten in one flight. High winds, drifting snow, a small crew, and an incomplete camp set up is making it difficult to make progress. We are now at least two weeks behind our most optimistic plans. All of this is sort of normal, but of course we hoped for a quicker start.

The southward movement of people is going as planned. NICL, IDDO, and the SCO all have people in McMurdo waiting for flights.

NOVEMBER 12, 2009 – Bruce Vaughn (written at McMurdo Station)

The WAIS 09-10 season was off to an early start with high hopes. After 10+ days of weather delays, the put-in crew of 10 led by Teresa Tran arrived WAIS Divide on November 2 and were greeted by a cold (-49 C) camp that appears to have wintered well. The core processing end of the arch is at least partially exposed and equipment on the berm was accessible. However, bad weather has hampered progress since then, with only one flight with very minimal cargo has made it since Nov. 2. We are on the fixed wing schedule each day for 2 flights, but without exception they have been weather cancelled so far.

Our time table hinges on the next successful flight to WAIS, which will contain ~10+ science construction crew to build out the camp. We estimate that it will be possible for NON-RPSC personnel to be queued for flights to WAIS beginning ~7+ days after that. Weather is again deteriorating at both McMurdo and WSD over the next 24 hours. I do not anticipate a successful mission to WAIS before Saturday.

Meanwhile the McMurdo contingent is completing training as needed, and organizing cargo. The

SCO/NICL personnel on site in McMurdo include:

Bruce Vaughn  
Geoff Hargreaves  
Bess Koffman  
John Fegyveresi  
Ryan Banta  
Bo Vinther

Housing in McMurdo is extremely tight, and most science groups are being berthed in larger rooms in Building 155. These large rooms are not conducive to getting good rest, and only seem to further expose team members to a revolving door of potentially sick people, of which there are many. Since it now seems unlikely that the SCO crew will be able to get to WAIS before Nov 23 at the earliest, we have purposely delayed the second wave of the SCO team in Christchurch from arriving McMurdo on Nov-13, pushing them back to a flight on Nov-18. They are registered for snow school on Nov-20-21. The crew in Christchurch includes:

Maria Banks  
Thomas Bauska  
Tommy Cox  
Peter Neff  
Heidi Roop

Weather permitting, the first drillers and some of CReSIS will arrive on tomorrow's flight (Nov. 13). We will all have ample time in McMurdo to prepare for the field. The crew here healthy and in good spirits. We hope to stay that way.