

Beat: Miscellaneous

Wreckage of missing plane found in Utah mountains, 5 dead

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USPA News - The wreckage of a small plane with five people on board that vanished in the central Idaho mountains nearly 1.5 month ago was discovered Friday by friends and relatives conducting a private search, officials and the pilot's wife said on Saturday. There were no survivors.

The aircraft, a six-seat BE-36 Beech Bonanza, had departed Baker City in eastern Oregon just after 11 a.m. local time on December 1 and was heading for the city of Butte in Montana when contact was lost after the pilot reported engine trouble. Its last-known position was on the western edge of the rugged Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho. Janis Smith, the wife of 51-year-old pilot Dale Smith, said the wreckage was found on Friday on the last day of a 3-day private search in the region. "Dellon (Dale's brother) and his crew spent the entire day, from 3 a.m. onward, trying to find the right location. The snow was very deep and the going was very slow," she said. Janis Smith said her husband's brother found the wreckage less than two hours before the team would have needed to wrap up their search. "I am so grateful that Dellon was the one who found his brother. The plane is in pieces and buried in snow," she said. "They have not yet found all the parts. However, we do know my family members on the plane died quickly and painlessly. They did not suffer." The Valley County Sheriff's Office confirmed there appeared to be no survivors, but said recovery efforts would be delayed by severe weather conditions. The official air and ground search was hampered by poor visibility, snowfall and sub-zero temperatures (below -17.7 degrees Celsius) until it was called off on December 12. The search included helicopters from the Idaho Army National Guard, Customs and Border Protection, a private helicopter, several Civil Air Patrol planes and aircraft from the state's Division of Aeronautics. In addition to pilot Dale Smith, other victims of the crash were identified as his son Daniel and daughter Amber. Also on board were Daniel's wife Sheree and Amber's fiancé Jonathon.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1776/wreckage-of-missing-plane-found-in-utah-mountains-5-dead.html>

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