

Update: Coast Guard suspends search for 1 missing from sinking fishing vessel 35 miles off Florence, OR

March 27, 2022



The Coast Guard suspended search efforts at 12:30 a.m. Sunday for the master of a 32-foot fishing vessel that sank approximately 35 miles offshore Florence late Friday night.

The missing man has been identified as Mike Morgan, 68.

A 47-foot Motor Lifeboat crew from Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River was the first to respond on scene, followed by multiple Coast Guard aircraft, Motor Lifeboat stations, including the 110-foot Coast Guard Cutter Orcas and crew. Rescue crews saturated approximately 232 square-miles of search area over a 24-hour period but were unable to locate Morgan.

Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector North Bend received a mayday call around midnight on Friday from Morgan, the master of fishing vessel White Swan III, reporting that his vessel was sinking in the northern section of Heceta Banks fishing grounds. A Motor Lifeboat crew from Station Siuslaw River arrived on scene shortly after the initial distress call and located a debris field. The Coast Guard recovered an unresponsive female victim early Saturday morning, later discovered to be a crew member aboard the White Swan III. The female victim was pronounced deceased by local emergency crews.

Involved in the search were:

Coast Guard Sector North Bend;

Coast Guard Sector Columbia River MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crews;

Air Facility Newport MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew;

Sector North Bend MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crews;

Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River 47-foot Motor Lifeboat crews;

Coast Guard Station Umpqua River 47-foot Motor Lifeboat crew;

110-foot Coast Guard Cutter Orcas;

13th Coast Guard District Command Center.

Pending further developments, the Coast Guard has suspended search efforts at this time.

"The decision to suspend an active search and rescue case is never easy, and it's only made after careful consideration of myriad factors," said Scott Giard, Coast Guard Search and Rescue Program Manager. "Our thoughts and condolences are with the families throughout this unimaginably challenging time."

Previous Coverage:

The Coast Guard is searching for the master of a 32-foot fishing vessel that sank Saturday morning approximately 35 miles offshore Florence.

Missing is Mike Morgan, 68.

Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector North Bend received a mayday call at approximately 12 a.m. Saturday from Morgan, the master of the white-and-black fishing vessel White Swan III, reporting that his vessel was sinking in the north end of the Heceta Banks fishing area. Morgan reported that a female crew member was also aboard the vessel. The 13th Coast Guard District Command Center received an emergency position indicating radio beacon alert from the White Swan III.

Upon arrival at the scene of the EPIRB location, an MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew from Air Facility Newport spotted a debris field and a life raft. The aircrew had to return to base due to heavy fog and low visibility.

Crews aboard the 87-foot Coast Guard Cutter Orcas, a Sector North Bend MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew, and a Coast Guard Station Umpqua River 47-foot Motor Lifeboat are currently saturating an approximately 21 square-mile area offshore Florence to locate Morgan.

Involved in the search are:

Sector North Bend;

Air Facility Newport MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crew;

Sector North Bend MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter crews;

Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River 47-foot Motor Lifeboat crews;

Coast Guard Station Umpqua River 47-foot Motor Lifeboat crew;

87-foot Coast Guard Cutter Orcas and crew.

Mariners and the public are encouraged to contact the Sector North Bend Command Center at 541-756-9210 if anyone has information in the effort to locate the missing master of the White Swan III.