

Katmai Ash Whipped Up by Strong Winds

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

There was volcanic ash in the air over the Shelikof Strait and parts of Kodiak Island yesterday. A person in Port Lions called KMXT to ask if a volcano had erupted, but the Alaska Volcano Observatory showed all was normal. However, it turned out that a volcano had erupted, though it wasn't yesterday – it was almost exactly 100 years ago.

The National Weather Service office in Anchorage reported that ash from the Novarupta explosion in 1912 was being whipped up by strong northerly winds because of a lack of snow cover in the Valley of 10,000 Smokes and Katmai National Park on the Alaska Peninsula.

The ash was lifted to about 4,000 feet and drifted over the Shelikof Strait and Kodiak Island. It was a significant enough amount that the weather service issued a warning to pilots, as volcanic ash can damage airplane engines.

Known as the Katmai Eruption, the 1912 explosion came from a volcanic vent later named Novarupta. It was the largest volcanic eruption of the 20th Century and ash fell on Kodiak for three days.