

Fewer Weather Satellites Concerns Senator

Friday, 15 March 2013

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/130315.begich_weather_sats.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

Today we are wrapping up this week's talks with Alaska Senator Mark Begich, who spoke to KMXT about fishery-related issues from the Boston Seafood show.

The National Weather Service relies on NOAA weather satellites to help extend weather forecasts more than a day or two into the future. However satellite coverage over Alaska will likely be reduced because a replacement for an aging satellite was not acquired in a timely manner.

The problem, he says, is that weather satellites are very picky about their orbits, and launches must be precisely timed.

This problem has been known since 2011, and it's not just Alaska weather satellites that are in jeopardy — the ones over the East Coast which helped forecasters predict the path of Hurricane Sandy, will also need replacing soon, too.