

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

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ANC23FA004

WRECKAGE EXAMINATION

November 10, 2022

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Chickaloon, AK
Date: November 10, 2022
Time: 1140L
Airplane: N7123K

B. WRECKAGE EXAMINATION

Investigator Mark Ward
NTSB
Anchorage, AK

C. SUMMARY

On November 10, 2022, about 1140 Alaska standard time, a Piper PA-18 airplane, N7123K, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Chickaloon, Alaska. The student pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.

According to the friend of the pilot, the accident airplane and a Cessna 172 airplane were flying in together along the Matanuska River. He stated they departed Wolf Lake Airport (4AK6), Palmer, Alaska, about 1100. He stated the pilot of the Cessna 172 saw the Piper PA-18 descend and fly at a low altitude along the river. He saw the airplane strike an unmarked cable that ran across the river about 30 ft above the water. The airplane came to rest inverted in the river. He landed and notified the Alaska State Troopers of the accident. The cable was not new and there were no visible markings on the cable.

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site

The airplane hit a cable that crossed over a river. The cable provided access to a home located on the south side of the river. The cable was about 30 ft above the water. After the airplane contacted the cable, the right and left wings were severed by the cable and the fuselage came to rest into the river.



Figure 1 Accident location



Figure 2 Cable attachment point on the north side of the river.



Figure 3 House and cable attachment point on the south side of the river.

2.0 Airframe Examination

2.1 Fuselage

The fuselage was intact with frame damage from the cable impacting the right horizontal stabilizer.



Figure 4 Accident airplane after recovery from the river.



Figure 5 Front bottom view of the accident airplane.

2.2 Empennage

The left side of the empennage was undamaged. The right side had impact damage to the right horizontal stabilizer. Control cables to the rudder and elevators were still attached and the rudder had minor impact damage.



Figure 6 View of the bottom side of the horizontal stabilizer and elevator.



Figure 7 View of left side of the rudder. Battery power was still on.



Figure 8 FAA registration number on the accident airplane.

2.3 Wings

Both wings were separated from the airplane from impact with the cable that crossed over the river. The right wing was located on the south side of the river with the cable still wrapped around the wing and folded over about mid span. The left wing was mostly intact and was located on the north side. Both wings were about equal distance from the cable location with the fuselage located further down river.



Figure 9 View of right wing on the south side of the river.



Figure 10 Zoomed in view of the right side wing. The cable was wrapped around the wing.



Figure 11 Left side wing of accident airplane.



Figure 12 Left wing on north side of the river in relationship to the final resting location of the fuselage.

3.0 Propeller Examination

The airplane propeller had witness marks along the leading edge of the propeller consistent with the engine producing power.



Figure 13 Bottom side of engine cowl. View of the airplane propeller.



Figure 14 View of damage to the propeller caused by contact with the cable under power.



Figure 15 Close up view of the damage to the propeller.

Submitted by:

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AAI