



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Jim Silliman
Air Safety Investigator
Central Region

Date: July 18, 2011
Person Contacted: Bill Kalodzik, Witness
NTSB Accident Number: CEN11FA468

Narrative:

We were sitting out on the patio drinking coffee. Weather was foggy, hazy. They were coming up the river. Heard them. They were having engine problems.

It echoes up here real bad. It was missing. I've got cars and street rods. It was popping and making noise. There was a big bang.

It was kind of foggy. Couldn't find nothing. Got in my truck. 5 miles up and down river. No smoke. We ran over 1.5 hours. Foggy, hazy enough that I had to have my lights on.

Problem with the motor. Like truck running out of diesel. Having injector problems. We looked for over 1.5 hours and couldn't find anything.

Couldn't swear exactly it was a helicopter. We tried to find the accident. Looked down and up river. Within 500 feet of site.

Foggy more so on the hills. Down in the bottom land it was starting to clear up. Fog was on top of the ridgeline. I left my place here and turned on my headlamps because it was foggy.

We were supposed to be out of here by 8:30 to 9:30. We left around 10:30. It was clear by then. Exactly 9:30 we heard it. Three of us on the patio drinking coffee. Waiting to go to the zoo.

Boom! Could be on the river or powerplant. Coming up the river. Big bend in the river. He was coming NNW away from the river. Straight up River Road.

He had motor problems of some type.

Sound? Like I've heard it on diesel trucks – popping and banging going up grade. Hard to exactly say. Motorcycles sound that way.

Our property is on the ridgeline. Slopes on both sides. My house due east; you'll walk into Mill's property. I border him on the west side of driveway. My place was fogged in. Not dense. I could see the barn about 780 feet away from where I was sitting. But I couldn't see the gable on top of the barn – 36 feet above ground. 6 tiers high. Fog was low. Some of the biggest trees you couldn't see the top of the trees.

Diesel trucks having injector problems coming up the hill. Can't swear it was a helicopter. We spent 1.5 hours looking for the accident. Didn't know what kind of accident, but it was an accident. Learned later that afternoon that a helicopter crashed. Got called when I was at the zoo.

Big bang. Helicopter.

Sounded like it was missing at first. Something exploded as it was moving. Definitely a bang. Can't swear it wasn't helo impact. Missing coming up river before he went down.

Experience with helicopters. Flown in a couple in military. We were in helicopter over in Hawaii. Got red light on. Gearbox overheating.

Maintenance supervisor. Played with hot rods and street rods.