



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF AVIATION SAFETY
CENTRAL REGION

January 24, 2018

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Subject: Matheny Christavia Mk1 airplane, N746LM, accident at Grand Detour, Illinois, on January 20, 2018, Interview with Mr. Nate Hiller, a resident of Grand Detour, IL

I spoke with Mr. Nate Hiller of Grand Detour. He was identified to me as a witness to the accident. Mr. Hiller did not see the accident, but he heard the airplane just before it struck the powerlines over the river, and he went to the accident site after the accident occurred.

Mr. Hiller said he was outside and heard the airplane. He said he didn't really pay that much attention and then he heard the airplane's engine become real loud for a second or two and then die as he got wrapped in the wire. Mr. Hiller said he lives a block away from the river and when it happened, the wires by his house started to sway. He thought something was going on.

When he got to the river, he saw the airplane on the ice on the far side. He said that there is a sandbar there and it probably helped with him not going through the ice. Mr. Hiller said that he could see the power line wrapped around the airplane. He watched the pilot get out of the airplane and start walking around. He did not see the female passenger. Mr. Hiller said he yelled across to see if they were alright. The pilot yelled back that they were okay. He saw the pilot hobble around until rescue arrived.

Mr. Hiller said there are no warning balls on the wires. The wires span across that east-west running section of the Rock River. Where the airplane was and resting, he estimated the airplane was probably going (flying) upstream (north-northeast) when he struck the wires. Mr. Hiller said he used to work for Commonwealth Edison, an Illinois electric utility company. He estimated that the poles up the banks from the river were about 40 ft. tall. The power line most-likely spanned 100 ft. above the river.

Mr. Hiller's telephone number is [REDACTED]

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Dr. David Bowling
Regional Chief
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[REDACTED]

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