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Aviation Safety - Central Region

Subject: CEN26LA003

Contact: FAA Inspector Barton Van Heuveln

FAA Inspector Van Heuveln responded to the accident scene the day after the accident and was unable to confirm fuel quantity in the fuel tanks due to the airplane being inverted. He did not see or smell any evidence of fuel seepage. He removed the inlet fuel line to the fuel pump and did not find any fuel in the line.

On October 10, the field was finally dry enough to allow for removal of the airplane by the recovery team. Neither tank appeared to be breached or compromised. The fuel drained out the left fuel tank was photographed.



Figure 1 Fuel From the Left Fuel Tank

The fuel from the right wing was added to the same container and photographed.



Figure 2 Fuel From Both Fuel Tanks

He was not able to find any evidence of fuel on the ground or blue staining on the airplane.

He made the following observations about the airplane:

- Checked the resistance of both fuel senders with the wiring cut. They both showed around 1 ohm.
- Pulled the prop through and verified impulse coupling noise-crank ok.
- Oil dipstick was full and clean
- Engine controls free with full motion for both throttle and mixture
- No external damage noted on engine
- Propeller has no evident damage, or signs of turning at impact.
- Flaps were in the retracted position, and the pilot doesn't recall lowering before landing

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