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Eastern Region

Date: December 17, 2021

Subject: ERA22LA090 - N1402C, Auburndale, Florida, 12/17/21 - Information provided by FAA Inspector Ahmed Caballero-Sanabria, of the Orlando Flight Standards District Office.

On 12/17/21 Mr. Caballero-Sanabria provided the following information via telephone:

There were 2 people on board, a husband and wife, both were fatally injured. Pilot information:

Pilot: John William Schmalz dob: [REDACTED], commercial pilot [REDACTED], medical 3rd class 12/19/2017. No basic med found in database.

The airplane was submerged in a lake. The Polk County Sheriff's Office retained the items that were recovered from the surface, including the carcass of a turkey vulture.

John Brown, a pilot who owns a seaplane base in Winter Haven, responded to the accident scene in an airplane, he observed a bird in the debris field. Telephone [REDACTED]

Witness: Andrew Smith, telephone [REDACTED]

Witness heard and saw the airplane with difficulties maintaining full power.

Over the lake, making a right turn, he heard the engine "struggling".

The bank angle became steeper, then the airplane went out of sight behind tree line.

He then heard a pop sound, could not tell what caused it. Engine, impact or other.

Witness was a pilot, has flown this airplane model, said that when loss of power occurs, there is a pitch up tendency.

Witness: Mr. Wyatt (not spoken to directly), [REDACTED] reported to the told Sheriff Department that he heard the airplane, he was at a nearby pool at the time, he also saw the pontoon hit the water first, and then "the prop, on the nose" hit next.

Mr. Caballero-Sanabria sent the following photos via email:



Figure 1 Bird Carcass



Figure 2 - Seat Upholstery, Flight Manual, Chart Supplements



Figure 3 - Sponson, Seat Cushion and Upholstery, Rope, Insulation, Pillow



Figure 4 – Nosewheel



Figure 5 - Copilot Seat