



Investigator Name: Leah D. Read
Title: Sr. ASI
Division: ERA

Date: July 22, 2024
Subject: ERA24LA303
Contact: Earl Wright, pilot/owner

In a telephone conversation, Mr. Wright stated he was flying at 11,500 ft mean sea level (msl) maneuvering around weather when he was forced to descend "very quickly" to 3,500 ft msl to remain clear of clouds. When the airplane reached 3,500 ft msl, it began to "violently shake" and then experienced a total loss of engine power.

Mr. Wright said that he slowed the airplane to best glide airspeed and attempted to reach the Thomasville Regional Airport, Thomasville, Georgia; however, he was unable to reach the airport and performed a forced landing in a field. After exiting the airplane, he observed that about three-quarters of one of the wooden propeller blades was missing, along with a section of lower engine cowling. Two engine mounts were also "perfectly" sheared off at the firewall.

Mr. Wright stated the wooden P-prop had been overhauled and had accrued about 50-60 hours since overhaul. He uses the airplane to fly back and forth from Georgia to Louisiana where he works as an aircraft mechanic for an offshore helicopter company. The pilot said he was descending quickly to avoid IMC conditions (but never exceeded maneuvering speed) when he felt the violent vibration.