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Title: Senior Air Safety Investigator
Division: AS-ERA

Date: [10/17/2024]

Subject: ERA25LA017 Eljay, GA

Contact: Bradley Henninger

Mr. Henniger was the pilot of the accident airplane, he was interviewed by telephone, and the following is a summary of the interview. When asked about the performance and handling of his Cessna 182P, he replied, "The airplane was fine."

When asked about the weather at his arrival airport, he said, "I always check, and I was concerned about the winds." He said he checked the winds as he approached the airport and again on the downwind leg of the traffic pattern and confirmed the winds were from 020 at 9 knots and "only 10-degrees off [runway heading] and no gusting." On final approach, the airplane was "on glideslope, on speed, 2 notches of flaps, constant glide slope, then 3rd notch of flaps, the nose drop (because wind died) did a go around, pushed the power in, flaps to second notch, and got a gust from the west, and blew me off the runway 20 feet above the ground."

Mr. Henniger explained the events after the wind gust blew the airplane from over the runway surface to its right, and towards the trees that lined the runway environment. He said, "I had to make a decision. I pulled back to clear the trees, the right wing stalled, and then I tried to level the wings before ground contact. The landing was hard, the cowlings were smoking, so we all got out and under our own power." He volunteered, "I've had gusts before but nothing like that."

Mr. Henniger estimated he had 220 total hours of flight experience of which 120 hours was in the Cessna 182.