

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594



WPR22FA053

ACCIDENT SITE REPORT

12/03/2022

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A. ACCIDENT

Location: Lakeport, California
Date: December 2, 2021
Time: 1115 Pacific standard time
Airplane: Experimental Amateur Built Russell W Dyer VORTEX, N425RD

B. ACCIDENT SITE REPORT

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C. SUMMARY

Witnesses observed the gyrocopter depart level flight, and tumble nose over tail 3 times before they lost sight of it behind a tree line. The smell of fuel was present at the accident site, and there was no evidence of a wire or bird strike. Additionally, there were no reports of damaged power lines or power outages in the accident area.

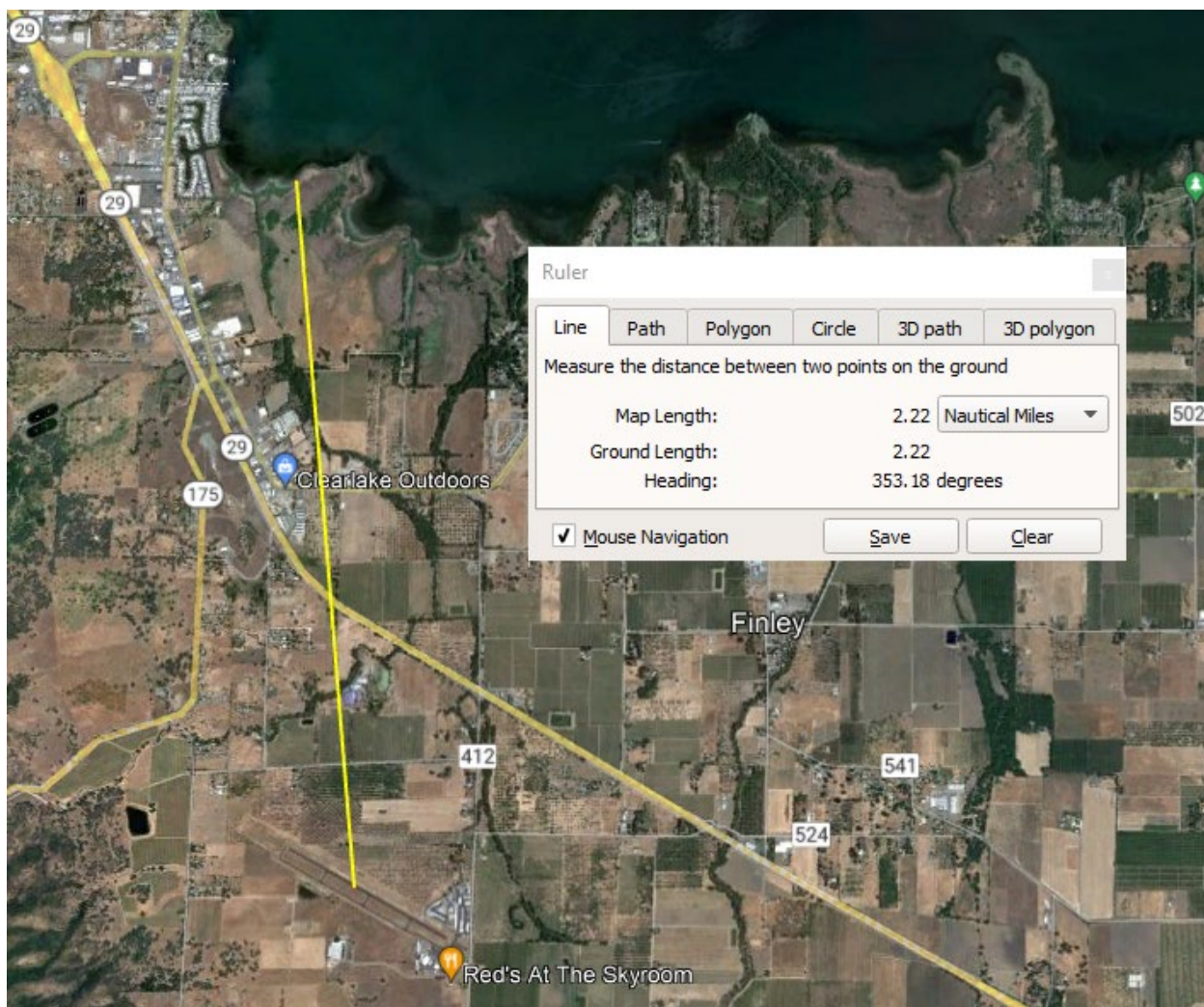


Photo 1: Overview of Accident Area (Photo Courtesy of GoogleEarth)

D. DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.0 Accident Site

The accident site was about 2 miles northwest of the Lampson Field Airport (1O2), Lakeport, California, near the shoreline of Clear Lake. The area that the gyrocopter came to rest is identified as sacred Toole Weed for the Big Valley Rancheria Tribe of Pomo Indians.

The gyrocopter came to rest on top of the Toole Weed on its left side. The entire gyrocopter was identified at the accident site. Visual examination of the airframe revealed no obvious disconnects with the flight controls and no holes in the engine case. The main rotor system remained connected; however, near the inboard hub and blade straps for each main rotor blade at the outboard edge were tears that were similar in appearance. One blade exhibited a diagonal black streak on its

underside adjacent to the strap that appeared to be consistent with propeller blade contact. The propeller assembly remained connected to the engine and the three-bladed propeller was also attached. One propeller blade remained straight, one propeller blade had separated near the root of the blade, and the tip of one of the propeller blades had separated. The tip was not located after a search of the surrounding area.

Flight control continuity was established on-scene. The Gyrocopter was placed upright, and the main rotor blades were rotated with no binding noted.

There were no circuit breakers tripped.



Photo 2: View of Main Rotor System



Photo 3: Forward View of Gyrocopter (Photo Courtesy of Lake County Sheriff)



Photo 4: Side View of Gyrocopter (Photo Courtesy of Lake County Sheriff)



Photo 5: View of Left Main Rotor Blade



Photo 6: View of Right Main Rotor Blade



Photo 7: View of Engine



Photo 8: View of Instrument Panel

Submitted by:
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