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Date: July 11, 2024

Subject: [REDACTED] Recollections of the Accident

[REDACTED], a family member of the pilot-rated-passenger, provided a recording of a conversation with the pilot-rated-passenger regarding the accident. The following is the IIC's summation of that conversation.

The family member began by asking the pilot-rated-passenger to "walk me through getting ready to fly." The pilot-rated-passenger explained that they did a preflight inspection of the airplane and made sure that everything was good. They did a warm-up [engine run up] and said that everything was flying [working] great. They left the field [Smiley Creek Airport (U87) Smiley Creek, Idaho]. They took off and did an expedited climb. They came around again and did another expedited "crazy" climb. The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that "the new engine had all sorts of performance, except at extremely high-density altitude, at low prop settings."

The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that they left Smiley Creek to go to Big Creek [Big Creek Airport (U60) Big Creek, Idaho]. [REDACTED] was in the left seat and was the pilot-in-command. The PIC offered to let the pilot-rated-passenger fly the airplane. The pilot-rated-passenger accepted and the PIC was showing the pilot-rated-passenger techniques like surfing the ridges, how to get the lift, with information in the cockpit such as winds aloft, that is as real time as possible. Winds coming from the windward side and gaining lift. The pilot-rated-passenger spoke about the leeward side and loss of lift and the need to manage those.

The pilot-rated-passenger gave the controls back to the PIC prior to the landing when they were about 7 miles from the airfield. The pilot-rated-passenger said that when they arrived at the Big Creek area, everything was going well, winds were tolerable. The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that it was a little bit of a downwind landing, but the problem was that they were too high, and that they should have gone around sooner. He recalled asking the PIC something to the effect of, are we going to make it

or are we going around? The pilot-rated-passenger said at that point the PIC aborted the landing, after trying to slip it in aggressively. The pilot-rated-passenger explained that a slip was a forward slip that was a way to lose altitude fast but by going slower, and stated that, "they tried to go around but that they did not have the power to make it happen at that density altitude." The pilot-rated-passenger said that they were dodging trees.

The family member asked the pilot-rated-passenger about the engine during the landing. The pilot-rated-passenger stated that it was making power and that it was running just fine, and said that the engine was at idle, like you were supposed to be when you are in a slip. The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that, "it made power, it just didn't make enough." The pilot-rated-passenger surmised that "they should have gone around another 300 ft sooner", then corrected his estimate to "600 ft sooner."

The family member asked the pilot-rated-passenger to talk about the weather and about possible downdrafts. The pilot-rated-passenger replied "not downdrafts, but that they landed downwind, and that the windsock was indicating downwind. The pilot-rated-passenger stated that you shouldn't land upwind there unless there is a strong upwind in that direction. The pilot-rated-passenger explained that they read the NOTAM that was provided by the Idaho Department of Transportation, not too long before that [the landing].

The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that the runway was grass and that it was about 3,300 ft and that the first 1,000 ft was wet with holes. The pilot-rated-passenger stated that it was plenty of runway with proper energy, but they were too fast because they were too high and trying to drop. The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that they were in a very steep slip and that they got down but could not bleed of the energy. That was why the pilot-rated-passenger asked are we going to make it or are we going around, at which time they did.

The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that at the time, the weather was beautiful and there was not a crosswind and that the downwind was not what they would call horrendous. The pilot-rated-passenger stated that there were winds but there are always winds when back country flying, and that you learn to use them.

The pilot-rated-passenger stated that there was nothing wrong with what the PIC was doing, except perhaps that they didn't go around 300 to 600 ft sooner.

The pilot-rated-passenger explained that the trees were at the other end of the runway and that there was a path, and they were trying to use the path to gain altitude when they ran into the trees.

The family member asked if there were any airframe issues and the pilot-rated-passenger said that when they arrived at the Big Creek area, everything was going well, winds were tolerable and the airplane was flying excellent and amazing. The pilot-rated-passenger described it as a well-oiled, well-maintained machine and stated that they couldn't ask more from a brand new 182 these days.

When asked about fuel the pilot-rated-passenger recalled that they had about 43- or 46-gallons total, enough to give them the performance they needed. The pilot-rated-passenger stated that they considered the performance needs of the airplane when operating in high density altitude conditions and how the density altitude would be lower in the morning for the takeoff. The pilot-rated-passenger recalled that they did not purchase any fuel after Pocatello. Before that, the PIC purchase fuel in Vernal, Utah.

When asked about any other details of the accident, the pilot-rated-passenger did not have anything else to offer and reiterated that the engine was operating amazingly, and the airframe was perfect, and that the avionics were working great and that they had lots of information in the cockpit.