



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Ruby, Alaska	Accident Number:	GAA17CA187
Date & Time:	February 15, 2017, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N72999
Aircraft:	Piper PA22	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Loss of control on ground	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the tailwheel, ski-equipped airplane reported that, while landing off airport in flat light conditions, he was unable to maintain a good visual reference of the hard-packed snow-covered landing area. After touchdown, the airplane drifted off the hard-packed snow, and the left ski sunk in softer snow. He increased power and attempted to recover with "hard right control" to no avail. The airplane's left ski struck a snow-covered tank.

The airplane sustained substantial damage to the left-wing lift strut.

The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's failure to maintain directional control while landing in flat light conditions on a hard-packed snow-covered landing area.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Attain/maintain not possible
Personnel issues	Aircraft control - Pilot
Environmental issues	Snowy/icy terrain - Effect on operation
Environmental issues	Snow/slush/ice covered surface - Effect on operation
Environmental issues	Hidden/submerged object - Contributed to outcome
Environmental issues	Flat light - Effect on personnel

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Loss of control on ground (Defining event)
Landing	Attempted remediation/recovery
Landing	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	72, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	March 10, 2015
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 13, 2015
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 8434 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2550 hours (Total, this make and model), 8434 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 55 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 19 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	Female
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:		Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N72999
Model/Series:	PA22 160	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1958	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	22-6507
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel; Ski	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 29, 2016 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2000 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3857.9 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:		Rated Power:	150 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	PATA, 220 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	15 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	02:52 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	269°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	3 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 3300 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/ None
Wind Direction:	150°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/ N/A
Altimeter Setting:	28.97 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	-8°C / -10°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - None - Mist		
Departure Point:	FAIRBANKS, AK (FAI)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Ruby, AK	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	65.136108,-153.539443(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Swenson, Eric
Additional Participating Persons:	Craig M Kenmonth; FAA; Fairbanks, AK
Original Publish Date:	May 15, 2017
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=94866

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), established in 1967, is an independent federal agency mandated by Congress through the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974 to investigate transportation accidents, determine the probable causes of the accidents, issue safety recommendations, study transportation safety issues, and evaluate the safety effectiveness of government agencies involved in transportation. The NTSB makes public its actions and decisions through accident reports, safety studies, special investigation reports, safety recommendations, and statistical reviews.

The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).