



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Susanville, California	Accident Number:	WPR23LA151
Date & Time:	April 5, 2023, 11:30 Local	Registration:	N1641E
Aircraft:	LOWE BRUCE SKYSTR KTFX IV-1200	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Nose over/nose down	Injuries:	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot of the tailwheel-equipped airplane reported that, while flying low to observe the unusual water flows from mountains, he noted abnormal engine behavior. He elected to perform a precautionary landing on flat terrain due to nearby rising terrain. Upon touchdown, the airplane experienced a slight ballooning effect, leading the pilot to apply maximum braking upon touchdown. The tires grabbed harder than expected due to soft terrain and the airplane nosed over and came to rest inverted, which resulted in substantial damage to the fuselage. A postaccident engine test run by the pilot revealed no anomalies or an explanation for the abnormal engine behavior.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's braking technique during an off airport precautionary landing on unforeseen soft terrain, which resulted in a nose over.

Findings

Aircraft	Surface speed/braking - Incorrect use/operation
Environmental issues	Wet/muddy terrain - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Nose over/nose down (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	51,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 3, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	587 hours (Total, all aircraft), 516 hours (Total, this make and model), 577 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	LOWE BRUCE	Registration:	N1641E
Model/Series:	SKYSTR KTFX IV-1200	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1992	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	1854
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	September 4, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1200 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	73 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	654 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Yamaha
ELT:	C91 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	APEX
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	160 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:	KSVE, 4149 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	26 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:55 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	283°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	7 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	50°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.18 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	3°C / -7°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	SUSANVILLE, CA (KSVE)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	STEAD, NV (KRTS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	Latitude, Longitude:	40.28018,-120.01184(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Rho, Paul
Additional Participating Persons:	Ron; FAA; Reno, NV
Original Publish Date:	November 15, 2023
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=107034

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).