



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Baker City, Oregon	Accident Number:	WPR24LA033
Date & Time:	November 9, 2023, 12:00 Local	Registration:	N418BS
Aircraft:	Piper PA-12	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel exhaustion	Injuries:	
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported a total loss of engine power resulting from fuel exhaustion, approximately one mile from the airport. While executing a forced landing in a farm field, a strong crosswind gust raised one wing. The pilot was unable to recover from this since no power authority was available. When the airplane contacted terrain, the landing gear and wingtip struck the ground, and the airplane ground looped. The airplane sustained substantial damage to its wings. The pilot reported that there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures 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 inadequate fuel planning, which resulted in a total loss of engine power due to fuel exhaustion.

Findings

Personnel issues	Preflight inspection - Pilot
Personnel issues	Fuel planning - Pilot
Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Aircraft	Fuel - Fluid level
Environmental issues	Rough terrain - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing	Fuel exhaustion (Defining event)
Landing-flare/touchdown	Off-field or emergency landing

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	73
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	March 12, 2021
Flight Time:	2764 hours (Total, all aircraft), 753.8 hours (Total, this make and model), 6.4 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N418BS
Model/Series:	PA-12	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1947	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	12-2831
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	October 4, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:	11.91 Hrs	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	O-320-A2B
Registered Owner:	TWIN BUTTES LLC	Rated Power:	160
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:	KBKE, 3363 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	11:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	1°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	18 knots / 25 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	120°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.24 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	7°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Mitchell, OR	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Baker City, OR (BKE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:45 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Baker City Airport KBKE	Runway Surface Type:	
Airport Elevation:	3375 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Dry
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Forced landing

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	N/A	Latitude, Longitude:	44.837333, -117.80913(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Basti, Paymaun
Additional Participating Persons:	Patrick Darling; Federal Aviation Administration; Boise, ID
Original Publish Date:	June 6, 2024
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=193378

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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](#).