



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Strawberry Reservoir, Utah	Accident Number:	WPR23LA126
Date & Time:	March 11, 2023, 11:30 Local	Registration:	N553AT
Aircraft:	Trendak Taurus	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)	Injuries:	2 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that, while flying low over a snow-covered frozen lake, the gyrocopter was closer to the surface than he realized. The pilot increased engine power to attempt to climb away from the surface, however, the nosewheel impacted snow on the surface and the gyrocopter nosed over, rolled, and came to rest on its side. The fuselage, horizontal stabilizer, and rudders were substantially damaged. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures with the gyrocopter 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 clearance from the snow-covered lake while flying at a low altitude.

Findings

Personnel issues	Monitoring environment - Pilot
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Environmental issues	Snowy/icy terrain - Effect on operation

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT) (Defining event)
-----------------------------------	---

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	59,Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Center
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Gyroplane	Restraint Used:	Unknown
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:	May 14, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	550.3 hours (Total, all aircraft), 33.2 hours (Total, this make and model), 489 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 13.1 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 10 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 0.7 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Passenger Information

Certificate:		Age:	Male
Airplane Rating(s):		Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):		Restraint Used:	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):		Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):		Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:		Last FAA Medical Exam:	
Occupational Pilot:	UNK	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Trendak	Registration:	N553AT
Model/Series:	Taurus	Aircraft Category:	Gyroplane
Year of Manufacture:	2017	Amateur Built:	Yes
Airworthiness Certificate:	Experimental (Special)	Serial Number:	T&S F26917S
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	3
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 7, 2023 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1320 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	140 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	Not installed	Engine Model/Series:	912 UL 2-01
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:	KPVU, 4497 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	27 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	10:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	276°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6000 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 20000 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	3°C / -5°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Provo, UT (KPVU)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Provo, UT (KPVU)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	10:49 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	40.17,-111.13(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Blocher, Kristyn
Additional Participating Persons:	John Hansen; Federal Aviation Administration; SLC
Original Publish Date:	April 20, 2023
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=106882

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](#).