

Joshua Cawthra  
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board

[REDACTED]  
Federal Way, WA 98003  
[REDACTED]

Web: <http://www.nts.gov>  
Incident - WPR17FA101

To Joshua,

On Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017, I, Joe Clare, witnessed the Icon A-5 plane with two passengers approach my boat on the east side of the narrows on Lake Berryessa, CA at the point known as Little Portuguese Canyon at approximately 0915 hours. I saw the plane approaching us from about 300 feet away at approximately 30-50 feet off the ground. As the plane passed I waved to the pilots and they waved back. Everything at that moment seemed normal, the plane had no smoke coming from it, engine was running smoothly and appeared as if they were just cruising the lake or coming into land the airplane, although the airplane was not moving up or down during this time, it was flying straight. Approximate speed appeared to be around 30 to 40 mph. We had just begun fishing so my friend Preston Sherwood was baiting his line and I turned back to watch him when within 5 seconds after I waved I heard the airplanes engine rev up and accelerate hard as he pitched the plane upward toward the right side of the Little Portuguese Canyon first hill, in what appeared to be an effort to climb out of the cove. I continued to watch the airplane as it reached approximately 100 feet above the ground and all of a sudden turned left (or west). The airplane continued left (west) and began to quickly descend towards the ground as if he was trying to make a U-turn in the air. I lost visual as they flew behind the point in which our boat was sitting on the point of Little Portuguese Canyon. Within 3 seconds both Preston and I heard a very loud crash and we instantly knew the airplane had gone down.

We quickly reeled up our rods and drove the boat over to them as fast as we could. As we approached the airplane on the left side embankment of Little Portuguese Canyon we called out to the two men "Are you Okay, were here to help you," but there was no response from either passenger. At this time there was no fire or smoke from the airplane, but the cockpit was open and we did not know if they were alive. We wanted to help them as quickly as possible, Preston suggested I stay on the boat and keep a safe distance as he would check them out. Preston got off the boat and checked them out and saw they were both unconscious and could not be removed from the airplane. He said they both appeared to have neck, back, leg injuries and were bleeding from the face and were not moving or responding to his verbal communication and the airplane smelled of gasoline. It was at this time, he announced to me we could not get them out and that we needed to get help. Preston got back on the boat and we immediately called 911, as we headed back to the Pleasure Cove Marina, but we were both out of cellphone range. Preston continued to call and I waited on the line. About half way back to Pleasure Cove Marina Preston got a hold of 911 and informed them of our situation. At approximately 0924 hours according to my cellphone log, I called Pleasure Cove Marina and the phone rang and went to an answering machine in which I started to leave a message stating "We have an Emergency, a plane has crashed with two men down and they need help!" A woman picked up the phone and said what happened, were are you at? I informed her of the situation and told her we were on the way to her Marina and needed all the help we could get to try and get these two men out as they were crushed in the airplane. She told me to call 911, I told her no you call 911 as our reception is bad and Preston was having problems hearing the dispatcher on his phone. She said hold on don't hang up and said she was calling from a different phone. As we approached the Marina we saw a man driving a boat asked if he worked here and he said yes, turned around headed to the dock and picked up two other men which

were waiting for us to arrive. We quickly drove them back to Little Portuguese Canyon and showed them where the airplane with the two men were located.

Once the Pleasure Cove Marina workers arrived to the beach they approached the two men and saw that they were not moving or responding to them. They got back on their boat and began to wait in the middle of the cove for the authorities to arrive. We waited with them for approximately ten minutes. The Pleasure Cove Marina workers told us we could leave as we did not have to watch this, we asked them if they were sure and they said yes, so we left. Later that day, as we came back to the dock and loaded the boat on the trailer a Napa County Sheriff asked us if we saw a plane crash today and we replied yes. Sheriff asked us for our information and if we could stay to answer questions and I said sure, anything to help you as I approached his vehicle. Sheriff contacted someone out at the scene and asked if he wanted us to wait and he replied no I am finishing up here and will call them later. We drove home and once I got home at approximately 2013 hours I spoke to you (Josh from NTSB) and told you the very sad story of what we observed earlier that day.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Joe Clare

[REDACTED]  
Concord, Ca 94521  
[REDACTED]



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