



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Caleb Desmarais
Witness

Interview Date and Time: August 29, 2019; 1350 PT

Mr. Desmarais, a senior firefighter and helicopter crewmember with the United States Forest Service at the time of the accident, stated that he was seated in a truck in the driver's seat next to another crewmember at the time of the accident. The truck was beneath a tree canopy and facing the runway. He saw a fast moving object out of the corner of his right eye that wasn't making any noise. When he look, he recognized the object as an airplane about 5 ft above ground level with the wingtips rocking, but was not making any noise. Immediately after he heard the engine power increase, but the wings continued to rock. The airplane may have started to climb by the time it reached the witness' center of vision and about 1-2 seconds later it disappeared from his view. Shortly after Mr. Desmarais heard a strange noise that he described as a "pop" sound, but did not see any moving trees, dust or smoke when he walked out to the runway. Approximately 15 minutes later he looked up towards the departure end of runway 06 and saw dark smoke. He opined that the accident occurred after 1825.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Denise Kelley
Mother of Accident Passenger

Interview Date: August 31, 2019

Ms. Kelley reported that the accident pilot lived with her in Oregon at the time of the accident. One week before the accident, Ms. Kelley observed the pilot studying a map of McKenzie Bridge, Oregon. He informed her that he was considering flying up to one of two airstrips in the mountains.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Jason Delanoy
Witness

Interview Date and Time: August 29, 2019; 1424 PT

Mr. Delanoy, a helicopter mechanic and fueler at the time of the accident, was standing near a truck under a tree canopy facing the runway at the time of the accident. When the airplane came into view it appeared to be going slow and was “way too low.” The engine did not show any indications of smoke and sounded continuous at a low power setting. The airplane banked side to side hard about 20°, but disappeared from his view behind trees within only a few seconds of appearing. He did not observe the airplane climb or the engine power increase or decrease during this time.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Mike Short
Flight Instructor

Interview Date and Time: August 30, 2019; 1300 PT

According to Mr. Short, he was the accident pilot's flight instructor from September 2018 through his private pilot check ride in July 2019 with the exception of October through April when the pilot ceased training temporarily for ski season. The accident pilot aspired to become a professional pilot and was serious about it. Mr. Short observed that the pilot studied hard, performed all of his ground study work on his own, was very thorough. He considered the accident pilot to be one of his best students. Mr. Short received compliments from the designated pilot examiner who administered the accident pilot's practical test for his private pilot check ride.

During their training time together they never practiced at mountain airports. A few days after the pilot passed his check ride, Mr. Short took him to a private grass strip in a Piper PA-22. The pilot's comments indicated that he enjoyed landing on the grass strip.

Mr. Short stated that he did not understand what the accident pilot's decision making process was when he decided to attempt to land in McKenzie Bridge, Oregon. He further remarked that

the wouldn't recommend that airport to any of his students without first talking with someone experienced first due to the airport's turbulence and downdrafts. He also encourages his students to obtain formal mountain flight training before going into the mountains. The accident pilot never informed Mr. Short that he had considered mountain flying or a flight to McKenzie Bridge, Oregon.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Kari Hirschberger
Witness

Interview Date and Time: August 29, 2019; 1321 PT

Ms. Hirschberger, who was a helicopter crewmember for the United States Forest Service at the time, stated she was seated in the passenger seat of her vehicle facing the airfield under a tree canopy at the time of the accident. The event occurred between 1835 and 1840. As she was conversing with other crewmembers, the accident airplane came into view on runway 06 about 5 ft above ground level with the engine running and looked like it was attempting to climb. She was unable to see the end of the runway from her position as it was blocked by trees. The wings rocked as it transitioned into a slow climb and then disappeared from her view about 15-20 ft above ground level. The engine sounded “normal” and did not give any indication that the airplane was experiencing trouble. The crew observed smoke off the departure end of runway 06 about 15 minutes later.



MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

Stephen Stein
Aviation Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region

NTSB Accident Number: WPR19FA244
Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N4108F; Cessna 172
Accident Location: McKenzie Bridge, Oregon
Accident Date: August 27, 2019

Note: The following interviews were documented by the Investigator-In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

Interview #1 Summary

Ron Stevens
Accident Airplane Owner

Interview Date & Time: August 30, 2019 0900 PT

Mr. Stevens stated that he was the airplane owner at the time of the accident and had interacted with the accident pilot on the day of the accident. The pilot rented the airplane from 1730 to 1930. Mr. Stevens told the pilot that he put an extra 5-6 gallons of fuel in the airplane before they departed and warned the pilot of the density altitude that day and that the airplane wouldn't perform like he was used to with the high ambient temperatures they were experiencing at the time.