



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Eric M. Gutierrez
Air Safety Investigator
Western Pacific Region

Date: June 29, 2022
Person Contacted: Sergeant Brandon Littrell
NTSB Accident Number: WPR22LA238

Narrative:

The following is a synopsis of the information provided by Sergeant Littrell in a telephone conversation.

Sergeant Littrell explained that he is a patrol sergeant with the Valley County Sheriff's Office, Cascade, Idaho. On June 27, 2022 he was notified of an airplane accident involving N1231C a Piper, PA-20-135 located about 1 ½ miles north of Lower Loon Creek Airport (C53), Challis, Idaho.



Figure 1: Overview of the accident site location.

Examination of the accident site revealed that the airplane impacted steep rising mountainous terrain at an elevation of about 6,240 ft mean sea level (msl), in an approximate southern heading. The main wreckage came to rest upright about 30 ft below the initial impact point and was mostly consumed by fire. All major structural components of the airplane were observed at the accident site.



Figure 2: View of accident airplane (photo courtesy of local law enforcement)

The forward section of the fuselage was heavily impact and thermal damaged. The cabin area was heavily impact and thermal damaged. The instrument panel had various instruments separated, impact and thermal damaged. The engine mount had several fractures, consistent with impact damage. The aft section of the fuselage exhibited thermal damage throughout.

The left wing remained attached to the fuselage. Crushing, bending and thermal damage was observed throughout the wing. The left aileron remained attached via their mounts and thermal damaged.



Figure 3: View of left wing. (photo courtesy of local law enforcement)

The right wing remained attached to the fuselage. Crushing, bending and thermal damage was observed throughout the wing. The right aileron remained attached via their mounts and thermal damaged.



Figure 4: View of right wing. (photo courtesy of local law enforcement)

The fuselage was mostly intact, crushing, bending and thermal damage was observed throughout. The engine and forward portion of the fuselage was impact and thermal damaged. The engine mount had several fractures, consistent with impact damage.

The vertical stabilizer, rudder, horizontal stabilizer, and elevator remained attached and secure to their respective mounts.



Figure 5: View of empennage. (photo courtesy of local law enforcement)

The engine remained attached to the engine mount. All four cylinders remained attached and exhibited impact and thermal damage. The exhaust remained attached to the engine and exhibited impact damage throughout.

The airplane was equipped with a two blade propeller. The propeller and attached crankshaft flange separated from the engine at the crankshaft. Both blades remained attached to the propeller hub. Propeller blade A exhibited polishing along the leading edge, along with unidirectional striations on the cambered side of the blade. Propeller blade B exhibited S bending mid span, with unidirectional striations on the cambered side of the blade.



Figure 6: View of propeller. (photo courtesy of local law enforcement)