



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Friday Harbor, Washington	<b>Accident Number:</b>	WPR21LA172
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 21, 2021, 17:15 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N888MJ
<b>Aircraft:</b>	MICHAEL J ROBBINS SEAREY	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Loss of engine power (partial)	<b>Injuries:</b>	2 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

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## Analysis

The pilot of an experimental amphibian airplane reported that, during takeoff, about 200 ft above ground level, the engine experienced a reduction of power. The engine was running, but without sufficient power to maintain level flight. He elected to make an off-airport landing that resulted in an impact with vegetation and substantial damage to both wings.

The pilot further reported that, the right throttle cable had pulled loose from the carburetor arm on takeoff and the spring pulled the throttle arm to the idle position, which resulted in a partial loss of engine power. According to the pilot, he had reinstalled the carburetor opposite to how it came from the manufacturer.

According to the manufacturer, the carburetor is installed with the throttle lever spring positioned in such a manner that if the throttle cable breaks, the throttle lever spring will move to the FULLY OPEN position (full power).

There were no other preaccident mechanical failures or malfunctions 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:

Partial loss of engine power due to the detachment of the throttle cable from the carburetor arm, as a result of the pilot's inadequate maintenance which resulted in an off-airport landing and impact with vegetation.

### Findings

**Personnel issues**

Modification/alteration - Owner/builder

**Aircraft**

Fuel control/carburetor - Incorrect service/maintenance

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Takeoff</b>	Loss of engine power (partial) (Defining event)
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### Passenger Information

<b>Certificate:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	Female
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>		<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Right
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>		<b>Restraint Used:</b>	5-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>		<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>		<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>		<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>			

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Commercial	<b>Age:</b>	76, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea; Multi-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	Helicopter	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	5-point
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	Airplane	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	Airplane single-engine; Instrument airplane	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	June 9, 2015
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	June 18, 2020
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated) 3964 hours (Total, all aircraft), 439 hours (Total, this make and model), 3715 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 26 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 17 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	MICHAEL J ROBBINS	<b>Registration:</b>	N888MJ
<b>Model/Series:</b>	SEAREY	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	2016	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	Yes
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Experimental (Special)	<b>Serial Number:</b>	1DK462C
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel; Amphibian; Hull	<b>Seats:</b>	2
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	June 3, 2020 Condition	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1420 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>	77 Hrs	<b>Engines:</b>	1
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	439 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	
<b>ELT:</b>	C126 installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<b>Operating Certificate(s) Held:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

<b>Conditions at Accident Site:</b>	Visual (VMC)	<b>Condition of Light:</b>	Day
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KFHR,109 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	0 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	16:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	88°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>	Clear	<b>Visibility</b>	10 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	None	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	5 knots /	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	None / None
<b>Wind Direction:</b>	230°	<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	N/A / N/A
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.99 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	16°C / 8°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Friday Harbor, WA	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Everett, WA (PAE)	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>		<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G

## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	Friday Harbor Airport FHR	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	113 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Dry
<b>Runway Used:</b>		<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>		<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	None

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	2 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	48.521972,-123.02436(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Cornejo, Tealeye
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Bruce Kitelinger; Federal Aviation Administration; Des Moines, WA
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	February 8, 2022
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class 4</a>
<b>Note:</b>	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=102962">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=102962</a>

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](#).