



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	American Falls, Idaho	Accident Number:	WPR23LA193
Date & Time:	May 20, 2023, 12:30 Local	Registration:	N77J
Aircraft:	Cessna 140	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel starvation	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

According to the pilot the engine lost all power immediately after switching fuel tanks **inflight during initial climb**. The pilot performed a forced landing in a field, which resulted in the airplane nosing over and substantial damage to the fuselage. The pilot told investigators that she may have inadvertently moved the fuel selector to the OFF position and that she observed the fuel selector in the OFF position following the accident. The pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical malfunctions or failures 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 inadvertent selection of the off position of the fuel tank selector inflight, which resulted in a total loss of engine power due to fuel starvation.

Findings

Aircraft	Fuel selector/shutoff valve - Incorrect use/operation
Aircraft	Altitude - Attain/maintain not possible

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Fuel starvation (Defining event)
Initial climb	Loss of engine power (total)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	27
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	
Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Unknown	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 6, 2020
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	
Flight Time:	408 hours (Total, all aircraft), 175 hours (Total, this make and model), 283 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 34 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N77J
Model/Series:	140	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	11489
Landing Gear Type:		Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:		Certified Max Gross Wt.:	
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	C126 installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	C-85-12
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	
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:	KPIH,4478 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	13 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	12:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	59°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	290°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.21 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	26°C / 8°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	American Falls, ID (KU01)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Wells , NV (KLWL)	Type of Clearance:	VFR
Departure Time:	12:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	42.811906,-112.82105(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Basti, Paymaun
Additional Participating Persons:	Lyndsay Carlson; FAA; Salf Lake City, UT Jon Hanson; FAA; Salt Lake City, UT
Original Publish Date:	December 13, 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=192211

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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](#).