



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Gunnison, Colorado	Accident Number:	CEN23LA263
Date & Time:	June 23, 2023, 08:17 Local	Registration:	N3289S
Aircraft:	Cessna 182G	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Defining Event:	Aerodynamic stall/spin	Injuries:	4 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that she had been checked out in the accident airplane that morning and this was only her second flight in the same type. She stated that she and three passengers were sightseeing in a canyon that began to narrow. As the flight progressed, she was unable to climb out of the canyon and stalled the airplane. During the stall recovery, the airplane impacted trees and terrain; a postcrash fire ensued and the airplane was destroyed. The pilot reported no mechanical malfunctions or anomalies that would have precluded normal operations.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's improper decision to fly into an area of unsuitable terrain which the airplane was unable to exit, resulting in an aerodynamic stall and subsequent impact with terrain.

Findings

Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Personnel issues	Knowledge of geographic area - Pilot
Aircraft	Climb capability - Capability exceeded
Aircraft	Airspeed - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Angle of attack - Capability exceeded

Factual Information

History of Flight

Maneuvering-low-alt flying	Aerodynamic stall/spin (Defining event)
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Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	21
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	November 1, 2021
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	May 5, 2023
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 300 hours (Total, all aircraft), 2 hours (Total, this make and model), 20 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N3289S
Model/Series:	182G	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1964	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18255789
Landing Gear Type:	Tricycle	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 22, 2022 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	2800 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	10619 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:		Engine Model/Series:	O-470-R
Registered Owner:	DOUBLE LAZY H LLC	Rated Power:	230 Horsepower
Operator:	DOUBLE LAZY H LLC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KGUC, 7666 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	26 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	08:56 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	78°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	/	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:		Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.2 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	12°C / -1°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed
Passenger Injuries:	3 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	On-ground
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	4 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	38.447,-107.476

Preventing Similar Accidents

Mastering Mountain Flying (SA-039)

The Problem

Pilots with limited or no training in mountain flying can be surprised about their aircraft's different performance at high density altitude, often leading to serious or fatal accidents. Wind and other weather phenomena interacting with mountainous terrain often lead unsuspecting pilots into situations that are beyond their capabilities.

Should a crash occur, a pilot who survives the crash but does not have emergency or survival gear immediately accessible may not survive the harsh environment until rescuers are able to reach the location.

What can you do?

Through training, pilots can develop skills and techniques that will allow them to safely fly in mountainous terrain. When planning flights in mountainous terrain, pilots and flight instructors should do the following to enhance safety:

- Flight instructors should encourage their students to attend a quality mountain flying course before attempting flight in mountainous terrain or at high density altitudes.
- Pilots should consult with local flight instructors before planning a flight into mountainous terrain. Even experienced mountain pilots may not be familiar with local conditions and procedures for safe operations.
- Pilots should be aware that weather interacting with mountainous terrain can cause dangerous wind, severe turbulence, and other conditions that may be unsafe for aircraft, especially light GA aircraft.
- Pilots should consider specialized emergency and survival equipment (such as personal locator beacons in addition to a 406 emergency locator transmitter) before flying in mountainous terrain, and develop a plan for immediate access to the equipment in the event of a postaccident fire.
- FBO staff should be alert for customers who appear to be planning flight into mountainous terrain who could benefit from mountain flying instruction.

See <https://www.nts.gov/Advocacy/safety-alerts/Documents/SA-039.pdf> for additional resources.

The NTSB presents this information to prevent recurrence of similar accidents. Note that this should not be considered guidance from the regulator, nor does this supersede existing FAA Regulations (FARs).

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): Williams, David

Additional Participating Persons: Brett Proud; FAA

Original Publish Date: August 31, 2023

Last Revision Date:

Investigation Class: [Class 4](#)

Note: The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.

Investigation Docket: <https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=192455>

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](#).