



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Rush City, Minnesota	Accident Number:	CEN25LA400
Date & Time:	September 23, 2025, 00:10 Local	Registration:	N14SS
Aircraft:	Piper PA-34-200	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Miscellaneous/other	Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported the flight was conducted on an instrument flight rules flight plan. The initial portion of the flight was in visual meteorological conditions. However, as the flight neared the intended destination airport, the weather conditions had deteriorated and an instrument approach was required. While on the final approach segment, the airplane drifted left of course. As the pilot was correcting and looking for the runway, he did not notice the airplane had descended below the minimum descent altitude. He initiated a missed approach but was unable to avoid trees in the airplane flight path. Since the runway was not in sight, he decided to divert to a nearby airport with visual conditions. The remainder of the flight was uneventful. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the right wing and stabilator from the tree impact. The pilot stated there were no failures or malfunctions related to the airplane before the accident.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's failure to properly monitor the airplane glide path which resulted in the inadvertent descent below the approach minimum descent altitude and the impact with trees.

Findings

Aircraft	Descent/approach/glide path - Not attained/maintained
Aircraft	Altitude - Not attained/maintained
Personnel issues	Identification/recognition - Pilot

Factual Information

History of Flight

Approach-IFR final approach	Miscellaneous/other (Defining event)
Approach-IFR missed approach	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial; Flight instructor	Age:	53, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Multi-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):	Airplane single-engine	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	October 1, 2024
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	September 3, 2024
Flight Time:	789 hours (Total, all aircraft), 180 hours (Total, this make and model), 730 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 83 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 13 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N14SS
Model/Series:	PA-34-200	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1977	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	34-7770385
Landing Gear Type:	Retractable - Tricycle	Seats:	6
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	March 11, 2025 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4570 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	45 Hrs	Engines:	2 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3806 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	LTSIO360
Registered Owner:	KS AVIATION LLC	Rated Power:	200 Horsepower
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Does Business As:	N/A	Operator Designator Code:	N/A

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Instrument (IMC)	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KROS,923 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	1 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	00:15 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	35°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	0.75 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 200 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots / 1 knots	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	20°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	29.93 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	14°C / 13°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - None - Mist		
Departure Point:	Ankeny, IA (IKV)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	IFR
Destination:	Rush City, MN (ROS)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	21:49 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	Rush City Regional ROS	Runway Surface Type:	Asphalt
Airport Elevation:	926 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	
Runway Used:	34	IFR Approach:	Global positioning system;RNAV
Runway Length/Width:	4401 ft / 75 ft	VFR Approach/Landing:	Go around

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	45.6855,-92.9655

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Sorensen, Timothy
Additional Participating Persons:	William Muller; FAA Flight Standards; Milwaukee, WI
Original Publish Date:	October 23, 2025
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=201745

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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](#).