



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

---

<b>Location:</b>	Skwentna, Alaska	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC09CA028
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	April 4, 2009, 14:00 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N2997M
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-12	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Collision during takeoff/land	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

---

## Analysis

The private pilot reported that before landing on the frozen snow-covered lake in a ski-equipped airplane, he intended to do a touch-and-go landing to check the snow conditions. He said that variable and gusty north-northwesterly winds required him to depart into an area of rising, tree-covered terrain. After landing to the northwest, he added full engine power and the airplane became airborne, but would not climb fast enough to outclimb the rising terrain. In the pilot's written statement to the NTSB, he stated that he: "Failed to fully recognize situation in time to abort departure..." The pilot indicated that the airplane collided with tree-covered terrain at the departure end of the lake. The airplane sustained substantial damage to the wings, fuselage, and empennage. The pilot indicated that there were no preaccident mechanical problems with the airplane.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of an unsuitable landing/takeoff area with an unfavorable wind.

## Findings

---

<b>Personnel issues</b>	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	(general) - Contributed to outcome
<b>Aircraft</b>	(general) - Capability exceeded
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Variable wind - Effect on operation

## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Takeoff</b>	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
----------------	--

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	46, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	
<b>Instrument Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Second Pilot Present:</b>	No
<b>Instructor Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Toxicology Performed:</b>	No
<b>Medical Certification:</b>	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	February 27, 2008
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	May 22, 2007
<b>Flight Time:</b>	933 hours (Total, all aircraft), 823 hours (Total, this make and model), 859 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 1 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Piper	<b>Registration:</b>	N2997M
<b>Model/Series:</b>	PA-12	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>		<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	12-1472
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Ski	<b>Seats:</b>	3
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	February 5, 2009 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	1750 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	3185 Hrs as of last inspection	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	LYCOMING
<b>ELT:</b>	C91 installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	O-320 SERIES
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	WIITA CHRIS D	<b>Rated Power:</b>	160 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	WIITA CHRIS D	<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>		<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	
<b>Observation Time:</b>		<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	
<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>	15 knots / 25 knots	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>		<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	2°C / -4°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>			
<b>Departure Point:</b>	Anchorage, AK (PAMR)	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Skwentna, AK	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	12:45 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	

## Wreckage and Impact Information

<b>Crew Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Passenger Injuries:</b>		<b>Aircraft Fire:</b>	None
<b>Ground Injuries:</b>	N/A	<b>Aircraft Explosion:</b>	None
<b>Total Injuries:</b>	1 None	<b>Latitude, Longitude:</b>	61.965278,-151.19139(est)

## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Johnson, Clinton
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Keith M Fiero; Federal Aviation Administration (Airworthiness); Anchorage, AK
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	July 28, 2009
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Investigation Class:</b>	<a href="#">Class</a>
<b>Note:</b>	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
<b>Investigation Docket:</b>	<a href="https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73613">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=73613</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](#).