



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Willcox, Arizona	Accident Number:	WPR14CA109
Date & Time:	January 25, 2014, 17:00 Local	Registration:	N9683P
Aircraft:	Piper PA 18-150	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Landing gear collapse	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he and his father had flown to the accident location to camp and hunt. They made three passes over an open area to find a suitable landing spot. The pilot stated that the grass appeared to be knee-to-hip height, but he believed it was safe to land. He set up for landing, and on the landing rollout, about 20-30 knots, the left main landing gear wheel struck an unseen, large embedded boulder that collapsed the left main landing gear. The airplane's wing sustained substantial damage. The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures 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:

The pilot's decision to land off airport on unsuitable terrain that resulted in a collision with hidden objects.

Findings

Personnel issues	Decision making/judgment - Pilot
Environmental issues	Mountainous/hilly terrain - Contributed to outcome
Environmental issues	Hidden/submerged object - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)
Landing-landing roll	Landing gear collapse (Defining event)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	38
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 Without waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 29, 2011
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	January 7, 2014
Flight Time:	2000 hours (Total, all aircraft), 15 hours (Total, this make and model)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9683P
Model/Series:	PA 18-150 A150	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-7509026
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	November 22, 2013 Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1750 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3830 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	LYCOMING
ELT:	Installed	Engine Model/Series:	O-320 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	Rated Power:	0 Horsepower
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:	TUS,2643 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	60 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	23:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	60°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 5500 ft AGL	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	11 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	320°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:	30.12 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	22°C / 6°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Tucson, AZ (TUS)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Willcox, AZ	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	16:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 None	Latitude, Longitude:	32.415554,-110.151107(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Cornejo, Tealeye
Additional Participating Persons:	David K Gilligan; Federal Aviation Administration; Scottsdale, AZ
Original Publish Date:	May 21, 2014
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=88745

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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](#).