Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Ft. Yukon, Alaska	**Accident Number:**	ANC14LA091
Date & Time:	September 28, 2014, 14:50 Local	**Registration:**	N7092H
Aircraft:	Piper J3	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Defining Event:	Fuel exhaustion	**Injuries:**	1 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot was conducting a personal cross-country flight. The pilot reported that, during the flight, the engine experienced a total loss of power. The pilot made a forced landing in a burned out area of trees, which resulted in substantial damage to the wings and fuselage.

The pilot reported the accident about 6 months after it occurred. The pilot reported that, after the forced landing, he noted that the right fuel tank cap was missing and that the fuel in the right fuel tank was depleted. The fuel selector was selected to the right fuel tank when the engine lost power, and the pilot stated that he did not attempt to switch the fuel selector to the left fuel tank. The airplane was never recovered or examined; however, given the pilot's statement, it is likely that the engine lost power due to fuel exhaustion.

Probable Cause and Findings

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

The pilot's improper preflight inspection and in-flight fuel management, which resulted in fuel exhaustion and a subsequent forced landing.

Findings

Personnel issues	Fuel planning - Pilot
Aircraft	Fuel - Fluid level
Environmental issues	Tree(s) - Contributed to outcome

Factual Information

History of Flight

Enroute	Fuel exhaustion (Defining event)
Emergency descent	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On September 28, 2014, about 1450 Alaska daylight time, a Piper J-3 airplane, N7092H, sustained substantial damage after colliding with terrain following a loss of engine power about 20 miles north of Circle, Alaska. The airplane was owned and operated by the private pilot as a personal flight under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight plan had been filed for the flight.

On the day of the accident, the National Transportation Safety Board investigator-in-charge was notified that an airplane had crashed and that the pilot was taken to a hospital for treatment and released. In the weeks following the accident, multiple attempts were made to contact the pilot by both the NTSB and FAA, with no success.

On April 1, 2015, the accident pilot contacted the FAA and made a statement about the accident. He stated that he was returning from his homestead about 140 miles north of Circle, and about 20 miles north of Circle, the airplane's engine lost all power. He made a forced landing in a burned out area of trees, and the airplane sustained damage to both wing, the left wing spar, and the fuselage. After the forced landing, he stated that he noticed the right hand wing fuel cap was missing. He stated that he had added five gallons of fuel to the right fuel tank before departing, and flew with the fuel selector on the right fuel tank for the entire flight before the engine lost power. He stated that after the engine lost power, he did not attempt to switch the fuel selector to the left fuel tank.

The airplane was not examined by the NTSB, and after repeated attempts, the pilot did not submit an NTSB Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report (NTSB Form 6120.1)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Sport Pilot	**Age:**	63
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	**Seat Occupied:**	Front
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	**Restraint Used:**	Unknown
Instrument Rating(s):	None	**Second Pilot Present:**	
Instructor Rating(s):	None	**Toxicology Performed:**	No
Medical Certification:	None	**Last FAA Medical Exam:**	
Occupational Pilot:	No	**Last Flight Review or Equivalent:**	October 12, 2010
Flight Time:			

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	**Registration:**	N7092H
Model/Series:	J3	**Aircraft Category:**	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	1963	**Amateur Built:**	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	**Serial Number:**	20343
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	**Seats:**	
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	Unknown	**Certified Max Gross Wt.:**	
Time Since Last Inspection:		**Engines:**	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:		**Engine Manufacturer:**	CONT MOTOR
ELT:	Installed	**Engine Model/Series:**	A&C75 SERIES
Registered Owner:	On file	**Rated Power:**	75 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:	PFYU,454 ft msl	**Distance from Accident Site:**	31 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	22:56 Local	**Direction from Accident Site:**	249°
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:	29.75 inches Hg	**Temperature/Dew Point:**	3°C / -5°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:**	

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	**Aircraft Damage:**	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		**Aircraft Fire:**	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	**Aircraft Explosion:**	None
Total Injuries:	1 None	**Latitude, Longitude:**	66.760833,-144.044174(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Shaver, Christopher
Additional Participating Persons:	
Original Publish Date:	March 2, 2016
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.ntsb.gov/Docket?ProjectID=91000