



# Aviation Investigation Final Report

<b>Location:</b>	Seeley Lake, Montana	<b>Accident Number:</b>	GAA16CA097
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	January 4, 2016, 17:10 Local	<b>Registration:</b>	N9493B
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Cessna 175	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>	Abnormal runway contact	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

## Analysis

The pilot reported that during the approach he was informed by a person on the ground, who was not associated with airport operations, that there was about 3 inches of compacted snow on the runway. Before attempting to land, he completed a low pass over the runway to observe the runway conditions, but reported that it was dusk and he was observing flat light conditions.

The pilot reported that the touchdown was normal, but about 50 to 75 feet into the landing roll the airplane pulled to the left. He attempted to correct with right rudder, but was unable to stop the airplane from ground looping to the left into a snow berm. After the accident, the pilot observed that he "landed left of center" and the left main landing gear caught a one foot snow berm. The right wing and right elevator were substantially damaged.

According to the Federal Aviation Administration Airport Facility Directory, the destination had "intermittent" snow removal and the airport manager could be called for current conditions. The runway used was not equipped with runway lights.

The pilot reported there were no 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' failure to identify the plowed runway width in dusk and flat light conditions, which resulted in a touchdown left of the runway center, an impact with a snow berm, and a ground loop.



## Findings

<b>Aircraft</b>	Directional control - Not attained/maintained
<b>Personnel issues</b>	Aircraft control - Pilot
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Runway/landing area condition - Awareness of condition
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Flat light - Effect on personnel
<b>Environmental issues</b>	Low light - Effect on personnel



## Factual Information

### History of Flight

<b>Landing-landing roll</b>	Abnormal runway contact (Defining event)
<b>Landing-landing roll</b>	Loss of control on ground
<b>Landing-landing roll</b>	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

### Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	43, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Left
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	4-point
<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 Without waivers/limitations	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	August 12, 2015
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>	No	<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	August 12, 2014
<b>Flight Time:</b>	(Estimated) 1300.3 hours (Total, all aircraft), 941 hours (Total, this make and model), 1202.4 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 21.3 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 19.3 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		



## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Make:</b>	Cessna	<b>Registration:</b>	N9493B
<b>Model/Series:</b>	175	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Year of Manufacture:</b>	1958	<b>Amateur Built:</b>	
<b>Airworthiness Certificate:</b>	Normal	<b>Serial Number:</b>	55293
<b>Landing Gear Type:</b>	Tailwheel	<b>Seats:</b>	4
<b>Date/Type of Last Inspection:</b>	October 5, 2015 Annual	<b>Certified Max Gross Wt.:</b>	2350 lbs
<b>Time Since Last Inspection:</b>		<b>Engines:</b>	1 Reciprocating
<b>Airframe Total Time:</b>	2646.4 Hrs at time of accident	<b>Engine Manufacturer:</b>	Lycoming
<b>ELT:</b>	C91A installed, not activated	<b>Engine Model/Series:</b>	IO-300-A1B
<b>Registered Owner:</b>	On file	<b>Rated Power:</b>	200 Horsepower
<b>Operator:</b>	On file	<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>	Dusk
<b>Observation Facility, Elevation:</b>	KMSO, 3206 ft msl	<b>Distance from Accident Site:</b>	31 Nautical Miles
<b>Observation Time:</b>	23:53 Local	<b>Direction from Accident Site:</b>	230°
<b>Lowest Cloud Condition:</b>		<b>Visibility</b>	6 miles
<b>Lowest Ceiling:</b>	Overcast / 11000 ft AGL	<b>Visibility (RVR):</b>	
<b>Wind Speed/Gusts:</b>	/	<b>Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:</b>	/ None
<b>Wind Direction:</b>		<b>Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:</b>	/ N/A
<b>Altimeter Setting:</b>	29.87 inches Hg	<b>Temperature/Dew Point:</b>	-7°C / -12°C
<b>Precipitation and Obscuration:</b>	Moderate - None - Haze		
<b>Departure Point:</b>	KALISPELL, MT (GPI )	<b>Type of Flight Plan Filed:</b>	None
<b>Destination:</b>	Seeley Lake, MT (23S )	<b>Type of Clearance:</b>	None
<b>Departure Time:</b>	16:30 Local	<b>Type of Airspace:</b>	Class G



## Airport Information

<b>Airport:</b>	SEELEY LAKE 23S	<b>Runway Surface Type:</b>	
<b>Airport Elevation:</b>	4256 ft msl	<b>Runway Surface Condition:</b>	Rough;Snow;Soft
<b>Runway Used:</b>	16	<b>IFR Approach:</b>	None
<b>Runway Length/Width:</b>	4575 ft / 75 ft	<b>VFR Approach/Landing:</b>	Full stop;Traffic pattern

## 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>	47.18,-113.445274(est)



## Administrative Information

<b>Investigator In Charge (IIC):</b>	Gerhardt, Adam
<b>Additional Participating Persons:</b>	Troy McClanahan; Helena FSDO (FAA); Helena, MT
<b>Original Publish Date:</b>	April 5, 2016
<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=92544">https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=92544</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](#).