



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	New Fairfield, Connecticut	Accident Number:	ERA17LA337
Date & Time:	September 15, 2017, 16:00 Local	Registration:	N885PR
Aircraft:	AIRMAX CONSTRUCOES AERONAUTICA SEAMAX-M22	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Collision during takeoff/land	Injuries:	2 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

Analysis

The private pilot of the amphibious airplane reported that he performed a fly-by of the lake he intended to land on to ensure that there were no boats or obstacles in the water. Seeing none and observing calm conditions, he conducted the landing, during which the airplane impacted a submerged object. The impact compromised the hull allowing water to enter, and the airplane subsequently sank. Pine and bark debris was found in the damaged area of the hull. The pilot reported there were no mechanical malfunctions or failures 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:

Collision with a submerged object during a water landing.

Findings

Environmental issues	Hidden/submerged object - Awareness of condition
Environmental issues	(general) - Awareness of condition

Factual Information

History of Flight

Landing-landing roll	Collision during takeoff/land (Defining event)
Landing-landing roll	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

On September 15, 2017, about 1600 eastern daylight time, an Airmax Construccoes Aeronautica Seamax-M22, N885PR, was substantially damaged after a water landing in Candlewood Lake near New Fairfield, Connecticut. The private pilot and passenger were uninjured. The airplane was operated under the provisions of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The private pilot of the amphibious airplane reported that after a cross-country flight with his son, they arrived at their intended lake destination to conduct a water landing. He reported that he performed a flyby to ensure there were no boats or obstacles in the water where he intended to land. Seeing none, and observing calm conditions, he conducted the landing. After the airplane uneventfully settled onto the water and during the subsequent taxi, they noticed water pouring up from the floor. He attempted to get to the shore, but the water was pouring in fast, so he shut down the engine and evacuated. They were rescued by nearby personnel who were on personal watercraft. The pilot reported there was no mechanical malfunction or failure that would have precluded normal operation.

The pilot further stated that the landing and taxi appeared completely normal and nothing was seen or felt floating in the water. He surmised that the airplane may have struck a submerged tree or log.

A Federal Aviation Administration inspector examined the airplane after the accident and observed that there was a 9-inch crescent shaped gouge on the hull below the waterline and it was impacted with pine needles and bark.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Private	Age:	54, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land; Single-engine sea	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	4-point
Instrument Rating(s):	None	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	Instrument airplane	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 3 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	January 13, 2016
Occupational Pilot:	No	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	February 1, 2017
Flight Time:	1515 hours (Total, all aircraft), 16 hours (Total, this make and model), 1500 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 16 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	AIRMAX CONSTRUCCIONES AERONAUTICA	Registration:	N885PR
Model/Series:	SEAMAX-M22 NO SERIES	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:	2011	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Special light-sport (Special)	Serial Number:	113
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel; Amphibian; Hull	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	January 21, 2017 Condition	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1320 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	503.9 Hrs as of last inspection	Engine Manufacturer:	Rotax
ELT:	C126 installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	912
Registered Owner:	WATERBIRD HOLDINGS LLC	Rated Power:	100 Horsepower
Operator:	WATERBIRD HOLDINGS LLC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	DXR,456 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	15:53 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	197°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Visibility	10 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 3900 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	4 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	170°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.05 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	25°C / 18°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	WESTHAMPTON BEACH, NY (FOK)	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	New Fairfield, CT (NONE)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	15:30 Local	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Airport Information

Airport:	LAKE NONE	Runway Surface Type:	Water
Airport Elevation:	429 ft msl	Runway Surface Condition:	Water-calm
Runway Used:		IFR Approach:	None
Runway Length/Width:		VFR Approach/Landing:	Straight-in

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:	41.494445,-73.450553(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Mccarter, Lawrence
Additional Participating Persons:	Robert McCauley; FAA/FSDO; Enfield, CT
Original Publish Date:	December 3, 2020
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=96099

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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](#).