



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

Location:	COLDFOOT, AK	Accident Number:	ANC98LA034
Date & Time:	04/03/1998, 1900 AST	Registration:	N1205F
Aircraft:	Cessna 185F	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:		Injuries:	3 None
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter - Non-scheduled		

Analysis

The pilot, and two passengers, were taxiing for takeoff in a wheel/ski equipped, tailwheel airplane. The flight was a VFR air taxi flight from a remote lake. The landing/departure area was about 3,500 feet long, and covered by soft snow. As the pilot began to taxi, he noticed the snow was softer than anticipated, so he began several taxi runs to pack down the snow for takeoff. During a turn, the right ski encountered soft snow and sank. The right wing struck the snow, and the airplane nosed over. The airplane received damage to the right wing, and propeller.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's selection of unsuitable terrain for takeoff. Soft, snow covered terrain was a factor in the accident.

Findings

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER
Phase of Operation: TAXI

Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SNOW COVERED
2. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - SOFT
3. (C) UNSUITABLE TERRAIN OR TAKEOFF/LANDING/TAXI AREA - SELECTED - PILOT IN COMMAND

Occurrence #2: NOSE OVER
Phase of Operation: TAXI

Factual Information

On April 3, 1998, about 1900 Alaska standard time, a wheel/ski equipped Cessna 185F airplane, N1205F, sustained substantial damage while taxiing for a takeoff from a remote lake, about 50 miles northeast of Coldfoot, Alaska. The airplane was being operated as a visual flight rules (VFR) on-demand passenger flight under Title 14 CFR Part 135 when the accident occurred. The airplane was registered to the pilot, and operated by North Quest Aviation, North Pole, Alaska. The certificated commercial pilot, and the two passengers were not injured. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed. A VFR flight plan was filed.

During a telephone conversation with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge (IIC), on April 6, 1998, at 1050, the pilot reported he landed at Squaw Lake about 1830. The landing/departure area was about 3,500 feet long. He loaded his passengers and began to taxi for takeoff from a mining camp. The snow was softer than anticipated, so the pilot began several taxi runs to pack down the snow for takeoff. During a turn, the right ski encountered soft snow and sank. The right wing struck the snow, and the airplane nosed over. The airplane received damage to the right wing, and propeller.

Company personnel reported the flight was overdue, and a search was initiated. Search personnel located the accident site on 4/4/98.

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	32, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land	Seat Occupied:	Left
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Restraint Used:	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	No
Medical Certification:	Class 2 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	Last FAA Medical Exam:	04/28/1997
Occupational Pilot:	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:		
Flight Time:	971 hours (Total, all aircraft), 146 hours (Total, this make and model), 900 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 138 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 29 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 4 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Cessna	Registration:	N1205F
Model/Series:	185F 185F	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	185-02768
Landing Gear Type:	Ski/wheel; Tailwheel	Seats:	4
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	03/18/1998, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	3350 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	29 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	3679 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Continental
ELT:	Installed, activated, aided in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	IO-520-D
Registered Owner:	WILLIAM E. ANKER	Rated Power:	300 hp
Operator:	NORTH QUEST AVIATION	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	On-demand Air Taxi (135)
Operator Does Business As:		Operator Designator Code:	NQ7C

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	, 0 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	0 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	0000	Direction from Accident Site:	0°
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Scattered / 2000 ft agl	Visibility	50 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	None / 0 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	5 knots /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	180°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	VFR
Destination:	CHANDALAR LAKE, AK (WCR)	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	1900 AST	Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 None	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	2 None	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 None	Latitude, Longitude:	

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC): SCOTT R ERICKSON **Report Date:** 02/15/2001

Additional Participating Persons: EDWARD BENTLEY; FAIRBANKS, AK

Publish Date:

Investigation Docket: NTSB accident and incident dockets serve as permanent archival information for the NTSB's investigations. Dockets released prior to June 1, 2009 are publicly available from the NTSB's Record Management Division at pubinq@ntsb.gov, or at 800-877-6799. Dockets released after this date are available at <http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/>.

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The Independent Safety Board Act, as codified at 49 U.S.C. Section 1154(b), precludes the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an incident or accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. A factual report that may be admissible under 49 U.S.C. § 1154(b) is available [here](#).