



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Final Report

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<b>Location:</b>	CORDOVA, AK	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ANC99LA136
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/01/1999, 2030 AKD	<b>Registration:</b>	N9130D
<b>Aircraft:</b>	Piper PA-18	<b>Aircraft Damage:</b>	Substantial
<b>Defining Event:</b>		<b>Injuries:</b>	1 None

**Flight Conducted Under:** Part 91: General Aviation - Personal

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## Analysis

During takeoff from an off airport river bank on a flight to spot moose, the airplane's left wingtip contacted tall brush. The airplane spun around, and the right wing and right main landing gear attachment sustained substantial damage. The private pilot said the winds were light and variable. He indicated to the NTSB investigator-in-charge that he had landed and taken off from the same site on previous occasions, but failed to avoid contacting the brush during this takeoff.

## Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's failure to avoid obstructions during takeoff. A factor associated with this accident was the high brush along the river bank.

## Findings

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Occurrence #1: IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ROLL/RUN

### Findings

1. (F) TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH VEGETATION
2. (C) MANEUVER TO AVOID OBSTRUCTIONS - NOT PERFORMED - PILOT IN COMMAND

## Factual Information

On September 1, 1999, about 2030 Alaska daylight time, a tundra tire equipped Piper PA-18 airplane, N9130D, sustained substantial damage when it contacted brush during the takeoff roll from a riverbank on Clear Creek, at 60 degrees 32 minutes north latitude, 144 degrees 46 minutes west longitude, about 38 miles east of Cordova, Alaska. The solo private pilot was not injured. The flight was being conducted under 14 CFR Part 91 as a personal flight to spot moose. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident, and no flight plan was filed.

The pilot told the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC) during a telephone interview on September 13, and in his Pilot/Operator report, that during the takeoff roll, the left wing contacted brush located on the edge of the river, and the airplane spun around. The right wing sustained substantial damage, and the right main landing gear collapsed. He indicated the winds were light and variable. The pilot said he had operated from the same area previously, but did not avoid striking willows during this takeoff.

## Pilot Information

<b>Certificate:</b>	Private	<b>Age:</b>	58, Male
<b>Airplane Rating(s):</b>	Single-engine Land	<b>Seat Occupied:</b>	Front
<b>Other Aircraft Rating(s):</b>	None	<b>Restraint Used:</b>	Seatbelt, Shoulder harness
<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 Valid Medical--w/ waivers/lim.	<b>Last FAA Medical Exam:</b>	03/23/1998
<b>Occupational Pilot:</b>		<b>Last Flight Review or Equivalent:</b>	
<b>Flight Time:</b>	1200 hours (Total, all aircraft), 500 hours (Total, this make and model), 1100 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

## Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N9130D
Model/Series:	PA-18 PA-18	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Year of Manufacture:		Amateur Built:	No
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	18-6511
Landing Gear Type:	Tailwheel	Seats:	2
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	07/15/1999, Annual	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	1500 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:	12 Hours	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Airframe Total Time:	4407 Hours	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
ELT:	Installed, not activated	Engine Model/Series:	C-90
Registered Owner:	ALVIN B. FULTON	Rated Power:	90 hp
Operator:	ALVIN B. FULTON	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None

## 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:	Unknown / 0 ft agl	Visibility	25 Miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 2500 ft agl	Visibility (RVR):	0 ft
Wind Speed/Gusts:	Light and Variable /	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	/
Wind Direction:	Variable	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	/
Altimeter Setting:		Temperature/Dew Point:	10° C
Precipitation and Obscuration:			
Departure Point:		Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:		Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:	2030 ADT	Type of Airspace:	Class G

## Wreckage and Impact Information

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

## Administrative Information

**Investigator In Charge (IIC):** MATTHEW L THOMAS **Report Date:** 11/22/2000

**Additional Participating Persons:** GARY DUPARTIS(FAA FSDO); JUNEAU, 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](mailto: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](#).