



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Data Summary

Location:	Fort Smith, MT	Accident Number:	WPR13CA213
Date & Time:	07/02/2013, 1012 MDT	Registration:	N302MX
Aircraft:	AVIAT A-1B	Injuries:	1 Serious, 1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation		

Analysis

The pilot reported that he was conducting a wildlife survey flight and had been airborne about 2.5 hours, when the observer said that he would like to take a break. At that time, the flight was over a high mesa covered in short grass, which the pilot decided was a suitable landing area. The touchdown was smooth, but the airplane encountered undulating terrain during the rollout and began to bounce. The pilot added full power to abort the landing, and the airplane's speed began to increase; however, the pilot was unable to take off before impacting a bush. The airplane traveled several hundred feet down a ravine and came to an abrupt stop. The airplane's main landing gear collapsed, and both wings sustained substantial damage. The pilot estimated that the density altitude at the landing site was about 8,950 feet. He stated that the accident could have been avoided had he "made the decision not to land off-airport in that area at such density altitudes." The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical malfunctions or failures with the airplane that would have precluded normal operation.

Flight Events

Landing-aborted after touchdown - Collision during takeoff/land

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be: The pilot's improper decision to land on rough terrain at a high density altitude.

Findings

Personnel issues-Action/decision-Info processing/decision-Decision making/judgment-Pilot - C
Environmental issues-Conditions/weather/phenomena-Temp/humidity/pressure-High density altitude-Effect on equipment
Environmental issues-Physical environment-Terrain-Rough terrain-Awareness of condition

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Flight Instructor; Commercial	Age:	30
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine Land; Single-engine Sea	Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	None	Instructor Rating(s):	Airplane Single-engine
Flight Time:	2379 hours (Total, all aircraft), 160 hours (Total, this make and model), 2 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Manufacturer:	AVIAT	Registration:	N302MX
Model/Series:	A-1B	Engines:	1 Reciprocating
Operator:	Flightline, Inc	Engine Manufacturer:	Lycoming
Air Carrier Operating Certificate:	None	Engine Model/Series:	O-360-A1P
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General Aviation - Aerial Observation		

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:		Weather Information Source:	Pilot
Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions	Lowest Ceiling:	None
Condition of Light:	Day	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	Calm
Temperature:	26°C / 14°C	Visibility	10 Miles
Precipitation and Obscuration:	No Obscuration; No Precipitation		
Departure Point:	Laurel, MT (6S8)	Destination:	Laurel, MT (6S8)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	James F Struhsaker	Adopted Date:	09/05/2013
Note:	This accident report documents the factual circumstances of this accident as described to the NTSB.		
Investigation Docket:	http://dms.nts.gov/pubdms/search/dockList.cfm?mKey=86791		

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