National Transportation Safety Board Washington, DC 20594

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Total Make/Model: 216
Total Instrument Time: UnK/Nr

Brief of Accident

Adopted 05/09/2013

ERA12LA482

Instrument Ratings
Airplane

File No. 31149 07/26/2012 Green Creek ,NJ Aircraft Reg No. N4361M Time (Local): 16:15 EDT Make/Model: Piper/PA-12 Fatal Serious Minor/None Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-320 SERIES Crew 0 0 1 Aircraft Damage: Substantial Pass 0 0 0 Number of Engines: 1 Operating Certificate(s): None Type of Flight Operation: Banner Tow Reg. Flight Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation Last Depart, Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location Condition of Light: Day Destination: Local Flight, NJ Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip Basic Weather: Visual Conditions Lowest Ceiling: None Visibility: 10.00 SM Wind Dir/Speed: 190 / 011 kts Temperature (°C): 31 Precip/Obscuration: No Obscuration; No Precipitation Pilot-in-Command Age: 23 Flight Time (Hours) Certificate(s)/Rating(s) Total All Aircraft: 843 Flight Instructor; Commercial; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land Last 90 Days: 302

*** Note: NTSB investigators may not have traveled in support of this investigation and used data provided by various sources to prepare this aircraft accident report. ***

The pilot was returning to land after an uneventful banner-towing flight. He dropped the banner, added full engine power, climbed to traffic pattern altitude, and maneuvered to enter the downwind leg of the traffic pattern. During the climb, the engine sputtered and then lost total power. The pilot was not able to restart the engine and performed a forced landing into trees. Postaccident examination of the airplane did not reveal any mechanical malfunctions that would have precluded normal operation. Both fuel tanks were intact; the right fuel tank was found empty and the left fuel tank contained about 1.75 gallons of fuel. The airplane had been operated for more than 4 1/2 hours since its last refueling. It is likely that the airplane's low fuel state, combined with the maneuvering associated with the banner drop and the airplane's subsequent pitch-up and airport traffic pattern operations resulted in an interruption of fuel flow to the engine. Updated at May 9 2013 10:00AM

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Time (Local): 16:15 EDT

OCCURRENCES

Maneuvering - Fuel starvation Maneuvering - Loss of engine power (total) Emergency descent - Off-field or emergency landing Emergency descent - Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

FINDINGS

Personnel issues-Task performance-Planning/preparation-Fuel planning-Pilot - C Aircraft-Fluids/misc hardware-Fluids-Fuel-Fluid level - C

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows:
The pilot's inadequate fuel planning, which resulted in a total loss of engine power due to fuel starvation while maneuvering.