



National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

Location:	Kalispell, MT	Accident Number:	WPR22FA169
Date & Time:	April 30, 2022, 08:04 Local	Registration:	N1908A
Aircraft:	Bearhawk Bearhawk	Injuries:	2 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On April 30, 2022, about 0804 mountain daylight time, an experimental amateur-built Bearhawk LSA, N1908A, sustained substantial damaged when it was involved in an accident near Kalispell, Montana. The pilot and passenger were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

The pilot planned to fly to Eureka Airport (88M) for breakfast with a group of friends flying in two other airplanes. They departed Kalispell City Airport (S27) at 0759, and the accident airplane was the last in trail.

The other pilots in the group stated that the takeoff was uneventful, with clear skies, good visibility, and no significant weather. They did not see the accident airplane after takeoff but were tracking it on their ADS-B receivers until a few minutes later when it disappeared.

Preliminary ADS-B data indicated that after departing from runway 31, the accident airplane climbed on runway heading for about 4 minutes to 4,900 ft msl, at a ground speed of about 88 knots. It then levelled off and accelerated to about 115 knots. One minute later, the data abruptly ended, with the airplane still travelling on the same track.

The first identified piece of wreckage consisted of the right wing and outboard section of its lift strut, which came to rest on a road, about 350 ft northwest of the last ADS-B target. The inboard section of the strut was located about 100 ft northwest of the wing, and the rest of the airplane was located another 850 ft northwest, in a flat grass field, at an elevation of about 3,090 ft. The right wing sustained crush damage and abrasions along the length of its root rib, consistent with ground impact after separation. A deep indentation that appeared to match the dimensions of the main landing gear tire was present on the underside of the leading edge, just forward of the lift strut fitting.

The main wreckage came to rest in a nose down attitude in a grass field. The airframe sustained extensive crush damage and fragmentation through to the leading edge of the

vertical stabilizer. The left wing remained partially attached to the airframe by its lift strut, and the forward spar end cap.

The bolts that connected both the forward and aft wing spar end caps and the lower strut remained in place and attached to their respective steel fittings and weldments on both sides of the airframe.

Multiple witnesses heard a loud bang, and observed a wing falling to the ground, however no person came forward as a witness to the initial breakup event. A north-facing security camera, located on a building about 650 ft from the main wreckage, captured the airplane about one second before impact. It was in a direct nose-down attitude and spinning to the right. The right wing was missing, but the left wing and empennage were still attached.

The airplane was composed of a fabric-covered tubular steel airframe, and an aluminum wing. It was built by the pilot from plans, with construction completed, and its airworthiness certificate issued, in June 2018. Maintenance records indicated that the last condition inspection was completed by the pilot on June 3, 2021, and the last entry, on February 5, 2022, was for an engine oil change. At that time, the Hobbs-hour meter read 242 hours.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bearhawk	Registration:	N1908A
Model/Series:	Bearhawk LSA	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:	Yes		
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KGPI, 2963 ft msl	Observation Time:	08:00 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	6 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	2 °C / 0 °C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	5 knots / , 20°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.09 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Kalispell (S27)	Destination:	Eureka, MT (88M)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	2 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	48.285913,-114.40329

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Simpson, Elliott
Additional Participating Persons:	Troy A. Meskimen; Federal Aviation Administration FSDO ; Helena, MT
Note:	