



AVIATION



HIGHWAY



MARINE



RAILROAD



PIPELINE

Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Condon, MT	Accident Number:	WPR26LA020
Date & Time:	October 17, 2025, 16:15 Local	Registration:	N2345R
Aircraft:	Piper PA-23-250	Injuries:	3 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On October 17, 2025, about 1615 mountain daylight time, a Piper PA-23-250, N2345R, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Condon, Montana. The pilot and two passengers were fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91 personal flight.

According to a report of preliminary air traffic control (ATC) services, at 1541, the pilot requested a climb to 14,000 ft mean sea level (msl) due to concerns about icing and was also advised of icing in the mid-teens by the controller. The pilot subsequently requested vectors toward lower terrain and then informed the controller that he was unable to maintain altitude before he declared an emergency, citing icing and an issue with the left engine. Salt Lake Center (ZLC) lost radar contact with the airplane at 1615. An airplane in the area attempted to relay communications to the accident airplane, but was unsuccessful. Another airplane advised ZLC that they were able to identify the accident airplane at 4,300 ft msl on ADS-B, northeast of Goat Mountain. Family members notified the Federal Aviation Administration when the flight did not arrive at its destination airport and an Alert Notice (ALNOT) was subsequently issued at 1629.

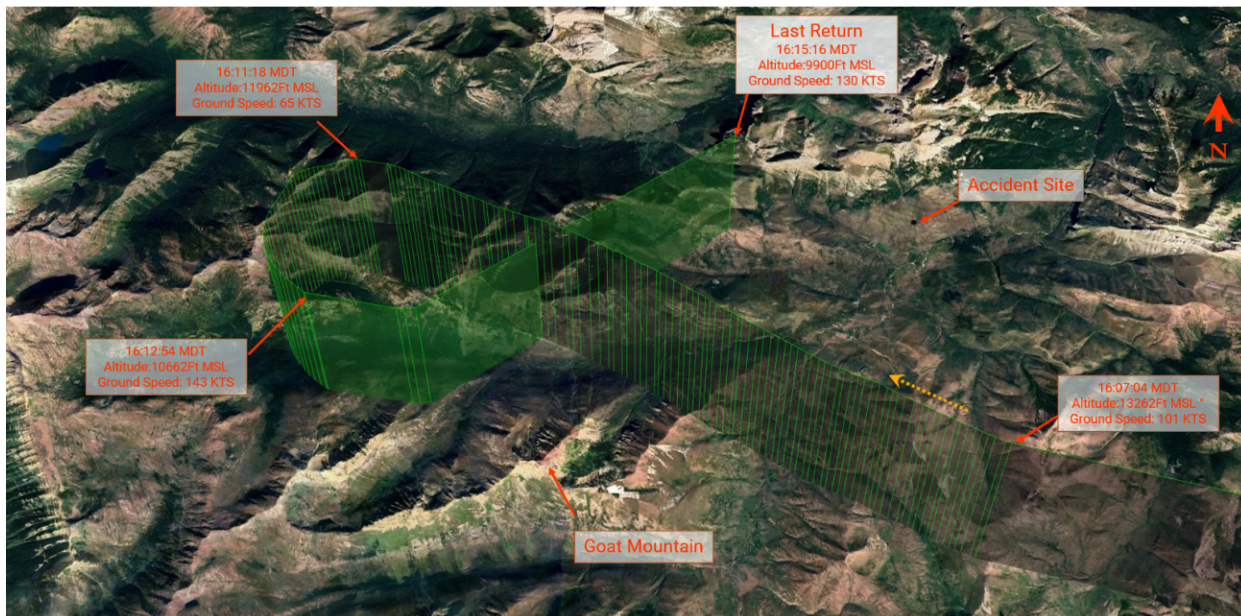


Figure 1: ADS-B Flight track of the accident airplane's final moments

Search and Rescue aircraft were deployed from Malmstrom Air Force Base, along with members of the Missoula County Search and Rescue, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the Powell County Sheriff's Office. The accident site was located on October 18, 2025 in mountainous terrain at an elevation of 5,286 ft msl near Youngs Creek within the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

The airplane was recovered to a secure facility for further examination.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Piper	Registration:	N2345R
Model/Series:	PA-23-250	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	BLUE WAVE AIR LLC	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	IMC	Condition of Light:	Dusk
Observation Facility, Elevation:	7S0,3086 ft msl	Observation Time:	16:15 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	36 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	11°C /2°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 6500 ft AGL	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	17 knots / None, 240°
Lowest Ceiling:	Broken / 8500 ft AGL	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.81 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	
Departure Point:	Billings, MT (BIL)	Destination:	Polson, MT (8S1)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	2 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	3 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	47.24,-113.17

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Brown, Zane
Additional Participating Persons:	Casey Stevens; Federal Aviation Administration; Helena, MT Troy Helgeson; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA Jon Hirsch; Piper Aircraft; Vero Beach, FL
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.