



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Windham, NY	Accident Number:	ERA25FA058
Date & Time:	November 24, 2024, 18:09 Local	Registration:	N58156
Aircraft:	Mooney M20J	Injuries:	1 Fatal
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 91: General aviation - Personal		

On November 24, 2024, at about 1809 eastern standard time, a Mooney M20J, N58156, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Windham, New York. The pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 *Code of Federal Regulation* Part 91 personal flight.

The airplane departed from Harford County Airport (0W3), Churchville, Maryland around 1640 and was destined for Albany International Airport (ALB), Albany, New York. Sunset at ALB had occurred at 1625 and the end of civil twilight was at 1656. Preliminary ADS-B data revealed that after departing 0W3, the airplane flew north-east toward ALB. The ADS-B data revealed that around 1802, the airplane was at an altitude of about 5,000 ft msl and began a shallow descent. At around 1805, the ADS-B data showed that the airplane descended below 4,000 ft, and by 1807, the airplane had descended below 3,500 ft. The airplane's last ADS-B derived position was recorded about 1808, with the airplane approximately 720 ft (laterally) from the initial impact point at the accident site. The last ADS-B data point reported the airplane's altitude as 3,025 ft, which was within 100 ft of the elevation of the accident site.

The pilot had been in contact with air traffic control (ATC) prior to the accident and was receiving visual flight rules flight following services. While in contact with ATC, the pilot reported moderate to heavy turbulence at his reported altitude of 5,000 ft. The pilot subsequently descended to about 4,300 ft and reported that the turbulence had subsided to light to moderate turbulence, and this was the pilot's last transmission to ATC. While in contact with ATC, the pilot did not make any distress calls.



Figure 1 – The accident airplane’s ADS-B flight track (green arrows) and the annotated location of the accident site (red circle).

The airplane impacted wooded, mountainous terrain at an elevation of 3,090 ft. The accident site was located below the mountain’s peak at an elevation of 3,524 ft. The first identified impact points were two trees that were approximately 80 ft from the where the airplane’s fuselage came to rest. Each tree had one of the airplane’s flaps wrapped around the trunk, at a height about 30 ft above the ground. A tree to the left of the initial impact trees contained remnants of the left aileron and wing, which were also approximately 30 ft up in the tree. The primary wreckage location consisted of the fuselage, empennage, engine, and propeller. The fuselage came to rest oriented on a heading of 82° true. The wreckage path was approximately 80 ft long and was along a heading of 38° true.

The airframe sustained impact damage with the most damage occurring to the wings and the forward fuselage. Both wings had separated from the fuselage, and portions of both wings were located along the wreckage path. The empennage remained attached to the fuselage and displayed impact damage signatures with most of the damage occurring to the horizontal stabilizer and the elevator. All the major components of the airplane were accounted for at the accident site.

The wreckage was retained for further examination.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Mooney	Registration:	N58156
Model/Series:	M20J	Aircraft Category:	Airplane
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	On file	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	None
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Night
Observation Facility, Elevation:	ALB,292 ft msl	Observation Time:	18:06 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	30 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	4°C /1°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Few / 2200 ft AGL	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	12 knots / , 280°
Lowest Ceiling:	Overcast / 6000 ft AGL	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	29.89 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Churchville, MD (0W3)	Destination:	Albany, NY (ALB)

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal	Latitude, Longitude:	42.30798,-74.1499

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Gibson, Kurt
Additional Participating Persons:	George Scheibel; FAA/FSDO; Latham, NY Russel Gait; Lycoming ; Williamsport, PA
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	