



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington
Office

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File code: 6730/5720

Date: 12/24/2003

Route to:

Subject: Preliminary (24-Hour) Briefing

To: Brad Powell, Regional Forester, R1

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PRELIMINARY AN SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Location: Missoula, MT

Date of occurrence: 12/22/03

Time of occurrence: Approximately 2030 MST

Team leader: Harlan Smid

Aircraft: Beechcraft Baron N181AM, USFS Region 6 lease aircraft

Mission: Passenger Transportation

Activity: Mishap occurred just after take-off, approximately ¼ mile south of the Missoula airport.

Number injured: Two minor injuries

Number of fatalities: None

Property damage: Substantial damage to an irrigation wheel line

Aircraft damage: The aircraft was destroyed

Narrative: The aircraft had dropped off the two passengers in Missoula and were retuning to their home base of Redmond, OR. The aircraft was flying under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) conditions at night. Shortly after taking off the aircraft crashed in a field approximately ¼ mile south of the airport. Both pilots exited the burning aircraft with minor injuries. They called for assistance from their cell phone and were taken to the local hospital. One of the pilots remained in the hospital overnight while the other was treated and released that night. The NTSB has delegated the investigation to an FAA Investigator in cooperation with the USFS accident investigation team.

cc: Rodd Richardson, Regional Fire Director
Edmund Ward, acting Regional Aviation Officer
Eddie Morris, Regional Aviation Safety Manager
Ann Baker, Regional Safety Manager
Ron Hanks, National Aviation Safety and Training Manager
Dick King, Director, Safety and Occupational Health



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