



Aviation Investigation Preliminary Report

Location:	Cougar, WA	Accident Number:	WPR22LA339
Date & Time:	September 7, 2022, 15:55 Local	Registration:	N66HJ
Aircraft:	Bell 205A-1	Injuries:	1 Minor
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 133: Rotorcraft ext. load		

On September 7, 2022, about 1555 Pacific daylight time, a Bell 205A-1, N66HJ, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Cougar, Washington. The pilot sustained minor injuries. The helicopter was operated as a public aircraft firefighting flight.

The privately owned helicopter was performing firefighting operations under contract with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in response to the Kalama Fire, under the operational control of the US Forest Service.

Earlier in the day the pilot had performed a series of crew relocation and firefighting water drop activities in the accident helicopter lasting about 2 hours. He then refueled using the same fuel truck for the previous flight and departed for Merrill Lake, where the firefighting water bucket (suspended from a 100 ft line) was reattached to the helicopter. He then performed four uneventful water dip and drop runs.

For the fifth dip he lowered the bucket into the water and maneuvered the helicopter to begin the fill, but the helicopter began to descend and yaw to the left. He lowered the collective control, and confirmed the throttle was set at full power, following which the engine appeared to completely lose power. The helicopter descended while the master caution light illuminated, and the low rotor RPM horn sounded. He applied forward cyclic to aim for the shoreline and attempted to activate the bucket line release. As the water approached, he applied up collective and the helicopter struck the surface in a flat attitude. By this time the engine had completely stopped, and the main rotor blades struck the water surface.

The helicopter began to roll to the right while filling with water, and the pilot was able open the door and egress to the shoreline.

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N66HJ
Model/Series:	205A-1	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Amateur Built:			
Operator:	Kachina Aviation	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Rotorcraft external load (133)
Operator Designator Code:			

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	VMC	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KKLS, 20 ft msl	Observation Time:	15:56 Local
Distance from Accident Site:	23 Nautical Miles	Temperature/Dew Point:	24°C / 15°C
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	11 knots / , 290°
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Visibility:	10 miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.15 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	Company VFR
Departure Point:	Cougar, WA	Destination:	Cougar, WA

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Minor	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:		Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Minor	Latitude, Longitude:	46.099922,-122.3311 (est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Simpson, Elliott
Additional Participating Persons:	Shawn Kellar; Federal Aviation Administration; Portland, OR
Investigation Class:	Class 3
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.