



Aviation Investigation Final Report

Location:	Logsden, Oregon	Accident Number:	WPR26LA086
Date & Time:	January 15, 2026, 08:37 Local	Registration:	N868H
Aircraft:	Bell 206L-3	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Defining Event:	Miscellaneous/other	Injuries:	1 Serious
Flight Conducted Under:	Part 137: Agricultural		

Analysis

During an aerial application reconnaissance flight, the helicopter departed with a fertilizer bucket attached which was held on by three nylon lines. As the helicopter lifted off and climbed out, the pilot noticed initially that all three nylon lines were hanging downward and moving appropriately with the bucket. The pilot continued to climb out and turned slightly to the right, away from obstacles. However, at this time, the pilot realized that the helicopter was not responding correctly to his flight control inputs. Looking in the mirror, he noticed that the bucket was hanging at a 45° angle and that one of the nylon lines connected to the bucket was wrapped over the right front skid and up against the cross-tube. The helicopter remained in a constant right turn and the pilot struggled to maintain control. He then attempted to release the bucket, but subsequently the helicopter impacted terrain and sustained substantial damage to the fuselage and main rotor blades.

The pilot reported no preimpact mechanical anomalies or malfunctions that could have precluded normal operation. He further stated that the nylon lines used to secure the bucket were lighter weight than the steel cable lines normally used and moved substantially in the airflow.

Probable Cause and Findings

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The inadvertent entanglement of a long line with the skid, which resulted in a loss of flight control. Contributing to the accident was the use of nylon lines instead of steel cables to secure the bucket.

Findings

Aircraft	Directional control - Attain/maintain not possible
Personnel issues	(general) - Other

Factual Information

History of Flight

Initial climb	Miscellaneous/other (Defining event)
Initial climb	Loss of control in flight
Initial climb	Collision with terr/obj (non-CFIT)

Pilot Information

Certificate:	Commercial	Age:	64, Male
Airplane Rating(s):	Single-engine land	Seat Occupied:	Right
Other Aircraft Rating(s):	Helicopter	Restraint Used:	3-point
Instrument Rating(s):	Airplane; Helicopter	Second Pilot Present:	No
Instructor Rating(s):	None	Toxicology Performed:	
Medical Certification:	Class 2 With waivers/limitations	Last FAA Medical Exam:	April 23, 2025
Occupational Pilot:	Yes	Last Flight Review or Equivalent:	November 27, 2024
Flight Time:	(Estimated) 15344 hours (Total, all aircraft), 141 hours (Total, this make and model), 14499 hours (Pilot In Command, all aircraft), 46 hours (Last 90 days, all aircraft), 7 hours (Last 30 days, all aircraft), 6 hours (Last 24 hours, all aircraft)		

Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

Aircraft Make:	Bell	Registration:	N868H
Model/Series:	206L-3	Aircraft Category:	Helicopter
Year of Manufacture:	1989	Amateur Built:	
Airworthiness Certificate:	Normal	Serial Number:	51318
Landing Gear Type:	Skid	Seats:	7
Date/Type of Last Inspection:	August 28, 2025 100 hour	Certified Max Gross Wt.:	4150 lbs
Time Since Last Inspection:		Engines:	1 Turbo shaft
Airframe Total Time:	8463.8 Hrs at time of accident	Engine Manufacturer:	Rolls Royce
ELT:	C126 installed, activated, did not aid in locating accident	Engine Model/Series:	250-C30P
Registered Owner:	WEYERHAEUSER NR CO	Rated Power:	650 Horsepower
Operator:	WEYERHAEUSER NR CO	Operating Certificate(s) Held:	Rotorcraft external load (133), Agricultural aircraft (137)

Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual (VMC)	Condition of Light:	Day
Observation Facility, Elevation:	KEUG,358 ft msl	Distance from Accident Site:	12 Nautical Miles
Observation Time:	08:54 Local	Direction from Accident Site:	311°
Lowest Cloud Condition:		Visibility	0.5 miles
Lowest Ceiling:	Indefinite (V V) / 200 ft AGL	Visibility (RVR):	
Wind Speed/Gusts:	3 knots / None	Turbulence Type Forecast/Actual:	None / None
Wind Direction:	120°	Turbulence Severity Forecast/Actual:	N/A / N/A
Altimeter Setting:	30.39 inches Hg	Temperature/Dew Point:	2°C / 2°C
Precipitation and Obscuration:	Moderate - None - Fog		
Departure Point:	Logsden, OR	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Destination:	Logsden, OR	Type of Clearance:	None
Departure Time:		Type of Airspace:	Class G

Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Serious	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:		Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Serious	Latitude, Longitude:	44,-123(est)

Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Nixon, Albert
Additional Participating Persons:	Matthew Hill; FAA FSDO; Portland, OR
Original Publish Date:	July 15, 2026
Last Revision Date:	
Investigation Class:	Class 4
Note:	The NTSB did not travel to the scene of this accident.
Investigation Docket:	https://data.nts.gov/Docket?ProjectID=202320

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The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for an accident or incident; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “accident/incident investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties ... and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person” (Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* section 831.4). Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by investigating accidents and incidents and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report (Title 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b)). A factual report that may be admissible under 49 *United States Code* section 1154(b) is available [here](#).