

OA-10A crash site near Grants, NM

DATE August 1, 1945

AIRCRAFT OA-10A Amphibian, AAF No. 44-34096

GENERAL LOCATION EL Malpais National Monument, near Grants, NM

PEOPLE ABOARD Crew of seven

REFERENCES MILITARIA INTERNATIONAL magazine, February, 2006

HISTORY

This aircraft, used by the USAAF for Search and Rescue duty, is the same as a U.S. Navy PBX-5A. It was stationed in Georgia and re-assigned to a west coast assignment beginning in August 1945. While en route over Tucumcari, NM, the airplane was observed by a P-51D pilot as having one landing gear down and with smoke trailing from the number 1 engine. The P-51D pilot reported this to the OA-10A pilot who indicated they had everything "under control." Hearing this, the P-51D pilot headed for his base, assuming things were OK. Apparently, that was not the case because the plane later crashed in the Malpais (Badlands) National Monument southwest of Grants, NM. The crash site is in the lava field which makes access treacherous. Therefore, the site is rarely visited and much of the crashed airplane remains. All crew members perished in the crash.

Several crash explorers have visited the site. There are a plethora of artifacts to view there which makes this an interesting site. However, remember that **the artifacts have been there for over 50 years in a National Monument and they are now archaeological objects. It is against the law to remove them.**

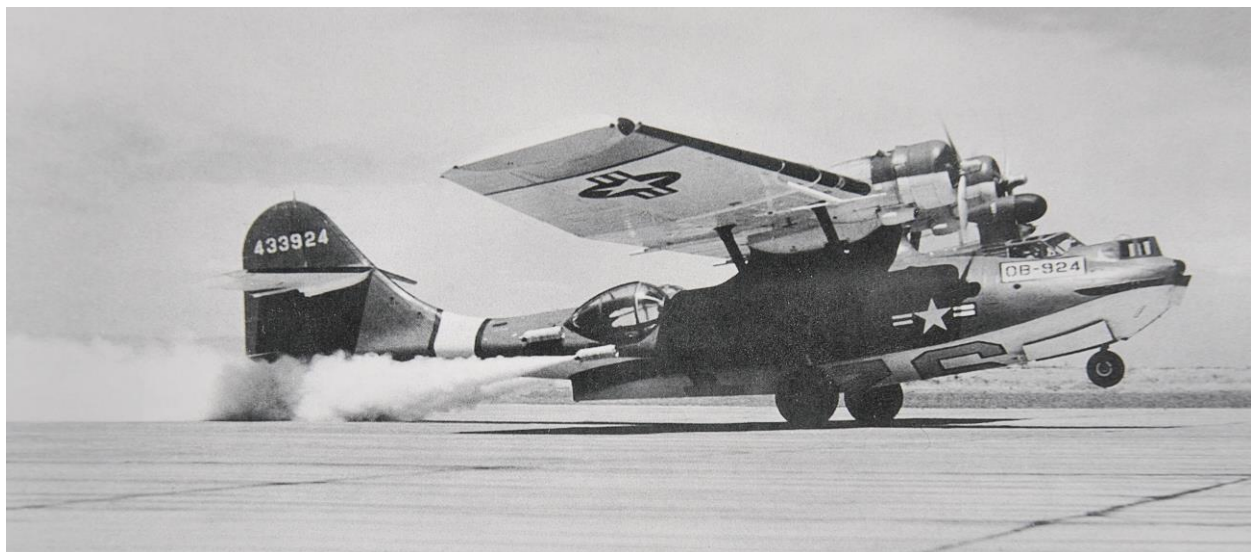


Photo of a similar OA-10A USAF Catalina aircraft