

Gardnerville pilot missing; crews searching near Placerville

By Marijke Rowland, Modesto Bee

Gardnerville resident and former Manteca businessman Robert H. "Budge" Brown is missing after his plane apparently went down near Placerville.

The founder of Oakwood Lake Resort, home of the Manteca Waterslides, left Minden-Tahoe Airport at 4pm Wednesday in his single-engine aircraft bound for a private airstrip in Tracy, according to the FAA and a family spokesman.

Brown, who is in his late 70s, was flying solo in a Lancair Legacy aircraft. Family members reported him overdue at 8:30pm Wednesday, 4½ hours after he took off.

The Minden-to-Tracy flight should take about 45 minutes, said Civil Air Patrol Capt. Matt Scherzi. Family members said Brown has flown the Minden-to-Tracy route 200 to 300 times.

FAA Western-Pacific Region said search crews were looking for the plane near Placerville.

Read the whole story