



United States Coast Guard
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Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers make hazard to navigation determination on sunken vessel in Columbia River

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News Release

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WARRENTON, Ore. — The Coast Guard determined a sunken vessel in the Columbia River to be a hazard to navigation, Monday.

The MDLM Diane, a 45-foot recreational tug with approximately 100 gallons of diesel aboard, sank while anchored outside the navigable channel after suffering an engine fire Oct. 31, 2017.

Upon being notified of the potentially sunken vessel, personnel from Coast Guard Sector Columbia River verified with the owner of the vessel that nobody was aboard eliminating any search and rescue concerns. The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund was opened to locate and remove potential pollutants from the vessel. Attempts to locate the sunken vessel were unsuccessful Saturday and Sunday by a contracted salvage team from Ballard Marine.

The Coast Guard coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who were able to search the river's bottom with scanning equipment. Monday, the vessel was located 45-feet into the navigational channel from the Oregon side. The MDLM Diane is below the Bonneville Dam South of Ives Island 14 feet below the waterline.

The vessel was reported missing Saturday when the crew of the UTV Willamette Champion approached the last known position of the MDLM Diane to conduct a dead-ship tow to Scappoose, Oregon. The crew noticed and reported a scattered rainbow sheen, debris field and a folded life raft near river mile marker 140 to Coast Guard watchstanders. An urgent marine information broadcast announcing a potential hazard to navigation has been aired regularly over VHF-FM marine radio.

The MDLM Diane's owner is the responsible party and is responsible for salvage. In the event the responsible party is unable to salvage the vessel the hazard to navigation determination provides a means to fund the removal of the vessel from the navigational channel. The OSLTF also will remain open to fund the cleanup of any pollution concerns related to the sunken vessel.

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