



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Pittsburgh District

# News Release

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## **Recovery Operations Progress on Ohio River**

PITTSBURGH – The US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the towing industry continue recovery operations at Montgomery Locks and Dam where the towboat M/V Elizabeth M. and four of its six barges remain sunk on the dam. The four barges include the barge that was unaccounted for until today when it was located, underneath another barge on the dam, using side-scan sonar. Like the other three barges in front of the dam gates, it is not interfering with the operation of the dam gates.

The barge sunk at Mile 32.2, closest to the downstream approach to the Montgomery Locks, was removed late Friday. The other barge sunk below the dam, at Mile 33.6, awaits recovery along with the four barges sunk on the dam and the M/V Elizabeth M. Recovery operations for these vessels are expected to continue for the next several weeks, river conditions permitting.

Salvage operations at Emsworth Locks and Dam moved above the dam today and began unloading coal from the upper portion of the barge that has been lodged on the sill of the dam at Gate #5 for over a week. After some of the coal was removed, the flow through the gate bay pushed the barge downstream off the sill of the dam. The nearly empty barge is on a shoal in the restricted area below the dam and should be removed today. Gate #5 was tested and is operational.

Four other barges from breakaways during high water earlier this month remain to be recovered – one upstream of the dam at Pike Island Locks and Dam, one in the back channel pool at Emsworth, one on the left descending bank about .5 miles above Dashields Locks and Dam, and the last one against the dam at Dashields. None of these barges are currently impacting navigation or lock and dam operation.

Further down the Ohio River, near Reedsville, Ohio, the pool between Willow Island (Mile 162) and Belleville (Mile 204) Locks is closed to navigation due to breakaway barges that sank on the dam blocking five of the gates at Belleville. Salvage operations are underway but until all the gates can be closed, the navigation pool between Belleville and Willow Island Locks cannot be restored to normal levels.

The Army Corps of Engineers' locks on the Ohio River normally remain open 24-hours-a-day year around. At the rivers' headwaters, the Port of Pittsburgh is the second busiest inland port in the nation and the 17<sup>th</sup> busiest port, of any kind, in the nation with over 41 million tons of cargo annually.

*For more information on the Belleville and Willow Island Locks contact Huntington District Public Affairs at 304-399-5353.*