

SUPSALV Clears Ft. Pierce Channel of sunken barge.

17 April 2015

Naval Sea Systems Command, Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV) has responded to a request from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Jacksonville District to remove a barge that sank on 24 Feb in the Federal ship channel, about 100 yards inside the end of the ocean jetties. SUPSALV has an inter-Service Support Agreement with the USACE to provide salvage support when the Corps is unable to conduct the task. The Coast Guard had attempted to remove the vessel in March and due to strong currents in the channel, the efforts were unsuccessful.

SUPSALV executed their East Coast Salvage Contract, held by DONJON Marine Services of Hillside, NJ and developed a plan to clear the channel and recover the barge/debris. DONJON mobilized the floating crane COLUMBIA and tug MARY ALICE and arrived on site in Fort Pierce, Florida on 09 April. After coordinating with the U.S. Coast Guard Station, Sector Ft. Pierce to discuss the mooring plan, safety zone, and vessel operations in the channel, they made preparations for setting a 4 point mooring to conduct the salvage task. Setting the moor was delayed until slack tide on 11 April due to unsettled seas and wind conditions. When the moor was set, chopping operations commenced and continued through the night. By 1030 the following morning, the team began lifting segments of the broken barge up with a heavy lift bucket and setting them onto COLUMBIA's deck.



The wheel house of the sunken barge rises out of the Ft. Pierce Inlet waters barge where it had been blocking safe operations in the channel. Salvage task managed by NAVSEA's SUPSALV and conducted by SUPSALV's East Coast Salvage Contractor, DONJON, Mari

Removal operations continued through 1400 on 13 April pausing briefly to allow the transit of vessels in the channel. After the final lift, the ACOE conducted a side scan survey of the channel and concluded the entire barge was recovered. With the lift complete, SUPSALV directed the scrap be transferred ashore and Columba readied for sea for the transit home.