

GLSA & WUAA SELF-SUPPORTING SUMMER FIELDWORK: 2026 UNIDENTIFIED STEAM TUG SURVEY PROJECT

Report by: Peter Kastella

Fieldwork Date: Thursday, September 3, 2026

Meeting Place: Jerry's Silo Marina

Meeting Time: Arrival 4:00 PM Departure 5:00 PM

Survey Team Members Attending: John Tindall

Volunteers Attending:

Peter Kastella, Derek Haager, Justin Tolomeo, and Scott Griffiths as divers, Rich Laiacona, John Tindall, Drew Smith and Bob Lijewski ROV and surface support

Volunteers in waiting should someone cancel.

A number of volunteers were on the call list

Vessels Being Used: Sandy Ann

Objectives for the Survey:

1. Survey and draw select areas of the wreck site
2. Search for additional debris using ROV

Teams:

Team 1 Justin and Pete, (Objective #1)

Team 2. Scott and Derek (Objective #1)

Team 3. Rich, Joe, Drew and Bob (Objective #2)

Equipment Needed:

Team 1 – Survey kits

Team 2 – Survey kits

Team 3 - ROV

Future dates for the next dive: September 10

Review of the dive and findings:

Morning thunderstorms gave way to clearing skies with warm and humid temperatures. As the temperatures climbed into the 80s, the winds were calm and the lake was flat. Fearing we had lost the buoy, Jerry had crew member Scott Bruss along to set a new mooring line. But as we got to the site the buoy was there. Scott dove to the wreck and examining the line which had become frayed by chafing against the zebra mussels on the steam engine frame. Additional lines were run, firmly securing the mooring to the wreck. Visibility this week was the best of the season at 25 feet plus. The bottom temperature was the coldest of the season at 39 degrees. The divers, Justin, Pete, Scott and Derek were assigned areas of the wreck to survey and sketch. Each diver completed their tasks despite the cold temps. Rich, piloted the ROV with John, Drew and Bob assisting. Because of the good visibility, they got some good video of the wreck and the divers doing their work. With everyone safely back on the Sandy Ann we headed back to port as a fog began to settle onto the surface of the lake. We ended the night with the “deco session” discussed the plans for the next planned dive on September 10.

The one tank dives are limited to six divers, with a minimum of five needed to pay for the charter. You can earn a guaranteed spot on a future charter if you serve as surface support for a week. Surface support does not pay a fee. Anyone interested in joining the self-supporting study should contact John to make sure there is space available. You are required to bring your own dive gear.

The Steam Tug Field Project is a GLSA & WUAA self-supporting project. Money received from divers, after paying the charter fees, is used to purchase new and replacement equipment for this and future self-supported projects on Great Lakes shipwrecks. Dive reports are posted at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069646586530>

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For those of you who have not paid your annual dues for the WUAA group or need to join the group please go to the web site and do so. <http://www.wuaa.org/wuaa/index.html>