

2 GE tugboats submerged in canal lock at Fort Edward

By Gordon Woodworth
Chronicle News Editor

Two tugboats owned by General Electric and used in the Hudson River Dredging Project were swamped with water Saturday while in dry dock at Lock C-6 of the Champlain Canal south of Fort Edward.

Chronicle reader Fred Wehner sent us photos he took on Sunday of the two submerged tugs, HR Beaver and HR Otter.

Contacted for comment, GE spokesman Mark Behan said, "As you guessed, rain and snowmelt caused water levels to rise in the Champlain Canal land-cut in Washington County and at Lock 6, submerging two of three tug boats moored in the lock.

"The third tug took on water, but remained afloat.



Submerged at Champlain Canal's Lock C-6, these two tugboats owned by General Electric and used in the Hudson River dredging project were in dry dock until last weekend's rain and snow melt filled the lock with water. *Photo by Fred Wehner/www.tug44.org*

"The vessels, which are used in the Hudson River Dredging Project and are owned

by GE, were dry-docked in the lock, with the approval of the New York State Canal



Corporation, for winter repairs."

Mr. Wehner, a Fort Edward resident who operates the Website www.tug44.org about the New York State Canal System, said it appeared that all three tugboats had their propellers and propeller shafts removed, leaving two six-inch holes in the back of the boats. One of the boats had a plug in the holes. The two tugs that submerged did not appear to have plugs, he said.

Mr. Behan said, "Representatives from the Canal Corp., the state Department of Environmental Conservation, EPA and GE are working together to re-float the vessels in the lock. Once water levels decrease and the vessels are once again secured in the dry-dock, crews will be able to assess whether the vessels need additional repair."

He added, "No delay to the opening of the Champlain Canal lock system or the start of the dredging season in May is anticipated as a result of the incident."

© Copyright 2014 The Chronicle
Lone Oak Publishing Co., Inc.
P.O. Box 153, Glens Falls, NY 12801
chronicle@loneoak.com
518-792-1126

Published April 3, 2014