



RATIFICATION OF EMERGENCY SALVAGE ACTIVITIES - MOTOR VESSEL AURORA

Protecting Stockton's Drinking Water and Delta Ecosystem

Stockton City Council Meeting
New Business Item – 15.2
July 15, 2025



PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

Under the City Manager's Emergency Contract and Procurement Policy (17.05.150 Section 4), MUD is required to make a record of all emergency purchases of supplies and services of more than \$100,000 and report to the City Council for ratification.

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

- On May 22, 2024, the derelict motor vessel M/V Aurora sank while moored along Empire Tract Road in the Delta.
- A Unified Command, including the US Coast Guard (USCG), California Department of Fish & Wildlife, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, and City/MUD was established on May 23, 2024, to respond to the vessel sinking and spill.
- The Aurora's sinking threatened the City's water supply, water quality, infrastructure, and the environment.



INITIAL RESPONSE EFFORTS

- The USCG, utilizing Federal Oil Spill Trust Fund monies, contracted with Global Diving and Salvage Inc. with directions to contain the spill, refloat the vessel, and remove petroleum and hazardous materials from the site.
- Refloat of the M/V Aurora and initial pollution removal was accomplished by June 24, 2024.



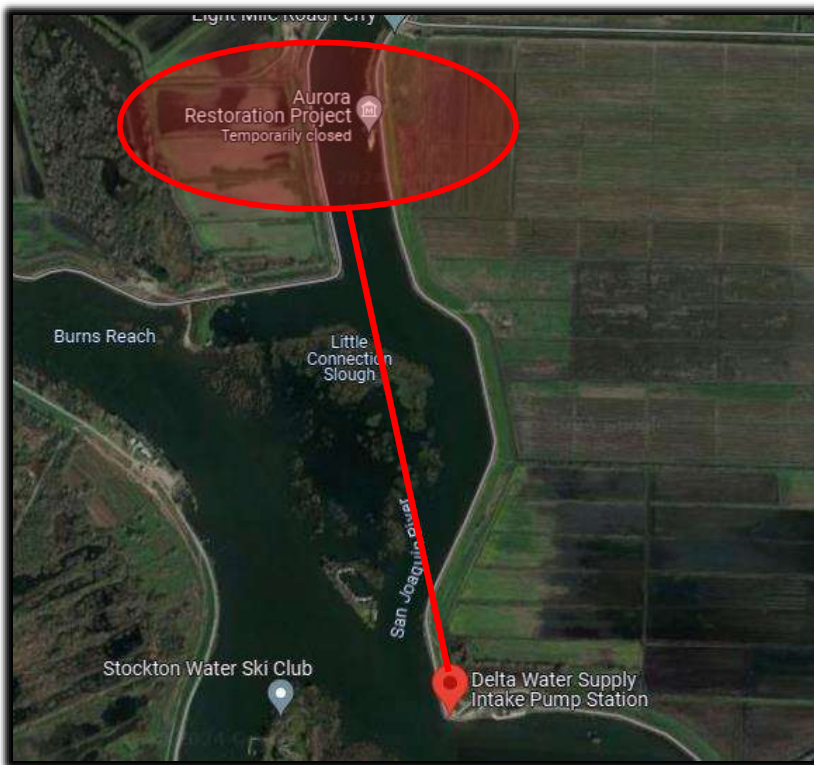
Dive crews working to assess the condition of the vessel



Crews inspect the *Aurora* to ensure pollution removal was complete.

INFRASTRUCTURE RISK

- The sinking of the 297 ft., 2,500-ton vessel caused a significant spill of diesel fuel, engine oil and other pollutants into Little Potato Slough just upstream of the City's water intake pump station (IPS).
- The City has made major capital improvements to protect drinking water supply and wastewater systems. In 2012, Stockton invested \$223 million to construct the Delta Water Supply Project to provide high-quality drinking water to customers within the City's service area.



Distance between incident site and Intake Pump Station

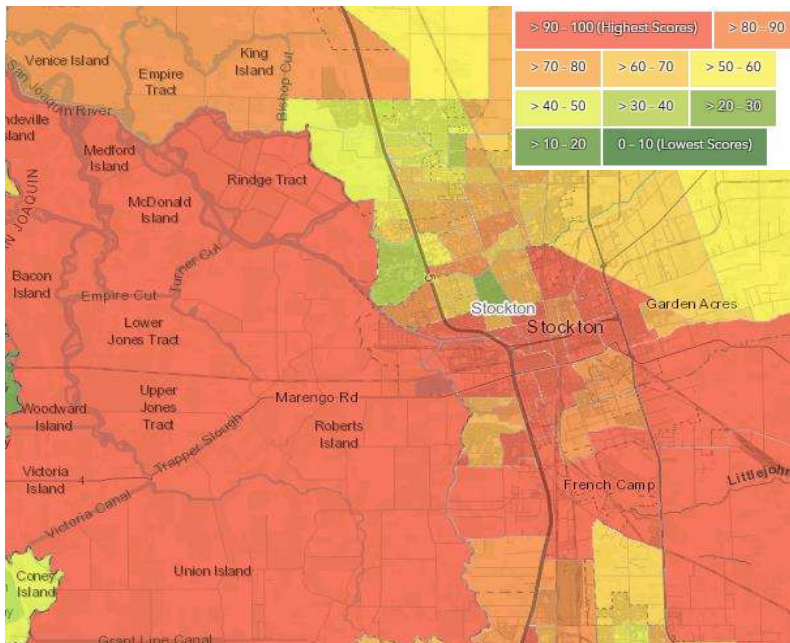


The City of Stockton's Delta Water Treatment Plant facility

PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS



- The M/V Aurora contained hazardous waste (HHW) such as solvents, paints, thinners, lacquers, varnishes, degreasers, paint removal products, acetone, and methylene chloride.
- 21,675 gallons of oily water, 3,193 gallons of hazardous waste, and five 25-yard bins of debris were removed from the vessel.
- Substantial asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead and Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were detected throughout the vessel.



- The Stockton Municipal area is in the 90th percentile for adverse environmental burdens, indicating that these areas are in the most polluted in California.
- This is the worst 1% of water quality in the State.



PUBLIC PERCEPTION

- If the perception becomes that our water source is contaminated, public trust in the City of Stockton and water management systems can be severely undermined.
- Timely and effective action demonstrates a commitment to protecting the community and safeguarding essential resources.
- **The City is committed to ensuring the safety of our water system and the health of our community.**



CITY ACTION

- On June 27, 2024, the City Manager approved the request for emergency procurement authorization for the removal and salvage of the vessel.



November 19, 2024

LEGAL NOTICE FOR

Motor Vessel AURORA, aka WAPPEN VON HAMBURG, California
Registration No. CF1143SE

THE ABOVE IDENTIFIED VESSEL CONSTITUTES "MARINE DEBRIS" pursuant to California Harbors & Navigation Code Section 550 & 551.

If this marine debris is not claimed and removed from her current location within 10 calendar days after the above date, pursuant to the above statutes and under the authority of the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department, the City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department may remove and dispose of it. The City may also take legal or administrative action to recover its costs and damages.

To claim this marine debris, or for additional information, please contact the following.

City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department
11373 N. Lower Sacramento Road
Lodi, CA 95242 (209) 937-8782

or
San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department
7000 Michael Canlis Blvd
French Camp, CA 95231 (209) 468-4400

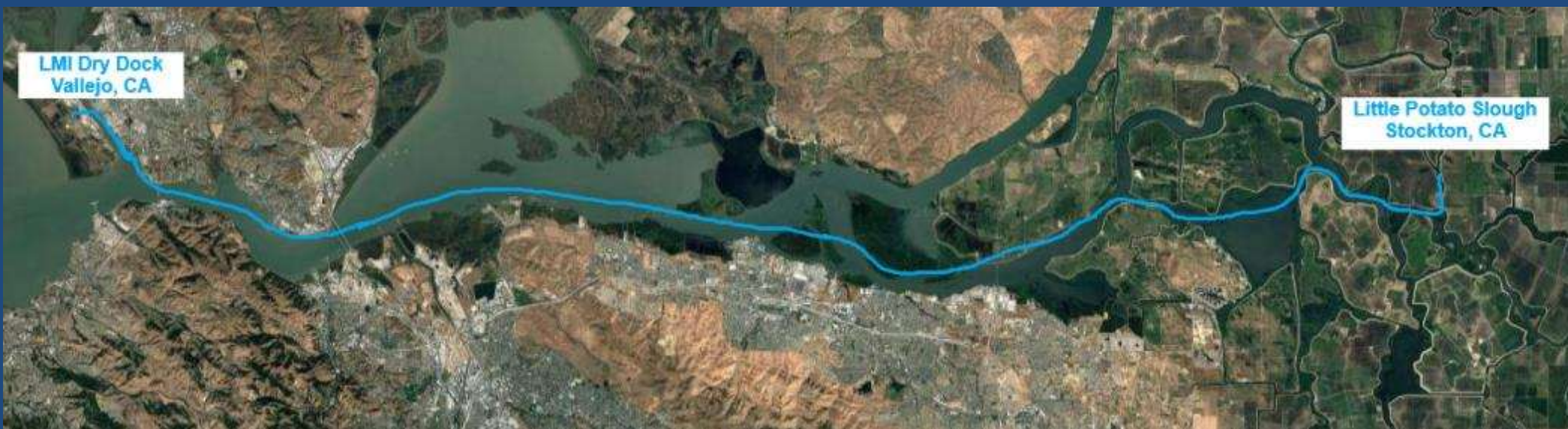
All who wish to be heard regarding this Notice must send any comments or objections in writing to the above entities, by Certified U.S. Mail or personal delivery, for receipt by those entities within 10 calendar days after the above specified date. All such submissions will be reviewed and considered, and a response will be provided prior to removal and disposal of the marine debris.

BY: City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department

- On November 19, 2024, the City/MUD noticed its jurisdiction provided under California Harbors and Navigation Code sections 550 & 551 and a memorandum of agreement with San Joaquin County and the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office.

DECEMBER 21, 2024

Lind Marine safely completed Aurora dead ship tow from Little Potato Slough to dry dock in Vallejo, CA.





Debris Abatement

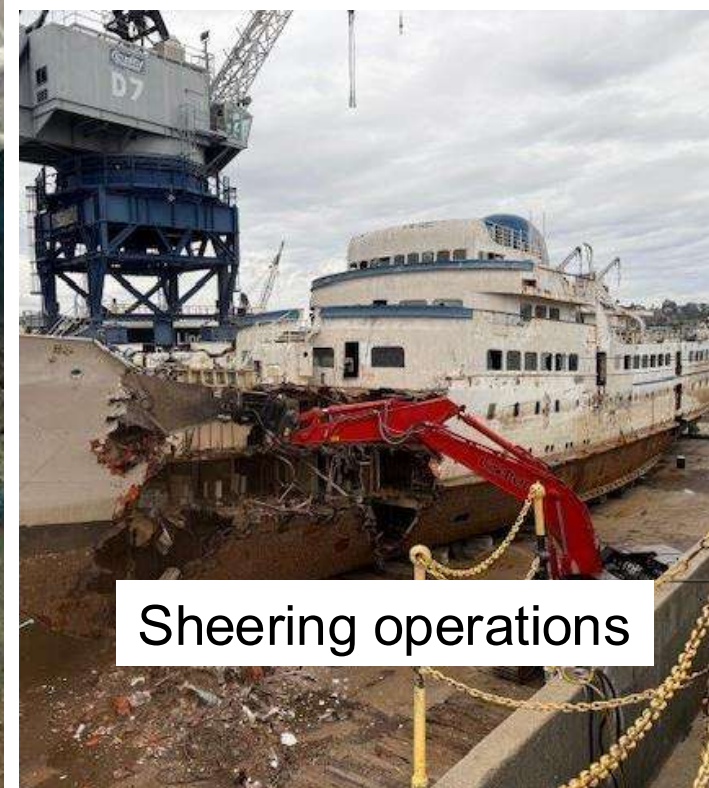
**December 24, 2024
- May 15, 2025**
Full hazardous materials
abatement and demolition,
all in compliance with strict
State & Federal safety
standards.



Proper disposal of
contaminated debris



Hazardous Liquids
Abatement



Sheering operations

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

Contractors	Total Amount	Services
Lind Marine LLC	\$7,908,993.76	Primary contractor and subcontractors: Glosten Marine Engineers, Ballard Marine, Terracon, Sterling Environmental, Ponder Environmental & Clean Harbors.
Universal Protection Service LP	\$161,033.18	Onsite security services and Empire Tract Road closure.
Marsh & McLennan Companies Inc.	\$118,335.00	Insurance including protection against environmental exposure and maritime liability during dead ship tow.
Global Diving and Salvage Inc.	\$97,480.42	Submersible pumps, electric generators and fans to keep Aurora afloat.
K.D. Moore Associates Inc.	\$4,732.60	Marine survey.
NPFC Vessel Certification Division	\$300.00	USCG COFR application fee for dead ship tow.
Total Incurred Costs¹	\$8,290,874.96	

¹Total Incurred Costs equal to total project costs minus \$999,932.09 in State Lands Commission DV Program funding.

FUNDING APPLICATIONS



CalRecycle



- Despite aggressive efforts to secure outside funding to offset the emergency response and salvage costs, the City of Stockton was largely unsuccessful due to limited program availability, budget restrictions, and the urgent nature of the incident.
- Emergency Response unit, MUD staff also submitted inquiries and applications to multiple state and federal entities including:
 - BoatUS Abandoned and Derelict Vessel (ADV) Grant Program
 - California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
 - California Environmental Protection Agency
 - National Pollution Funds Center
- Unfortunately, each of these agencies either lacked applicable funding, had closed funding cycles, or were unable to respond within the timeframe necessary to support the salvage effort.

APPROVED FUNDING



CALIFORNIA
STATE LANDS
COMMISSION



- The California State Lands Commission's Derelict Vessel Program provided nearly \$1 million in funding (\$999,932.09), significantly helping to offset project costs to the MUD Water Utility Fund.
- Special thanks to all agencies that took part in this effort.
- This vital support played a key role in advancing the project and protecting our waterways.

NEXT STEPS

- United States Coast Guard is working to remove the last remaining sunken vessel, the 147 ft. minesweeper, HCMS *Chaleur*.
- The waterway is finally on track to be fully cleared of derelict vessels, which will help preserve water quality, restore safe navigation, and reduce environmental hazards.
- MUD staff will continue to actively pursue additional reimbursement opportunities through all applicable legal, regulatory and legislative channels and also has an active insurance claim currently being processed.



The Chaleur, the last sunken vessel in Little Potato Slough. On track to be removed by July 2025.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve findings pursuant to Stockton Municipal Code section 3.68.070 which support and justify an exception to the competitive bidding process.
2. Ratify the final expenses in the amount of \$8,290,874.96 to Lind Marine of Vallejo, California, and associated contractors, for all costs related to the salvage and disposal of the derelict, motor vessel (M/V) Aurora.
3. Authorize City Manager to take appropriate and necessary actions to carry out the purpose and intent of this resolution.