

# HARD HAT NEWS

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Section One of Three

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Operator Mike Stevenson and Foreman George Lamoreaux, employees of Bullard and Lindsay, confer at the edge of the silt pond at the Erie Canal at Utica, NY.

Photograph by Kathleen Ryan



# Inter-Agency Cooperation Makes Emergency Dredging Project on Erie Canal Easy

by Kathleen Ryan

Former New York Governor Dewitt Clinton could never have imagined the up-to-date technologies being used at the Erie Canal in Utica, NY when he planned for its inception. The canal is undergoing an emergency dredging project that began early this September. Clinton's main workforce during the initial construction of the Canal consisted mainly of farm laborers digging the canal by hand. Over the course of the next couple months, however, labor on the Canal will include crews of about twenty five men, four tug boats, two dredging barges (equipped with track hoe and crane), five scows, two cranes, a dozer and a track hoe.

Bullard and Lindsay Contracting Company, a company that specializes in marine work from New York City, was awarded an emergency dredging project at the Erie Canal in Utica, New York. Troy Town Dock and Marina Inc. is working as a sub-contractor on-site and has provided four tug boats needed to complete the project. The contractors began work early this September and plan to finish by the completion date of November 15th.

This emergency project will encompass the dredging of approximately 113,000 cubic meters, or 150,000 yards, of fine silt and sand from the bottom of the Canal. One cubic yard of wet mud and/or sand weighs approximately one ton. Therefore, approximately 150,000 tons of silt/sand will be removed from the bottom of the Erie Canal in roughly three months time.

Barry Bullard, of Bullard and Lindsay Contracting Company, stated that "as of today, we've been dredging about eighteen days." Of those eighteen days, the crew has "averaged about five thousand cubic yards of silt per day."

Foreman George Lamoreaux stated that the crew's been working fourteen hour days to meet the schedule. The only real obstacle they've run into is that it's been "getting dark early" which makes it a little more difficult. They have overcome this obstacle, however, by using generators and light stands to keep their work areas lit thereby maintaining productivity during the darker hours of the work day.

The project, let for approximately 2.6 million dollars, includes a mechanical dredging of the canal in three sections. The complete undertaking is comprised of about three and a half miles between Budlong Creek (to the Turning Basin), an area near Gridley Creek, and an area near the Thruway Culvert. The work process will not interrupt the use of the canal by boaters.

According to Dave Hudda, a designer with the Albany Thruway Authority, the design process amazingly took only a couple of months. This is definitely due to the team effort that expedited the process. One reason that the project needed to get going so quickly was the fact that a couple of vessels ran aground this past spring.

Yotin Padungtin, with the NYS DOT Region 2 Office of Planning and Program Management said that funding was the only real issue in putting the contract together.

Funding had to be channeled through the NYS DOT who in turn helped in facilitating the approval process. The DOT did everything they could to get this going in a timely manner.

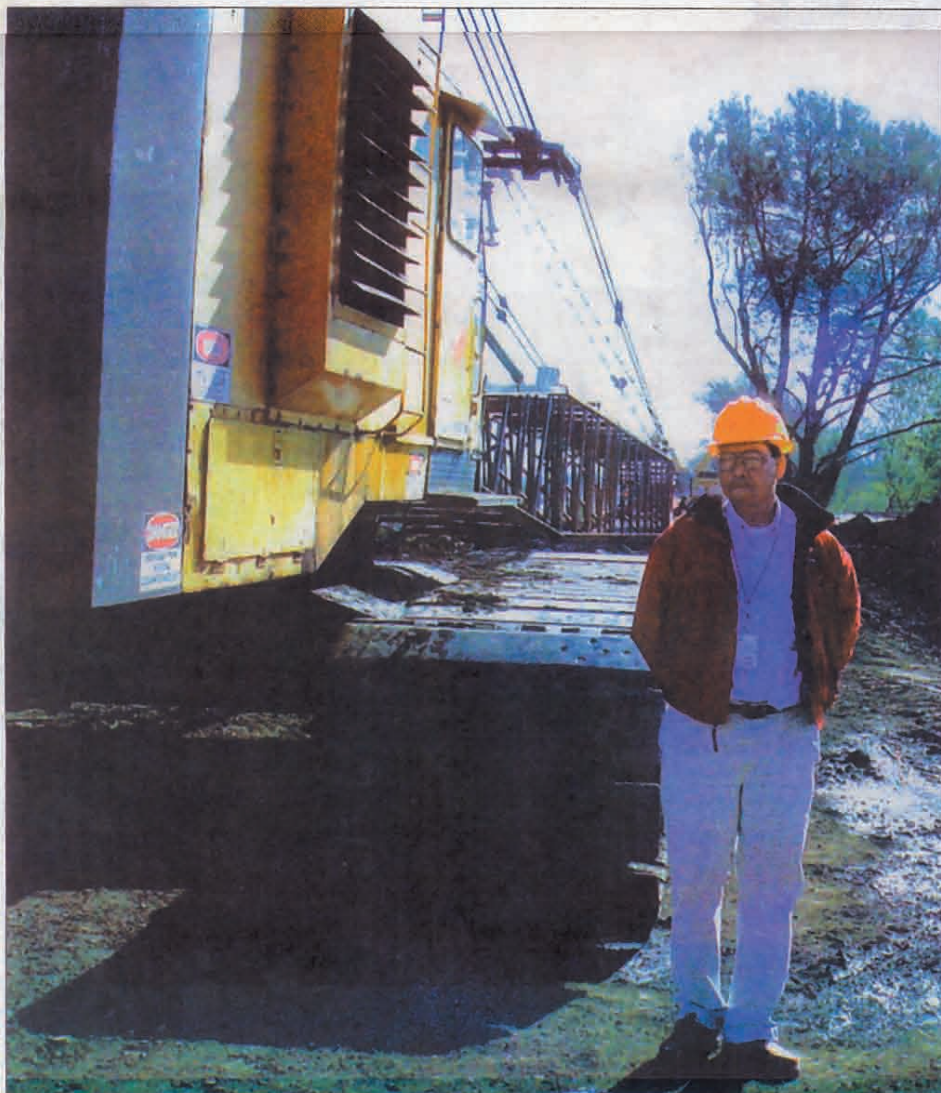
Dwayne Dretz, NYS Thruway Project Engineer, John Zmarthie, NYS Canal Corporation, Remo Radicchi, NYSTA Construction Supervisor, and Guy Hulbert, Canal Corporation have all been instrumental in this process as well. The project was approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, the New York State Office of the Comptroller, and the Department of Environmental Conservation and Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

According to all parties, there's been tremendous cooperation from everyone who worked hard in getting this project off the ground in such a timely fashion. Everyone from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the NYS DOT, the NYS Thruway Authority, the NYS Department of Conservation, the NYS Canal Corporation, The Army Corps of Engineers, and the EPA right down to the contractor and subcontractor performing work on-site have worked extremely well together to ensure a safe, effective, and cooperative environment.

John Zmarthie, Division Canal Engineer, stated that the project "is going well...moving a lot of material and staying out of the way of recreational travel."

He stated that he had no concerns about the project.

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Yotin Padungtin of the NYS DOT Region 2 Office of Planning and Program Management observes the progress of work at the Erie Canal Project in Utica. (background: Manitowoc 115 ton crane, 3900 W 115 ton Liebherr crane and the silt pond banking).



Al Rivers utilizes the power the 3900 W 115 ton Liebherr Crane to remove silt that's been loaded into a hopper (silt that is removed from the canal bottom is then transferred, via hoppers and cranes, to the silt pond).



Recreational boats can be seen in the background of the dredging operation at the Erie Canal in Utica, New York. Cranes, track hoes, barges, scows and tug boats are integral parts of the mechanical dredging process being done at the Erie Canal in Utica, New York.

Photographs by Kathleen Ryan



# Inter-Agency Cooperation Makes Emergency Dredging Project on Erie Canal Easy

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Al Rivers operates the 3900 W 115 ton Liebherr crane on the Bank of the Erie Canal in Utica. ERIE 13 Operators on one of two barges maneuver the Hitachi EX 750 track hoe to adjust their positioning.

other than the possibility of blocking water traffic, because everyone involved is very professional. He had confidence that the work would be handled in the most proficient way by all parties. And since the water vessels

are still able to maneuver around the work areas safely, it seems everyone's happy.

Recreational vehicles are a vast amount of the traffic on the Erie Canal, but it is still used for commercial vessels as well. This project will help open up the Canal to even more commercial traffic and ensure the safety of all the crafts that utilize the waterway.

The major problems leading to contracting the emergency dredging have been caused by bank erosion and weather. This is the first time outside contractors have been called in for dredging of the canal; the work is typically performed yearly by the Canal Corps, but was too intensive this time. The Canal Corps owns only one dredge and the amount of refill in the Canal bottom called for more timely measures.

Levels of the canal, before dredging, were down to seven feet in some areas. Dredging will include the removal of approximately zero to seven (plus or minus) feet of silt and sand from the Canal bottom to get to the optimal thirteen feet depth that is required. The width of the channel will remain the same, roughly one hundred four feet wide.

The basic process of mechanical dredging includes removing material (silt/sand) by bucket (crane or hoe), placing material in a scow (or on a barge), and towing the scow to a disposal or transfer area. At the disposal area, another bucket is used to remove the material from the scow and is then transferred via vehicle or directly into a disposal area.

The UDS (upland disposal site) for the Erie Canal Dredging Project is located between locks 19 and 20. The silt pond encompasses an area of about 200 feet by 400 feet and contains spoils that are about ten to twelve feet deep.

Bullard and Lindsay Contracting Company utilizes equipment that they own as well as rental equipment from Essex Rentals out of Chicago. The two towering 115 ton Liebherr cranes are as integral to the project as are the Hitachi track hoes, scows, and excavators. Tug boats provided by Troy Town Dock and Marina Inc. are

just as essential, as they are needed to maneuver the barges and the scows. The crew is working as hard as the equipment to keep the project running smoothly.

Workers on two separate barges are working with the track hoes and cranes to dredge the Canal bottom and fill the scows. The scows are then taken to workers located near the silt pond who transfer the silt to the UDS / silt pond. The crew is averaging about five thousand yards of silt per day and it looks like they'll meet their deadline if everything continues to go their way.

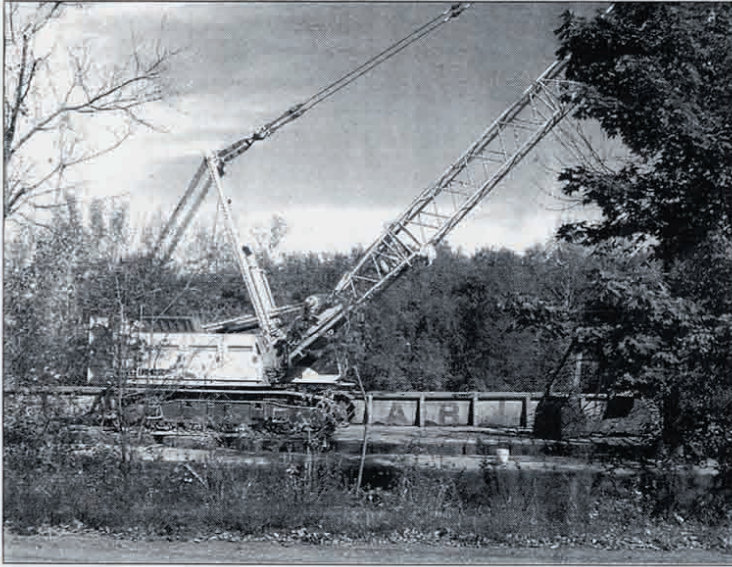


Spuds are lifted on one of the barges with a Rig-All Crane to adjust the barge's positioning.





# Inter-Agency Cooperation Makes Emergency Dredging Project on Erie Canal Easy



Liebherr 115 ton crane on one of the barges is used to remove silt from the canal bottom.



The Hitachi EX 750 track hoe removes silt and sand from the Canal bottom and transfers it to the scow. The scow is then taken to the UDS where crane operators transfer the silt to the UDS.



Local Union 545 Apprentice Greg Tucker is flanked to his left by the Manitowoc 115 ton crane being used on this project.



Mike Stevenson operates the Komatsu PC 22 USC track hoe at the edge of the silt pond at the Erie Canal in Utica. The D61EX Stationary Komatsu track dozer at left is ready for use



Mike Stevenson expertly maneuvers the Komatsu PC 22 US LC track hoe at the silt pond in Utica, New York on the Erie Canal Project.



Liebherr 115 ton crane on one of the barges removes silt from the canal bottom which is then loaded into a scow to be taken to the UDS.