

Hope renewed that locomotive will be found today in river

BY SHAWN BERRY

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GRAND FALLS – The search for a locomotive in the St. John River will continue today with renewed hope that it will be located.

A Moncton diver who met a group who described finding the engine in the fall of 2000 is to join the effort.

Eric Ouellette, a Grand Falls engineer who has been searching for the train wreck hopes the Moncton diver's second-hand knowledge of the site will help him find the engine. This will mark his fourth search on the river in as many weeks.

Mr. Ouellette has been searching for the 35-ton engine that plunged into nine metres of water 103 years ago when a bridge gave way.

He takes the fact the Moncton divers have said they will travel to Grand Falls today as a positive sign.

"This is the guy that told me he had heard it was there. Well, if he was not convinced, he would not be coming up to

Grand Falls (today)."

The diver and some friends who have experience locating and charting underwater wrecks are to help with the search effort late this morning.

"He talked to me about how they are going to carry out their search patterns, it's pretty cool."

"I think those guys are pretty confident they can find it if it is there."

A Canadian Pacific Railways historian told Mr. Ouellette that the engine was accounted for on a July 31, 1904 assignment list. Locomotive 508 was assigned and maintained in Edmundston.

Mr. Ouellette believes the engine remains underwater and could be salvaged by a barge being used for construction work on a highway bridge spanning the river.

The search for the locomotive is approaching a decisive moment.

If isn't found today, he said, "it's not there."

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