

Academics explore a 200-year-old shipwreck

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U.S. researchers are working to recover artifacts from a 200-year-old shipwreck, more than 4,000 feet beneath the surface of the Gulf of Mexico.

The \$4.8 million project, funded by the Okeanos Gas Gathering Co., is believed the deepest such recovery effort ever attempted in the gulf.

Texas A&M University Professors William Bryant and Donny Hamilton, along with doctoral student Peter Hitchcock, say the vessel could prove to be one of the most historically significant shipwrecks found in the gulf.

The recovery effort is taking pace southwest of the Louisiana coast, where the Mississippi River flows into the Gulf of Mexico.

Using a remotely controlled submersible vehicle, the researchers are focusing on retrieving items and artifacts visible on the seafloor and do not plan to excavate the entire hull.

The vessel's identity and origin remain a mystery, but an analysis of video documentation from previous site visits suggests the artifacts scattered on the seafloor are from the late 1700s or early 1800s.

Organizers said the project is being extensively recorded for a planned documentary film.

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