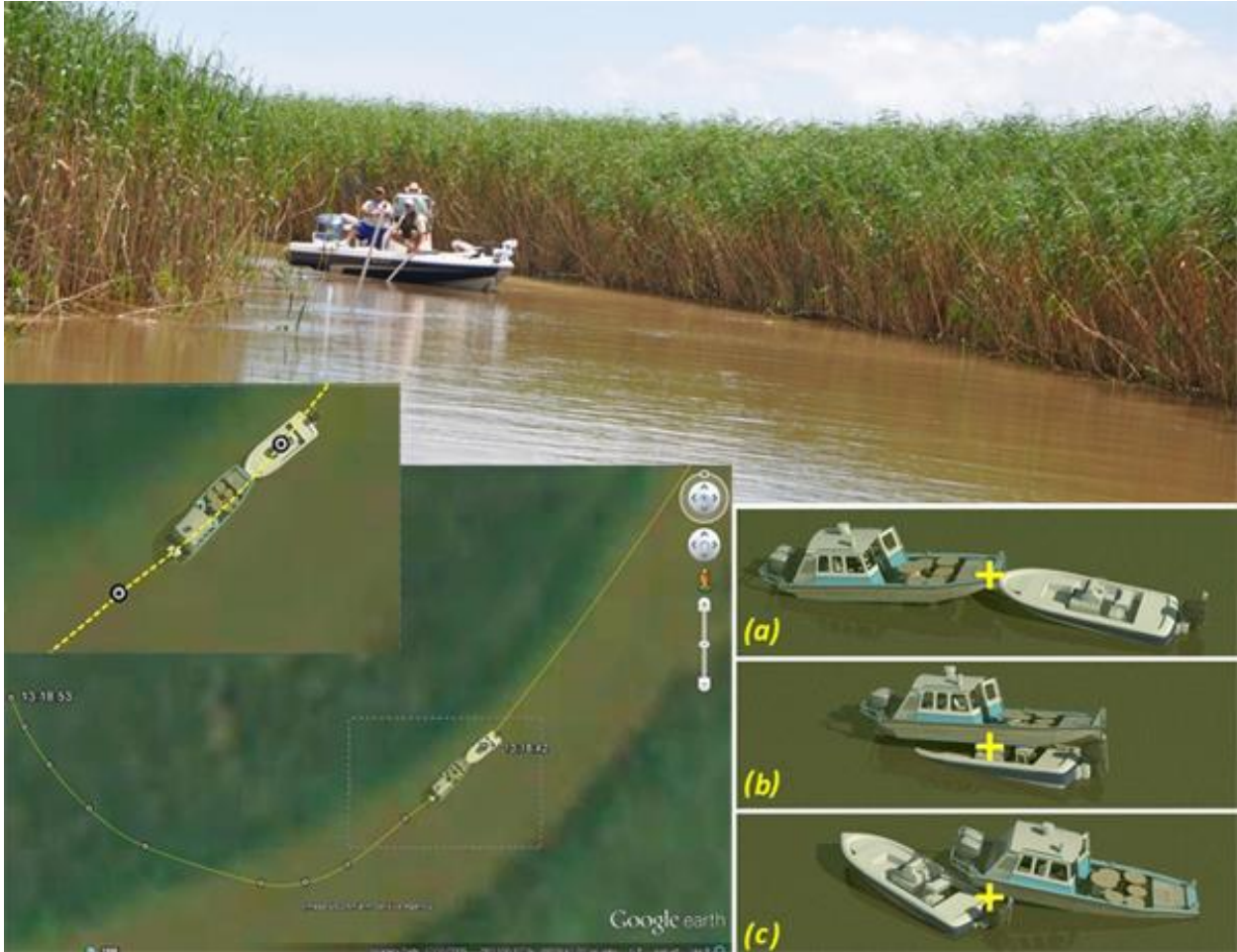


ATA's Reconstruction of Louisiana Boating Accident Results in Settlement



ATA Associates provided accident reconstruction services in a lawsuit on behalf of a former offshore vessel industry manager who was killed in a 2013 collision between his recreational boat and a commercial workboat in a narrow waterway in the Mississippi River delta, about 75 miles southeast of New Orleans. ATA's reconstruction of the head-on collision supported claims for compensatory and punitive damages by the decedent's widow and two minor children which were recently resolved in a confidential settlement agreement. Knowledge of a variety of technical disciplines was required to make sense of the facts of the case, and several of ATA's staff members collaborated on the challenging but successful effort.

Global positioning system (GPS) data were available from the plaintiff's boat, but not from the workboat involved in the collision. The GPS data established the speed and the path of the plaintiff's boat, beginning well before the collision and ending at that boat's final rest position. The moment in time and, therefore, the particular location of impact between the two craft were determined from a "spike" found in the deceleration history of the plaintiff's boat, which was derived from the GPS time and distance data for that boat. An accurate reconstruction of the specific location of the collision was needed to address "around the bend" line-of-sight issues for both boats related to curvature of the channel in which the collision occurred.

In the absence of GPS data for the speed and direction of travel of the workboat, those features were determined by other means. Matching and aligning linear scrapes on the top surfaces of the plaintiff's

boat with complementary marks on the underside of the workboat's hull (both sets of marks having been observed and documented during ATA's physical inspection of both vessels) not only showed that the mishap had been a dramatic over-ride of the workboat over the recreational craft, but also clearly established the orientation of the two vessels at the moment of initial contact. The over-ride collision indicated by the marks analysis was also consistent with the nature and severity of the injuries sustained by the occupants on the plaintiff's boat. The speed of the workboat at the moment of impact with the plaintiff's boat and its change in speed through the ensuing over-ride were then calculated using momentum exchange and conservation of energy as guiding analytical principles.

In sum, ATA's reconstruction established that the workboat was on the wrong side of the channel at the time of the collision; having "cut the corner" of the curve in the channel where the mishap occurred. Additionally, ATA's reconstruction indicated that the workboat was travelling at an imprudently high speed, so that when it encountered the on-coming recreational boat the ensuing collision could not be avoided by either boat operator.