

Army Corps of Engineers supporting recovery operations following Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse

By Cynthia Mitchell 27 March 2024



USACE Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon views damage of the fallen Francis Scott Key Bridge that collapsed in Baltimore, March 26, 2024. USACE will lead the effort to clear the channel as part of the larger interagency recovery effort.

BALTIMORE – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District activated its Emergency Operations Center March 26, clearing the way for more than 1,100 engineering, construction, contracting and operations specialists to provide support to local, state and federal agencies following the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge.

In accordance with federal authorities, USACE continues the effort to clear the Federal channel as part of the larger interagency recovery effort. Together with local, state, and federal partners, they are working closely to determine the actions required to remove the fallen debris.

As of March 27, USACE is providing:

- Certified underwater assessment capabilities by Structural Professional Engineers, Remotely Operated Vehicle and sonar;
- Structural Engineering support, including certified bridge safety inspectors

and urban search and rescue structural technical specialists;

- Waterway debris management, led by USACE debris removal vessel *REYNOLDS*, which patrols the waters of the Baltimore Harbor and Patapsco River for drift and debris that could be hazardous to navigation; Hydrographic and topographic surveying via the *CATLETT*, a 61-foot survey vessel that actively supports the Baltimore District's Navigation Branch.

USACE is also poised to provide the following support to the joint response:

- Additional USACE vessels are prepared to join efforts as needed for waterway debris management, led by USACE debris removal vessel *REYNOLDS*;
- Two survey vessels from USACE, Philadelphia District, *H.R. SPIES* and the *DAUNTLESS*, are available to support;
- USACE dive safety experts from the Philadelphia, Buffalo, and New England Districts are preparing to join the response effort.

Baltimore District operates and maintains more than 290 miles of federal navigable channels within the Susquehanna River watershed, including the Fort McHenry Channel.

"Our thoughts are with those impacted by the tragic collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge," said Baltimore District Commander Col. Estee Pinchasin. "Our Emergency Managers are closely monitoring the incident and coordinating with partner agencies for any potential support requests. We'll continue to support the U.S. Coast Guard and other state and local agencies as needed."