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Contact: Karen L. Auer, 412-395-7106

Karen.L.Auer@usace.army.mil

Recovery Operations Start at Montgomery Lock

PITTSBURGH – The US Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the towing industry started recovery operations at Montgomery Locks and Dam where the towboat M/V Elizabeth M. and three of its six barges remain sunk on the dam.

The team began preparations for search operations to include moving dive equipment and support vessels on-site today as river conditions slowly improve. The first priority at Montgomery Locks and Dam is recovery of the body of the missing crewmember. Beginning at daylight tomorrow divers will prepare to enter the interior of the sunken M/V Elizabeth M. to verify the presence or absence of the missing crewmember, recover the body if possible and search the interior to determine the condition of the towboat in preparation for recovery and removal operations at a later date.

Campbell Transportation Co. has positively located and marked two of its three remaining barges. Survey work to locate the last barge has been suspended until search and recovery operations are complete. The salvaging operations of the barge closest to the Montgomery Lock are progressing and the barge may be raised later today.

A joint US Coast Guard/Corps of Engineers situational update briefing will be held at 4:00 p.m. tomorrow at the Montgomery Locks and Dam.

For more information on US Coast Guard activities contact LTJG Justin Covert at 412-644-5809, Ext. 2102.