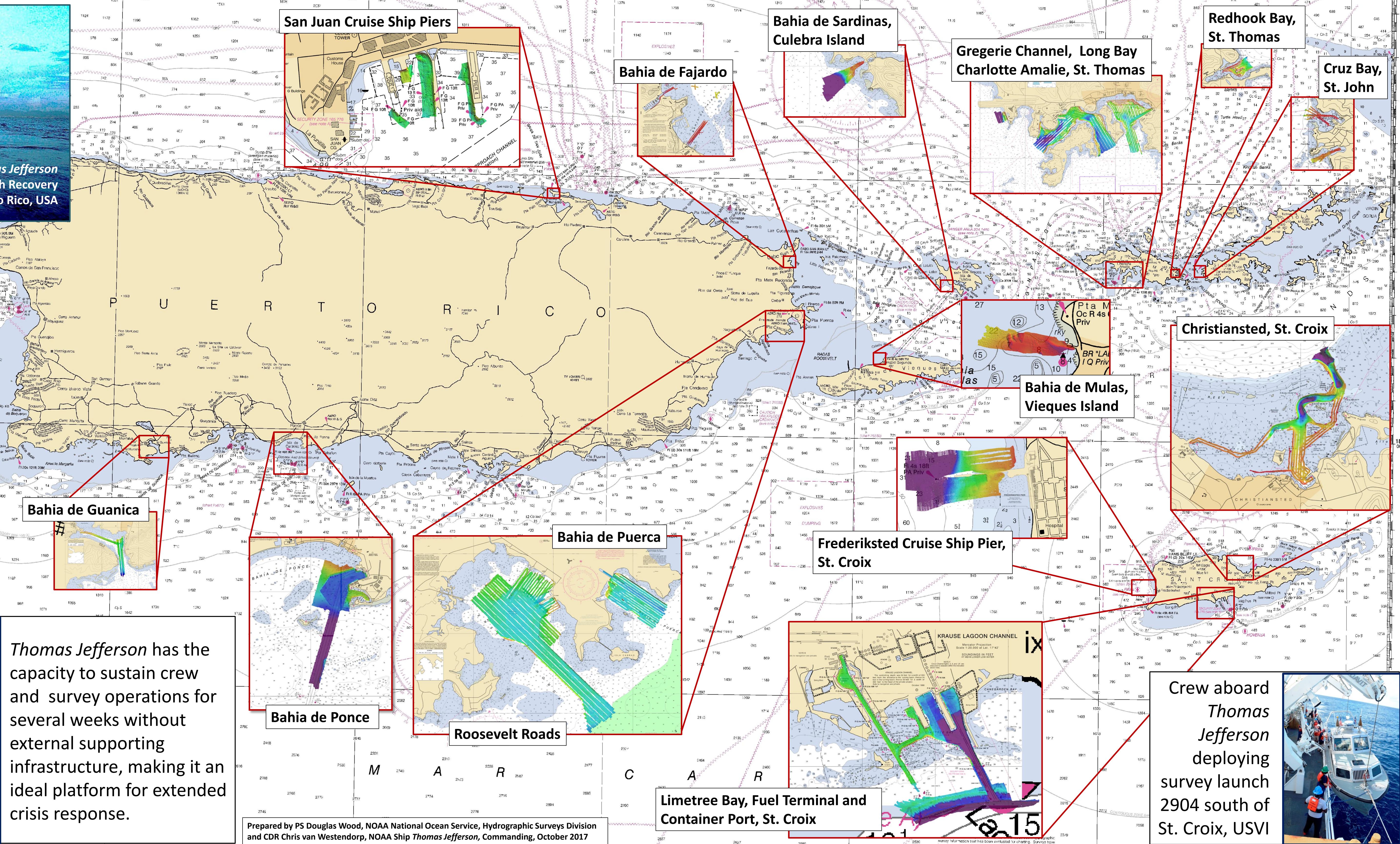
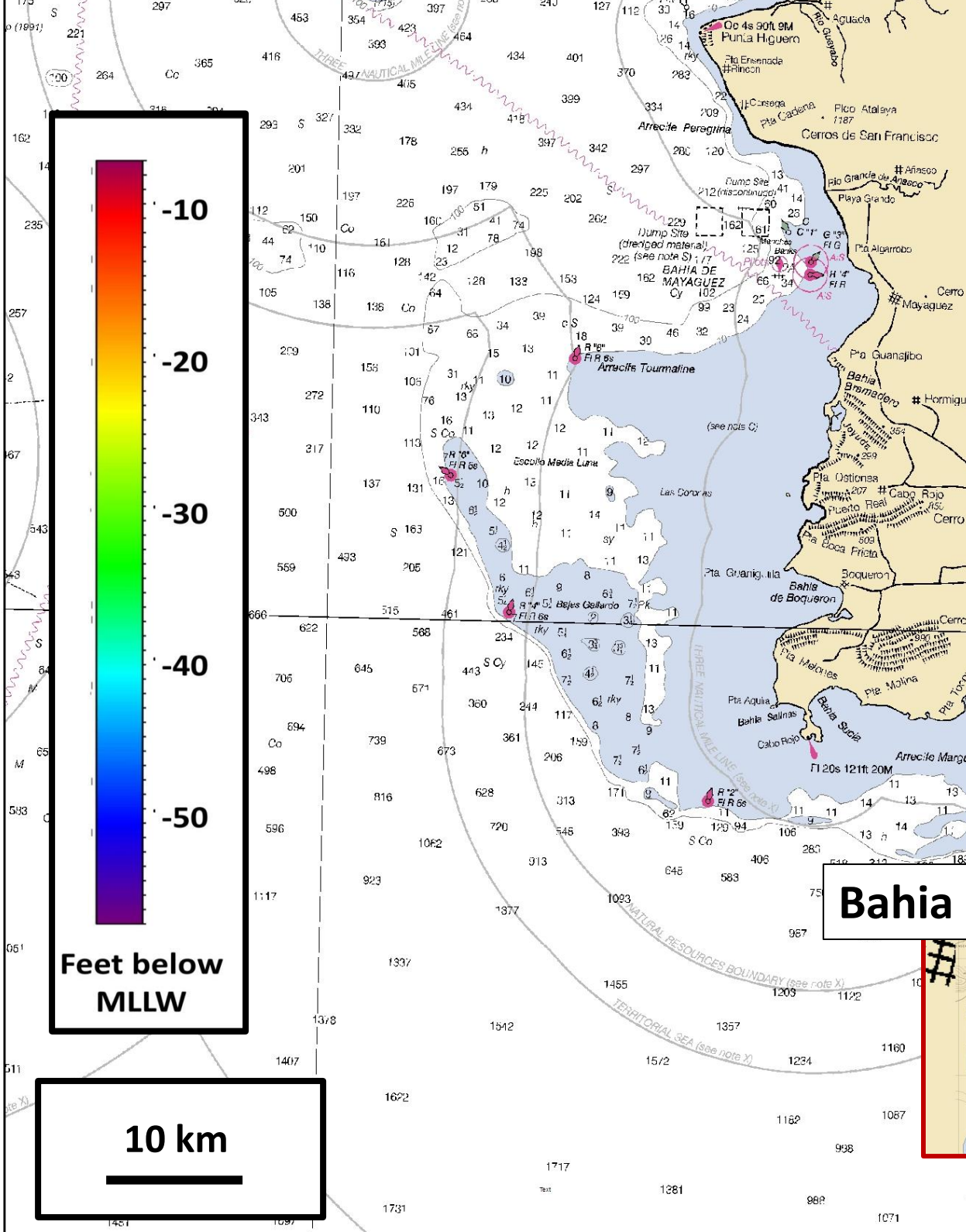


NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson* Hurricane Maria Response, 2017

After any natural disaster, ports and harbors must be opened as quickly as possible to facilitate recovery and reconstruction. In many instances a hydrographic survey is required to assure safe passage of commerce. On September 20, 2017 Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico as a Category 4 storm after ravaging the U.S. Virgin Islands. As the storm passed to the north, *Thomas Jefferson* transited from Port Everglades, Florida, to these islands. There the ship's 38 officers and crew conducted multibeam echo sounder (MBES) and side scan sonar (SSS) hydrographic surveys in the island ports and bays. Survey data helped inform U.S. Coast Guard and other national/regional authorities on decisions to allow and/or restrict commerce. Over three weeks the crew surveyed 13 areas and no fewer than 18 individual port facilities, as well as conducted emergency repairs to three tide and weather stations.

Insets below on NOAA chart 25650 show digital terrain models (DTMs) produced from MBES data; DTM gaps are covered by concurrent SSS.



Thomas Jefferson has the capacity to sustain crew and survey operations for several weeks without external supporting infrastructure, making it an ideal platform for extended crisis response.

Crew aboard *Thomas Jefferson* deploying survey launch 2904 south of St. Croix, USVI

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