

**California Department of Fish and Game News Release
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Donner Spill Update: Soil Removal to Start June 8, Travelers May See Traffic Delays

Crews will remove contaminated soil from a diesel spill along Interstate-80 near Donner Lake beginning Tuesday, June 8 at 6 a.m. Travelers will see the fast lane closed and may experience traffic delays from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“We have worked with CalTrans to design an operation that will get the soil out effectively while minimizing as much as possible the impact of traffic delays on travelers,” said Hector Orozco, incident commander for the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). “We also have an agreement that operations will cease in the event of rain or temporarily suspend if traffic gets too backed up.”

CalTrans granted DFG’s requests to begin soil removal Tuesday. The work will continue through Thursday, if necessary. The California Highway Patrol will be monitoring the traffic and determining when it is too backed up which will trigger a temporary suspension of activities until traffic clears.

Though the majority of the spilled fuel was deposited in the center divide, some moved down the median and through a culvert to the hillside above Donner Lake resulting in some staining (dark areas of soil where diesel is present). Responders expect to develop a plan that will most likely call for hand crews to remove the diesel-stained soil in this area.

“Initial assessments of the stained soil revealed most of the fuel-impacted soil is shallow,” said Carol Oz, DFG environmental scientist. “Considering the terrain and safety, the extent of spill impact, and the need to minimize damage to the hillside, hand crews will be the most effective approach for removing soil on the lake side of the Interstate.”

Environmental monitoring of the area continues for water quality and wildlife impacts. Recent samples from Summit Creek and Donner Lake showed no diesel detected. Scientists will develop restoration plans for the area following the soil removal.

Donner Lake is open to the public with no spill-related restrictions.

For more information see <https://calspillwatch.dfg.ca.gov>.

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