

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update 13: Unified Command continues cleanup operations

Editors note: Hours of operation for the Joint Information Center's are now 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The after hours contact number is (510) 333-6297.

SANTA BARBARA – Members of the Refugio Oil Response Unified Command continue cleanup operations at the Refugio Oil Spill in Santa Barbara County.

Since the beginning of the response, cleanup crews have collected a total of 9,492 gallons of oily water mixture.

Since yesterday, oily solids recovered by responders increased from 91 to 220 cubic yards. Oily soil collected has increased from 800 to 1,250 cubic yards. Additionally 1,630 feet of absorbent boom has been deployed as well as 2,090 feet of hard boom, resulting a total of 3,720 feet of boom deployed.

Responders are working to remove oil from the kelp beds by spraying praying water's surface with a fire monitor (water cannon) to create an artificial current and agitating oil from the kelp. The oil is then "herded" and collected.

The number of people responding to the spill has increased from 625 to 654 since yesterday.

Five shoreline cleanup assessment technique (SCAT) teams continue to work along the shore from Gaviota Beach to the west side of Ellwood Beach. There are three helicopters, one vacuum truck and six wildlife recovery teams in operation.

There are nine brown pelicans and one Western Grebe that have been recovered and are being treated by wildlife specialists.

Five pelicans have died. One sea lion impacted by oil was recovered and one has died. A dolphin that was recovered dead on Friday has undergone a necropsy; no visible oil was found on the animal. A second dolphin was recovered Saturday and is undergoing a necropsy to determine the cause of death. Updates will be available when it has been completed.

There have been a large number of invertebrates affected by the oil, though due to complexities in counting and staffing constraints, it is unknown how many have been impacted.

Refugio and El Capitan beaches remain closed to the public and will remain closed until June 4, 2015.

Canada de Alegria to Coal Oil Point fisheries still remain closed.

A Federal Aviation Administration flight restriction has been established in the area of the response. Aircraft not directed as part of the response may not enter the airspace of Refugio State Beach. The restriction encompasses a five-mile radius around the park with a 1,000 foot ceiling. This includes the use of drone aircraft.

The public is advised to avoid contact with the oil and to keep pets away from the area where product has accumulated. In addition, they should not attempt to rescue oiled wildlife. Untrained individuals who attempt to rescue wildlife may cause more harm than good and may injure themselves in the process. If oiled animals are scared back into the water by pets or people, their chances of survival decrease dramatically.

- To report Oiled wildlife: 1-877-823-6926
- Volunteer information: 1-800-228-4544
- Claims number: 1-866-753-3619
- For more information: www.refugioresponse.com

*For more information contact:
Joint Information Center
reply@refugioresponse.com*