



Refugio Response Joint Information Center
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Refugio Oil Spill Onshore Progress: Soil Removal Gaining Speed



While the Refugio spill on-water response is nearing completion, work continues onshore with the removal of contaminated soil. Excavation and removal of contaminated soils where the pipeline leaked, as well as between the highway and the Union Pacific railroad tracks, is about 90 percent complete. The area from below the railroad tracks to the beach is currently undergoing excavation.

Once soil is excavated, the area is tested to see if petroleum chemicals are still present. If so, further excavation occurs. Once tests show that the crew has reached clean soil, the area will be backfilled with tested, clean soil.

The drainage culvert that runs from the area where the pipeline leaked, under the highway and railroad tracks, and which served as the conduit for the released oil, has been thoroughly cleaned. Samples were collected and initial data indicates cleaning operations were successful; additional samples will be taken to confirm that all residue has been cleaned from the culvert.



Onshore soil removal has shifted focus to the south side of Highway 101, down the hillside and bluff to the beach. This is where the oil flowed from the north side of the highway and under the railroad tracks and then to the ocean. The terrain, including the cliff face, presents the crew with both physical challenges and cultural and

archeologically sensitive Native American areas.

Thus far, about 3,804 cubic yards of soil have been removed. Soils are moved offsite and are treated prior to being reused as fill for commercial and industrial projects such as road beds. Restoration of the site, once all contaminated soil has been removed will include replacing vegetation and trees such as these that have been impacted.



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