



Refugio Response Joint Information Center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cyclists from AIDS/LifeCycle Ride to pass Refugio Oil Spill Response Excavation Site

SANTA BARBARA, Calif.— Tomorrow morning, June 5, nearly 2,400 cyclists will ride past the oil spill cleanup work west of Refugio State Beach as part of AIDS/LifeCycle, a seven-day, 545-mile cycling event from San Francisco to Los Angeles that raises funds for San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the HIV/AIDS-related services of the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

Representatives from the Unified Command and AIDS/LifeCycle have met to determine how best to accommodate the safe passage of cyclists while continuing the cleanup operations on the bluff. Continuing the cleanup work while ensuring road safety is a high priority for both Refugio Incident response and AIDS/LifeCycle.

Vehicles and equipment will be moved off the road and away from the excavation site while riders are moving through the area, and cyclists will ride on the shoulder of US 101 as they had planned to do. Excavation work on the bluff will continue, with excavated contaminated soil stored onsite until the riders are through the area.

"On behalf of the Unified Command, I am happy to say that we found a solution that lets the riders stay on the course while we continue our vital cleanup work," said Capt. Charlene Downey, the Coast Guard Federal On Scene Coordinator for the response. "Our first concern is rider safety; the precautions we have taken to modify our operations will ensure that the dedicated riders can safely ride past our workers. Our drivers will be cautious and aware of cyclists; California Highway Patrol and Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office will be on-site to help direct truck traffic and keep the cyclists safe. We salute the commitment of the riders as they complete their journey from San Francisco to Los Angeles."

"We are relieved to be working together with the Unified Command to find a solution that allows AIDS/LifeCycle to proceed as planned while also continuing the cleanup effort," said AIDS/LifeCycle Senior Director Greg Sroda. "Our event participants raised a record \$16.3 million this year to care for people living with HIV and help prevent new infections. They are equally passionate about the environment. We're pleased with this outcome, which we see as a win-win for two important causes."

In addition to maintaining a safe roadway for the cyclists, response operations has monitored air emissions from the excavation and are confident that air quality will not pose any problem for the riders as they pass the work zone.

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