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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Beach Assessment and Clean-up Continues And Extends

The Refugio Oil response effort includes continued assessment and clean-up of local beaches in Southern Santa Barbara County.

Professional and volunteer clean-up crews have been deployed for oil removal activities across beaches in Santa Barbara County including Arroyo Burro Beach and other Santa Barbara area beaches. These individuals are appropriately trained and wear personal protective equipment, to prepare for potential direct contact with oil products. Sections of beaches may be temporarily restricted to allow space for them to work; this does not indicate that the beaches are unsafe for the public.

Protective boom is being placed at some local beaches and waterways such as the Arroyo Burro Creek and Goleta Slough. These are placed to proactively prevent oil from potentially getting into these sensitive areas. At this time, only Refugio and El Capitan state park campground and adjacent beaches remain closed to the public. Air and water testing and monitoring are actively continuing in areas from Gaviota to Santa Barbara. The goal is to detect concerning levels of any oil related harmful substances. In addition, shoreline assessment teams continue to walk beaches daily to monitor for oil. Any beach conditions indicating a significant public health risk will result in immediate beach closure.

Several beaches have trace amounts of oil and scattered tar balls. Currently testing is underway to determine if local oil on beaches is related to the oil spill. It is best to stay away from areas where there is visible oil and petroleum odor, as inhalation of some crude oil related compounds may cause temporary discomfort for sensitive individuals.

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