



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  THE RESOURCES AGENCY

OSPR News Release

DFG OFFICE OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE



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East Walker River oil spill settled

The California Department of Fish and Game Office of Spill Prevention and Response (DFG-OSPR), the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Trustee agencies), and Advanced Fuel Filtration (AFF) have tentatively settled the case of the East Walker River oil spill. Final approval of the settlement by the United States is subject to a public notice and comment period of approximately 30 days.

The spill occurred on December 30, 2000, when a tanker truck carrying 6,100 gallons of oil overturned on California Highway 182, killing the driver. Approximately 3,608 gallons of heavy, #6 fuel oil spilled from the truck into the East Walker River, north of the Mono County town of Bridgeport. The spill oiled approximately ten miles of the river, a premier trophy wild trout fishery, in both California and Nevada. Because of winter weather that made the work both dangerous and extremely difficult, it took over three months to clean-up the waterway and shorelines.

AFF has agreed to reimburse DFG-OSPR \$68,000 for its past assessment costs involved in determining the extent of damages to the natural environment. This is in addition to \$232,121.88 already paid by AFF to DFG for the cost of responding to the initial spill. AFF will also pay DFG-OSPR \$148,000 for restoration of 3.3 miles of stream, and \$105,000 for 2,483 lost "angler days." Another \$105,000 will be used by the Trustee agencies for natural resource restoration planning and oversight. The Trustee agencies will now develop a natural resource restoration plan, solicit public comments, and oversee implementation of the restoration projects.

AFF has already reimbursed the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region \$22,373 for their expenses in the clean-up operations.

The DFG collected fifty-seven dead animals during this response: six beavers, 1 mink, four birds, and 46 fish. Spill responders estimate that 1,758 gallons of oil, 200 barrels of oily liquid, and 695 cubic yards of oily debris were recovered. That represents about 49 percent of the oil. Most oil spill clean-up in water results in less than ten percent recovery.

Due to the nature of the incident and AFF's willingness to immediately take responsibility for the spill cleanup, their prompt payment for costs incurred by the DFG-OSPR during the initial clean-up efforts, and their willingness to resolve this case without having to resort to litigation, the State agencies have agreed to forgo any penalties associated with such pollution incidents.