

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RESPONSE CREW TACKLES ASPHALT TAR SPILL INTO SANDIA CREEK

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, Calif - Department of Fish and Game (DFG) teams responded to a truck wreck on De Luz Road in Riverside County that released approximately 600 gallons of asphalt tar into Sandia Creek late yesterday. The tar-coated vegetation along a 300-yard stretch of Sandia Creek, recognized as one of the last pristine, free-flowing creeks in the Southern California area.

“Oil products cause serious damage when they enter California’s waters, so we strive to respond quickly and effectively,” said Thomas Cullen, Administrator for DFG’s Office of Spill Prevention and Response. “Pristine waters like Sandia Creek and the wildlife within it are especially vulnerable to pollution.”

The asphalt tar has been contained within the area, but responders deployed containment boom farther down Sandia Creek as a precaution. Asphalt tar is a heavy, sticky petroleum product that either attaches to the vegetation or sinks to the bottom of the creek. Fortunately, the creek flow is low which is preventing the material from washing further downstream. Local road construction crews use the material as part of a slurry operation.

Sandia Creek, a tributary to the Santa Margarita River, boasts abundant vegetation like willows, poison oak, and other aquatic plants that provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. Wildlife impacts include 16 dead mosquito fish and a tree frog. No birds have been observed at this time, but teams continue to monitor for wildlife during the ongoing cleanup.

Updates on the response can be found at www.facebook.com/calspillwatch; [twitter.com @dfg_ospr](https://twitter.com/dfg_ospr); and www.calspillwatch.dfg.ca.gov

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