California Department of Fish and Wildlife News Release

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SCIENTISTS TEST OIL SPILL CONTAINMENT EQUIPMENT GEARED TOWARD PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE SITES

RICHMOND -- The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and National Response Corporation (NRC), an oil spill response organization, today tested response strategies to protect environmentally sensitive sites in the event of an oil spill in San Francisco Bay.

"The exercise was performed in the Santa Fe Channel near the Port of Richmond, and involved the deployment of boom used to contain spills," said Kathleen Jennings, an environmental scientist with CDFW's Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR).

CDFW's Sensitive Site Strategy Evaluation Program (SSSEP) evaluates strategies selected from more than 600 sites statewide that are particularly vulnerable to an oil spill. These areas are identified in Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) and are rich in sensitive resources such as fish, birds and marine mammals. Many also include habitat for wildlife breeding, nesting and feeding.

The strategy tested today focuses on preventing oil from escaping the Santa Fe Channel and entering and affecting the bay, specifically Brooks Island, which maintains a rich habitat for nesting birds.

Factors such as tidal patterns, currents and weather conditions affect how well equipment like boom works. Testing a strategy helps experts from OSPR determine whether it is likely to be successful in the event of a spill or needs to be altered.

ACP's cover the entire coastline and marine waters of California and include the state's busiest port areas: San Francisco Bay, Los Angeles/Long Beach and San Diego. Over 50 state, federal and local governments, as well as non-government organizations, industry and the general public contribute to ACP development. The San Francisco ACP in particular has numerous and varied sensitive sites that could require protection during an oil spill.

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Hi resolution photos of boom available for use at:
https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=67532
https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=67533
Video on boom also available for use at:

http://youtu.be/nuSip3ZUi4w