

# California Department of Fish and Wildlife News Release

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## **Oil by Rail Report Highlights Need for Sustainable Funding and Close Coordination to Protect Public Safety**

### *Large Increase in Oil by Rail Points to Need for Long-Term Solutions*

In an effort to prepare state and local emergency responders for the dramatic increase in shipments of oil by railroad in California communities, the state Interagency Working Group on Oil by Rail Safety today released a report outlining its recommendations to improve public safety during the transport of oil by rail in California.

“Keeping California’s residents and environment safe from oil spills from rail deliveries, pipelines, or marine shipments is a top public safety priority,” said Mark Ghilarducci, Director of the California Office of Emergency Services. “Implementing these recommendations will bolster a growing array of prevention, response and regulatory efforts.”

State energy officials estimate that crude oil imports by rail will increase from 1 percent of total California oil imports in 2013 to 25 percent of imports by 2016. Most of the increase is due to a sharp rise of imports from Canada and North Dakota in the Bakken shale formation.

In response, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. included proposals in his budget to prepare the state for the influx of oil by rail, including increasing safety inspections of railways by the Public Utilities Commission and establishing an inland oil spill preparedness and response program.

“Californians recognize that moving oil can be a dangerous business,” said California Department of Fish and Wildlife Director Charlton H. Bonham. “Enhancing the programs we have in place will give Californians the confidence they need to know that any movement of oil in this state will be done in the safest manner possible.”

The report details 12 main recommendations:

- Increase the number of California Public Utilities Commission rail inspectors;
- Improve emergency preparedness and response programs;
- Request improved identifiers on tank placards for first responders;
- Request railroads to provide real-time shipment information to emergency responders;
- Request railroads provide more information to affected communities;
- Develop and post interactive oil by rail map;

- Request the federal Department of Transportation to expedite phase-out of older, riskier tank cars;
- Accelerate implementation of new accident prevention technology;
- Update California Public Utilities Commission incident reporting requirements;
- Request railroads provide California with broader accident data;
- Ensure compliance with industry voluntary agreement;
- Ensure state agencies have adequate data.

Several state agencies engage in prevention, planning, emergency response, and cleanup activities applicable to oil by rail, including the Office of Emergency Services (OES), the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), and the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR). Local agencies, including the local Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs), also play critical roles in emergency preparedness and response, and have expressed growing concern about increased oil by rail transport.

In addition to administration's budget proposal, state officials are updating California's emergency response programs, including the CalEPA Emergency Response Management Committee revising the Hazardous Material and Oil Spill annex of the State Emergency Plan and OES reviewing and updating the six Regional Plans for Hazardous Materials Emergency Response.

The report is the product of an intensive 6 month effort by multiple state agencies, including the California Public Utilities Commission; California Office of Emergency Services; California Environmental Protection Agency; Department of Toxic Substances Control; California Energy Commission; California Natural Resources Agency; California Office of the State Fire Marshal; Department of Oil, Gas and Geothermal Resources; and Office of Spill Prevention and Response.

View the report: <http://bit.ly/OBR-pdf>

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