

Yesterday there were conflicting and confusing reports coming in from Zone 4. New buried oil, oiled wrack and to what depth do you dig to. I went out to the site this morning. Yesterday they used a small bobcat excavator to work on digging up the oily patches in Ventana beach.

I arrived on scene on Ventana Beach at 8:45 AM, right behind some DNER Rangers. Apparently two hawksbill turtles were still trying to nest at dawn and were scared off by the arrival of the work crew at 8AM. The turtles were located on the eastern half of Ventana beach, where the clean up is being carried out. A survey of the beach was carried out by several DNER personnel to assure that there was no turtle nest in the area. We need to do the Section 7, Endangered Species Consultation to document this to show that impacts to species is being minimized.

After some discussion and a quick sea turtle awareness talk to the clean up crews by DNER, work was resumed around 10:45 AM. There is an accumulation of oily wrack high on the beach at the far end of Ventana beach. I marked it to make it easier to identify and work. This needs to be removed today incase the sea turtles come back up on the beach tonight.

I checked the rest of the beach for oil. There are some pockets of oil stained sand but that was all I found except for those piles of oily wrack at the end of the beach.



I got to Majagua Beach and it has problems, they found what seems to be buried liquid oil down near the low water line. It is buried some 12 inches or more in that find hard pact sand. Strike team was trying to better define the area. Booms were placed in the water but they may need additional layers of booms and they need to switch them out as soon as they get laden with oil. This material seems coat the outside of the sausage boom and once its coated the product does not penetrate easily.



Majagua Beach 11 AM, Sept. 7, 2007. Note mounds of oily wrack at high water line need to be removed.



Liquid oil buried at low water line Majagua Beach.

We then took a boat ride to another work site east of Majagua beach. There is no road access, so every thing is ferried in by boats. There are a series of sand beaches, mangroves and rocky shorelines that extend from just east of Majagua to the tip of Punta Verraco. One small work crew is working the more accessible areas. There are pockets of red mangroves with their roots heavily oiled, we did not get close enough to really check if the oil can be removed by passive cleaning with snare boom. Some of the mangroves had their lower branches covered in oil as well, leaving a bath tub ring effect.



Oiled red mangrove, you can see the black oil from the water line up to the first branches.

Some of these areas have an accumulation of oily wrack behind the mangroves, this needs to be assessed to see if it can be removed without causing further damage. In some areas there are black

mangroves immediately along the shore. These have had their breathing roots also called pneumatophores coated with oil.



Black mangrove pneumatophores coated with oil. This is found in areas where black mangroves are found immediately behind the shore.



I think that the area of Majagua beach needs a thorough search for buried oil. I recommended that the excavator on Ventana be moved there to help. There needs to be enough boom in the water and regular boom maintenance to assure that the product does not move down to Ventana or to clean areas on Majagua. Hawksbill turtles are may also nest on this beach as well.



Majagua Beach clean up around 1:30 PM Sept 7, 2007

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