

## NOAA Web Update June 2, 2010

### DEEPWATER HORIZON Incident



**Situation: Wednesday 02 June —**

#### ***Response:***

BP began efforts to place a cap over the riser pipe leaking oil into the Gulf of Mexico. On June 1st, using a diamond bladed saw, BP managed to successfully complete one cut through the riser pipe. Today, during a second required cut before capping the pipe, the saw got stuck. BP's goal is to free the saw from the pipe, replace the blade, and restart the cutting process. Once engineers complete the second cut, they will secure a cap over the pipe and connect it by a riser to a drillship. This approach, if successful, could contain most of the oil. Meanwhile, BP continues to drill two relief wells that should be complete by mid August.

NOAA scientists continue to generate surface oil trajectories. In the nearshore, onshore winds are expected to continue through Friday with speeds of 10-15 kts. The winds will result in northward movement of oil towards the Mississippi/Alabama barrier islands. The northeastward movement of oil could continue over the next few days threatening shorelines as far east as Pensacola, Fla. Threats to shorelines in Breton Sound, Chandeleur Sound, and the NE side of the Mississippi Delta will be reduced while west of the Delta, more shoreline impacts could occur.

In the offshore area, satellite imagery analysis continues to show narrow bands of oil to the SE and ESE of the main slick. Observers flying over this region confirmed colorless sheens in narrow bands. These scattered sheens will most likely continue to be entrained in a large clockwise eddy (Eddy Franklin) that has pinched off the main Loop Current. Satellite imagery also showed a narrow band of apparent sheen within Eddy Franklin as far south as approximately 27 degrees 15 minutes. If this sheen persists or has tar balls associated with it, there is potential for some of it to become entrained into the Loop Current and move toward the Florida Straits.

#### ***Assessment:***

NOAA's Damage Assessment Remediation and Restoration Program is conducting a Natural Resource Damage Assessment [http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/book\\_shelf/1959\\_deepwater-Horizon-NRDA-ORR-web-5-7-10.pdf](http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/book_shelf/1959_deepwater-Horizon-NRDA-ORR-web-5-7-10.pdf) (PDF, 89 K). The focus currently is to assemble existing data on resources and their habitats and collect baseline (pre-spill impact) data. Data on oiled resources and habitats are also being collected.

### **NOAA by the Numbers in the Gulf Region June 2, 2010**

#### ***NOAA aircraft deployed (effective May 31):***

- N46RF Twin Otter (DHC-6), Current station: Mobile, Ala. Began flying marine mammal surveys as of 28 Apr. Its mission changed on May 5 to multispectral scanning to study oil density and thickness.

- N68RF King Air (BE-350ER), Current Station: New Orleans, La. Mission: Coastal photography and mapping. First Flight: 5 May.
- N42RF Orion (WP-3D), Current Station: Tampa, Fla. Mission: Loop Current study. First Flight: 8 May, flew May 21. Aircraft flew mission on Friday, May 28 – media onboard.

***NOAA and contract research vessels:***

- NOAA Ship Gordon Gunter
  - Completed 547nm of acoustic survey on its sub-surface oil sampling cruise, in addition to its full suite of sampling operations.
  - Operating around the 5nm Exclusion Zone and an area to the WNW of the Deepwater Horizon site. Conducting the full suite of sampling operations. Acoustic signatures with potential as sub-surface plumes being sampled extensively.
- NOAA Ship Thomas Jefferson
  - Scheduled to depart today on Deepwater Horizon “Western Sentry” project at 1800 EDT.
- R/V Gandy
  - Conducting Reef Fish Survey out of Panama City, Fla.
- R/V Caretta
  - Alongside Pascagoula - scheduled to assist with spill response after 21 June.
- R/V HST
  - Alongside Pascagoula. Available.
- R/V Harold B
  - Coming out of shipyard this week. Scheduled to conduct trap/video surveys out of Panama City the remainder of the month.
- R/V Beau Rivage
  - Concluding trawling in non-oiled areas to collect baseline samples for the National Seafood Inspection Laboratory. ETA Pascagoula 04 June.
- R/V Jack Fitz (a CSA International vessel)
  - Alongside in Port Fouchon
- R/V Pelican
  - Departing on a 5-day cruise today

***Glider operations:***

- Two Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) community gliders (Rutgers and Mote) and 2 NAVO gliders on active missions and transmitting data

***Fishery closure update (effective June 2):***

- NOAA Fisheries Service revised the fishery closure effective 6:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, June 2. The closure now encompasses approximately 37 percent of the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone. A 2,637 square mile area of the western-most boundary south of Louisiana was reopened today - oil was projected to be in this area, but was never actually observed there.

***Marine mammals and turtles (effective June 1):*****Sea Turtles**

- The total number of sea turtles verified from April 30 to June 1 within the designated spill area is 277. The on-water surveys by NOAA, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, and other partners working under the Unified Command captured 10 heavily oiled young turtles (8 Kemp's ridley, 1 loggerhead, 1 hawksbill) in areas 40 miles offshore on Tuesday, June 1. The turtles' behavior was abnormal, but they were responsive. All the turtles were cleaned aboard the vessel, received initial veterinary care and were transported to Audubon Aquarium outside New Orleans where they are receiving further care. In addition, Louisiana Department of Fish and Wildlife captured 4 live and one dead Kemp's ridley turtle, all oiled, in waters off Grand Isle, La. A total of 24 live turtles and one dead turtle have been captured during on-water surveys. Surveys continue this week.
- Oil was found covering the 24 live sea turtles, the one dead sea turtle captured during a directed survey, two live stranded sea turtles caught in skimming operations and one dead stranded turtle. All others have not had visible evidence of external oil.
- Of the 277 turtles verified from April 30 to June 1, a total of 232 turtles stranded dead, 20 stranded alive. Three of those subsequently died and one of the live stranded turtles —caught in marine debris —was disentangled and released. There are 40 turtles in rehabilitation. Turtle strandings during this time period have been higher in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama than in previous years for this same time period. This may be due in part to increased detection and reporting, but this does not fully account for the increase.

**Dolphins**

- From April 30 to June 1, there have been 29 dead dolphins verified within the designated spill area. So far, one of the 29 dolphins had evidence of external oil. Because it was found on an oiled beach, we are unable at this time to determine whether the animal was covered in oil prior to its death or after its death. The other 28 dolphins have had no visible evidence of external oil. Since April 30, the stranding rate for dolphins in Louisiana has been higher than the historic numbers for the same time period in previous years. This may be due to increased detection and reporting and the lingering effects of the earlier observed spike in strandings.

***NOAA Facilities in the Gulf:***

- NOAA Fisheries Regional Office in St. Petersburg, Fla.
- National Marine Sanctuaries: Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, Galveston, Texas; Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Key West and Key Largo, Fla.
- National Estuarine Research Reserves: Mission-Aransas Reserve, Texas; Grand Bay, Miss.; Weeks Bay, Ala.; Rookery Bay, Fla.
- Science Center in Panama City, Fla.
- Field offices of the Science Center in Galveston, Texas and Pascagoula, Miss.
- Seafood Laboratory in Pascagoula.
- Texas - 13 Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) and the southern regional office in Fort Worth.
- Louisiana - 4 WFOs
- Mississippi - 4 WFOs
- Alabama - 4 WFOs
- Florida (West Coast to Key West) - 4 WFOs (additional 3 WFOs in East coast Florida and National Hurricane Center in Miami).
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and National Ocean Service (NOS) offices in Lafayette, La.
- NMFS regional office in Baton Rouge, La.
- National Coastal Data Development Center, National Data Buoy Center, Gulf Coastal Services Center - Stennis, Miss.

***Miscellaneous:***

- Two NOAA communications personnel are detailed to the federal Joint Information Center in Robert, La.
- One NOAA public affairs specialist is assigned to the NOAA Ship THOMAS JEFFERSON
- Two NOAA Communications personnel are assisting Dr. Lubchenco while in the Gulf.