

NOAA Web Update June 8, 2010

DEEPWATER HORIZON Incident



Situation: Tuesday 08 June —

BP has been collecting oil via the "Top Hat" for 5 days. The amount oil collected today increased from approximately 11,000 barrels for the past few days to 14,842 in the past 24 hours. Engineers continue to work to optimize the amount of oil collected from the riser. BP will know more about the final containment potential of the top hat operation within the next day or two.

Response

Efforts to collect, burn, disperse, and contain the oil continue in full force. Skimmers have recovered nearly 15.86 million gallons of oily water, and nearly 3.58 million gallons of oil have been burned in 131 in-situ burns. In addition, responders have deployed more than 4.80 million feet of sorbent and containment boom.

Weak, offshore (NW) winds are forecast for Tuesday, but are expected to become SE overnight. Onshore (SE/ESE) winds are forecast to continue through Friday at 10 knots or less. Persistent southwesterly winds over the last few days have resulted in northward movement of the slick towards the Mississippi/Alabama barrier islands and westward movement along the Florida Panhandle. Models show alongshore currents becoming more westward over the next few days, inhibiting further eastward movement. However, coastal regions between Dauphin Island and Freeport may continue to experience shoreline contacts throughout this forecast period. To the west of the Delta, any remaining floating oil in this region could come ashore between Timbalier Bay and Southwest Pass.

Satellite imagery analysis and overflight observations continue to indicate patches of sheen to the SE of the main slick. Scattered sheens and tar balls observed in these regions may be getting entrained into the northern edge of the large clockwise eddy (Eddy Franklin) that has pinched off the main Loop Current (LC). Trajectories indicate that some of these sheens may continue southward along the eastern edge of Eddy Franklin, whereas some may be getting entrained into the counter-clockwise eddy to the NE of the main LC eddy. A Coast Guard overflight today in the Florida Strait saw no signs of oil. A second overflight off the west coast of Florida saw no oil.

Closures

NOAA Fisheries Service is not modifying the fishery closure in the Gulf of Mexico today. Any changes to the closure are announced daily at 12 p.m. Eastern at sero.nmfs.noaa.gov and take effect at 6 p.m. Eastern the same day.

Sea Turtles and Marine Mammals (effective June 7, 2010)

A total of 315 sea turtles have been verified from April 30 to June 7 within the designated spill area. (The designated spill area for sea turtles and marine mammals is from the Texas/Louisiana border to

Apalachicola, Florida.) Between Sunday, June 6 and Monday, June 7, 15 turtle strandings were verified; all were dead (two in Florida, one in Alabama, one with external oil in Louisiana and 11 in Mississippi). Thirty sea turtles have been captured in the on-water turtle search and rescue operation by NOAA, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and other partners working under the Unified Command. Twenty-five of those captured turtles are in rehabilitation at Audubon Aquarium in New Orleans, two turtles were captured dead and three captured alive subsequently died at the aquarium. A total of 36 stranded or captured turtles have had evidence of external oil. These include the 30 captured turtles from the on-water operation, four live stranded sea turtles (two caught in skimming operations) and two dead stranded sea turtles. All others have not had visible evidence of external oil.

Of the 315 turtles verified from April 30 to June 7, a total of 263 stranded turtles were found dead, 22 stranded alive. Three of those subsequently died. Three live stranded turtles have been released, including two that were found in Mississippi and released after rehabilitation in Ten Thousand Islands, Florida. There are 41 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.

From April 30 to June 7, 35 stranded dolphins have been verified in the designated spill area. Of this, 33 dolphins stranded dead and two stranded alive. One died on the beach and another that stranded in Florida was euthanized. So far, two of the 35 stranded dolphins had evidence of external oil. However, we are unable at this time to determine whether the animals were externally oiled before or after death. Since April 30, the stranding rate for dolphins in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama has been higher than the historic numbers for the same time period in previous years. In part, this may be due to increased detection and reporting and the lingering effects of an earlier observed spike in strandings for the winter of 2010. A stranding is defined as a dead or debilitated animal that washes ashore or is found in the water.

Assessment

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) is conducting a [Natural Resource Damage Assessment](#) (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.