

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Silvertip Pipeline Spill - Yellowstone River - Removal Polrep  
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region VIII

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
Initial Mobilization  
Silvertip Pipeline Spill - Yellowstone River  
Z8DY  
Laurel, MT  
Latitude: 45.6691159 Longitude: -108.7715328

**To:**  
**From:** Steven Way/David Romero, OSC  
**Date:** 7/2/2011  
**Reporting Period:** 01 July 2011

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	<b>Contract Number:</b>
<b>D.O. Number:</b>	<b>Action Memo Date:</b>
<b>Response Authority:</b> OPA	<b>Response Type:</b> Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b> PRP	<b>Incident Category:</b> Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	<b>Operable Unit:</b>
<b>Mobilization Date:</b> 7/2/2011	<b>Start Date:</b>
<b>Demob Date:</b>	<b>Completion Date:</b>
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	<b>State Notification:</b>
<b>FPN#:</b> E11809	<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>

1.1.1 Incident Category

This is an emergency response under OPA/CWA Removal Action authority. The pipeline spill incident is a Major discharge to inland waters as defined by the NCP.

1.1.2 Site Description

A pipeline break in a 12 inch Exxon Mobile Crude oil line discharged oil into the Yellowstone River that runs through the towns of Laurel and Billings Montana. The river is in flood stage and debris is being carried in the flows.

1.1.2.1 Location

The incident occurred in Laurel, Montana on the Yellowstone River approximately 15 west of Billings.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The discharge is estimated at 1000 barrels (42,000 gallons) of crude oil. The river is at flood stage and is carrying oil into overland flow and down river at approximately 7 miles per hour. Threatened and endangered species and migratory water fowl are present. Drinking water intakes have been shutdown and downstream users were notified.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

The oil has migrated to approximately 40 miles downriver by 1400 hours from the pipeline break. At this time, the oil impacts are not fully assessed; slower water areas are accumulating oil on vegetation and debris accumulated in the river. Wildlife impacts are being observed; however, limited information is currently available to determine the extent of impacts. Shoreline assessment is not complete. Downstream counties are providing limited information about impacts.

Montana Department Fish, Wildlife and Parks have been onscene and will provide a report to the OSC. The DOI and US Fish and Wildlife were notified and are in route to the site.

## **2. Current Activities**

### **2.1 Operations Section**

#### **2.1.1 Narrative**

Response activities are in the early stages of operations with minimal resources provided by the RP to effect recovery. However, conditions on the river including high velocity flow, flood stage water levels and large debris (trees and logs) reported to be floating in the current dictate that conservative measures be used at this time.

#### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

The RP has stopped the source of the discharge by shutting down the pipeline at the nearest valve (reportedly, approximately 0.5 miles from the river on one side).

Evacuations were initiated by the Billings Fire department for a period of several hours in the early morning and residents were allowed to return to their homes by approximately 0500.

Water supply intakes were shutdown through Billings and downstream notifications were made.

Approximately 20 personnel from the pipeline company and refinery are on scene performing minor containment and collection with sorbent boom and pads.

Response contractors (Clean Harbors) have been mobilized and are reportedly expected on scene by 1600 hours on July 3.

#### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

Exxon Mobile Corporation is believed to be the Responsible Party (RP). Based on the OSCs (Romero) evaluation of the response actions, EPA has mobilized the ERRS contractor to provide additional response contractor resources need to be on scene sooner than what Exxon is providing for.

#### **2.1.4 Progress Metrics**

To be determined

### **2.2 Planning Section**

#### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

START personnel will assess shoreline areas for oil accumulation and providing status updates on response operations.

##### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

Oil recovery operations will continue in areas where oil is accumulating and access is safely obtained for cleanup crews. Additional crews will be available on Sunday, July 3 and July 4.

##### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

Shoreline assessment is needed to determine effective strategies for recovering the oil. Sorbent boom deployment will be expanded in the morning, and where possible, other oil recovery and containment will be implemented.

Monitoring the downstream extent of the impact is planned for the morning.

#### **2.2.2 Issues**

Effective response has been slow to develop from the RP and detailed response resource information has not been provided to the FOSC.

The July 4th Holiday weekend has slowed over all resource deployment to the incident. However, mobilization has started and substantial increase in personnel is expected July 3.

### **2.3 Logistics Section**

EPA Logistics functions have been performed by the on-call OSC during the mobilization. This function will be performed on site under Unified Command.

### **2.4 Finance Section**

No information available at this time.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

### **2.5.1 Safety Officer**

No report

### **2.6 Liaison Officer**

No Report

### **2.7 Information Officer**

#### **2.7.1 Public Information Officer**

Media contact has been made and the OSC oncall provided an interview while EPA resources mobilized.

#### **2.7.2 Community Involvement Coordinator**

Need to be determined

## **3. Participating Entities**

### **3.1 Unified Command**

Unified Command is being established with EPA, Exxon Mobile and the State

### **3.2 Cooperating Agencies**

State and local agency participation is being developed.

## **4. Personnel On Site**

EPA: 2 additional EPA-OSCs are mobilizing to the scene to oversee operations in support of the FOSC.

USCG: Pacific Strike Team members (4) have mobilized and will be in Billings July 2 and on scene July 3.

ERRS: approximately 50 personnel and river boats are being mobilized by EPA thru the ERRS contract.

START: 2 START members are onscene and at least 2 more are deploying July 3.

ERT: 1 ERT member will be mobilized July 3 and provide environmental assessment support.

EXXON MOBILE Resources:

20 clean up personnel onscene

100 to 150 clean up crew reporting July3 and July 4.

## **5. Definition of Terms**

No information available at this time.

## **6. Additional sources of information**

### **6.1 Internet location of additional information/report**

Billings Gazette (billingsgazette.com)

### **6.2 Reporting Schedule**

To be determined

## **7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.