

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
White River Seep at Natural Buttes - Removal Polrep
Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VIII

Subject: POLREP #2
Final Polrep
White River Seep at Natural Buttes
Z8FG
Near Vernal, UT
Latitude: 39.9835400 Longitude: -109.4097670

To:
From: Joyel Dhieux, On-Scene Coordinator
Date: 12/22/2014
Reporting Period: 7/11/2014 - 8/31/2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Z8FG	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	OPA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	EPA	Incident Category:	Removal Assessment
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	7/8/2014	Start Date:	7/7/2014
Demob Date:	7/10/2014	Completion Date:	12/22/2014
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:	E14811	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

This preliminary assessment was conducted as an emergency under OPA.

1.1.2 Site Description

In May 2014, the EPA Region 8 Emergency Response Unit was asked to investigate a series of seeps, some actively bubbling, along the White River. Initial reports indicated a black, oil-like substance was discharging from the seeps and a possible sheen was observed. The seeps are located in the Natural Buttes field, an area of extensive oil and gas development. The White River is a tributary of the Green River and is home to several threatened and endangered species including the Colorado pike minnow and the razorback sucker.

1.1.2.1 Location

The seeps are located approximately 33 miles south of Vernal, Utah, along the White River at latitude/longitude 39.9835400, -109.4097670. The seeps are within the external boundaries of the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation on lands managed by the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA).

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The seeps are potentially a discharge of oil under 40 CFR 110.3(b).

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

On July 9, 2014, EPA OSC Joyel Dhieux conducted a preliminary site assessment of the seeps. Representatives from the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, SITLA, Tri-County Health, Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, and EOG Resources participated in the site visit. Representatives from the Ute Indian Tribe, Bureau of Land Management and Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining were also invited to participate in the site visit. At the time of the visit, approximately 7-10 seeps were visible along and bubbling up from within the riverbed. One seep was visible on the cliff approximately 10 feet above the water level. Pools of water with the appearance of motor oil were observed near the seeps. However, there was no visible petroleum sheen or odor near the seeps or within the White River. The black substance found near the seeps behaved consistent with gilsonite; it was granular and did not produce a sheen when disturbed.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA conducted a preliminary site assessment on July 9, 2014. EPA collected water samples downstream from the seep, at the seep, and upstream from the seep. In addition, a sample of produced water was collected at Anadarko's NBU 456-2E well, located adjacent to the seep. The water samples were fingerprinted for hydrocarbons and analyzed for a series of water quality characteristics, anions, cations and select metals. Anadarko Petroleum collected samples at adjacent locations.

The sampling results did not indicate that a discharge of oil was occurring. While negligible quantities of benzene (1.5 ug/l) and diesel-range organics (DRO)(0.288 ug/l) were measured at the seep, all other petroleum-related analytes were measured as non-detects. The DRO measured in the sample may be indicative of weathered gilsonite which is in the C16-C26 range. DRO includes carbons in the C10-C28 range. As previously noted, no sheen was observed on the water near the seep.

Water discharging from the seep was high in barium, boron, sodium, bicarbonate, carbonate, chloride and total dissolved solids when compared to samples collected from the White River. However, the seep did not appear to be impacting the water downstream. Water collected both upstream and downstream of the seep had similar sampling results. In addition, the water analysis at the seep did not match the produced water sampled at the NBU 456-2E well.

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

No PRPs have been identified at this time.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>
N/A					

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

No additional EPA response activities are planned.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

EPA OSC Dhieux will continue to monitor the situation. Should the characteristics of the seep change (e.g. visible sheen, petroleum odor, etc), EPA will consider conducting additional sampling in the vicinity.

2.2.2 Issues

No issues have been identified.

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

Not applicable

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

Not applicable

2.5.3 Information Officer

Not applicable

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

Not applicable

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Ute Indian Tribe, Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation
State of Utah Department of Environmental Quality
Utah State Institutional Trust and Lands Administration
Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
Tri-County Health
Bureau of Land Management
Anadarko Petroleum Corporation
EOG Resources

4. Personnel On Site

All personnel have demobilized from the site.

5. Definition of Terms

Not applicable

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

An EPA OSC website has been created to disseminate information at: www.epaosc.org/whiteriverseep

6.2 Reporting Schedule

This is the final Polrep. No further reports are anticipated.

7. Situational Reference Materials

Not applicable