

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Bridger Pipeline Release - Removal Polrep
Initial Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VIII

Subject: POLREP #1
Initial Size-Up and Establishing Unified Command
Bridger Pipeline Release

Glendive, MT
Latitude: 47.0316670 Longitude: -104.7708330

To: David Ostrander, EPA

From: Paul Peronard, On-Scene Coordinator

Date: 1/19/2015

Reporting Period: 1/17/2015 - 1/19/2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority:	Response Type:
Response Lead:	Incident Category:
NPL Status:	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date:	Start Date:
Demob Date:	Completion Date:
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

1.1.1 Incident Category

Transportation-Related: Pipeline Petroleum Spill

1.1.2 Site Description

At approximately 10:30 AM Saturday, Jan 17, 2015, the Bridger Pipeline controller at the control room in Casper, Wyoming, noticed some abnormal pressure readings on the Bridger Pipeline's Poplar Pipeline and began to investigate. The pipeline system pressure alarms sounded and the pipeline was shut down. Bridger Pipeline personnel then attempted to confirm a release and were unable to determine what the problem was, and an NRC report was filed at 17:58. The original NRC report stated the release was discovered at 2:30 PM. The original report was regarding a potential spill on NRC incident report #1105930. This section of the Poplar Pipeline is 12 inch diameter, 0.500 inch wall thickness and is located in the area of the Yellowstone River crossing. Also, there are two block valves approximately 6800 feet apart, and the pipeline fill is approximately 900 barrels within this section. The pressure drop was specifically in this 6800 foot section. The 300 barrels reported to NRC was determined by meter in – meter out and was an estimate. The crude oil in the line at the time of the release was primarily Bakken Crude.

Once the release was confirmed, Bridger Pipeline filed a second NRC incident report (#1105969) confirming the presence of oil in the Yellowstone River. The operator's aerial patrol plane has confirmed a sheen on the Yellowstone River in open water approximately 3/4-mile downstream and also at the first intake that is 18 miles downstream from their pipeline. The quantity of crude oil released has been estimated at between 300 BBLs and 1200 BBLs.

1.1.2.1 Location

The section of pipeline where the release is suspected to have occurred crosses the Yellowstone River between two block valves near 47.031667, -104.770833. This is approximately 7 river miles upstream of Glendive, MT, in Dawson County.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Crude oil released into the environment threatens downstream water users, including drinking water supplies and agricultural uses, and could impact wildlife along the river. Downriver cities with water intakes

are Glendive, MT, and Sidney, MT, and have been notified of the threat for intakes. At both locations, the intakes are below the surface of the river, but they are monitoring the situation.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Bridger Pipeline LLC, contractors for Bridger Pipeline, the EPA OSC, and two START contractors have been working to collect field data regarding river conditions, ice thicknesses, and the presence/absence of sheen or recoverable oil. The furthest oil has been reported downstream, in open water where there is not an ice sheet, is near Crane, MT, which is almost to Sidney and only a couple of miles west of the North Dakota border. Assessment activities are ongoing and being conducted by Bridger Pipeline and its contractors, MT DEQ, EPA, and ND DOH.

Bridger Pipeline personnel have reviewed their 2010 pipeline in-line inspection tool data and the 2013 pipeline in-line inspection tool data and have not identified any specific issues or anomalies.

An oil sheen has been identified 3/4-mile downstream of the Yellowstone River pipeline crossing and at a surface intake. No sheen has been identified at the town of Savage approximately 20 miles downstream. Bridger has notified all intakes to watch for any sheen. It is not clear if oil is trapped under the river ice.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

The incident objectives are:

1. Provide for life safety for all responders and the public.
2. Sample/Monitor and ensure safety of downstream water intakes including Glendive.
3. Stop the release and determine source and presence of crude oil within vicinity of incident. Take measures to prevent further migration in to the Yellowstone River.
4. Find a downstream location at which to prevent further migration of product.
5. Investigate and identify locations for the reasonable recovery of free product.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

EPA OSC and START contractors arrived in Glendive, MT, on Sunday, January 19, 2015, at approximately 10:00 PM. EPA has entered into Unified Command with Bridger Pipeline LLC, with Dawson County, MT DES, MT DEQ, DOT-PHMSA, and USFWS serving as supporting agencies.

The spill response contractor is in the process of placing boom across the Yellowstone River at Sidney, MT, approximately 30 miles downstream. More response equipment, such as air boats to get out on to the ice, is in the works.

A second spill response contractor is preparing to place a test head at one end of the pipe near the Yellowstone River and put a tool in the pipeline and push it with nitrogen. The hope is to find the leak source and at least push the tool past the leak location. Personnel are working on capturing the remaining crude oil in the pipeline at the leak location. A vacuum truck has already tried to remove the crude oil without much success.

Operational tasks for UC during the January 19, 2015, operational period are as follows:

1. Determine whether there were any drinking water impacts at downstream POTWs by collecting samples and getting laboratory analytical results to local public health officials.
2. Determine the location of the leak in the section of pipeline between the two block valves on either side of the Yellowstone River by sending a diagnostic pig through the line with compressed nitrogen behind it to analyze the integrity of the line. Bridger Pipeline along with their remediation contractors, are also working to get a camera to run down the pipe to look for damages from the south side, and dig a bell ditch on the north side of the river, and penetrate the pipe and vacuum out all of the crude possible. When they have a quantity of collected crude oil, the Unified Command will have a better idea of the exact number of barrels released.
3. Determine whether there are viable locations downstream to prevent oil from migrating further and to remove released oil from the environment. Given the weather conditions and the thin ice conditions present on the Yellowstone River, the response contractors are trying to locate thicker ice and to find a way to recover oil using slots in the ice sheets, where possible, and placing other absorbent materials in the path of the oil.

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

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

TBD as released oil quantities are determined and oil is recovered from the river.

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

The Unified Command is focused on determining the extent of contamination at the site and preventing further migration of spilled crude. The source of the crude oil has been secured, and downstream water users have been notified of the incident. Efforts are underway to protect drinking water resources and recover oil from the environment.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Two additional EPA OSCs are en route to the site now.

USCG Pacific Strike Team is being contacted to mobilize personnel to the site.

USFWS is being issued a PRFA by EPA to assist the OSCs with wildlife impact assessments.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Secure the oil remaining in the pipeline segment between the two block valves.

Determine the exact location

Address impacts in the immediate vicinity of the rupture location

Establish a location for installing barriers to continued oil migration.

Begin recovering collected oil.

Address impacts to the shoreline and environment.

2.2.2 Issues

River conditions and weather are hampering access to the spilled oil and the ability to pinpoint the source of the release. There is extensive ice cover on the Yellowstone River, and the ice is not structurally sound to put responders on. Further ice formation is creating flows of smaller chunks of ice and bergs that are hampering the ability to boom the river to prevent further migration.

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

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

EPA

Bridger Pipeline LLC

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Dawson County DES

MT DEQ

MT DES

USFWS

DOI

DOT - PHMSA

4. Personnel On Site

EPA OSC

START - 2

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.