

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



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VIII

Subject: POLREP #12
Final
Bridger Pipeline Release

Glendive, MT
Latitude: 47.0316670 Longitude: -104.7708330

To: David Ostrander, EPA

From: Paul Peronard, On-Scene Coordinator

Date: 3/24/2015

Reporting Period: 02/27/2015 to 03/20/2015

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Z8FM	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	OPA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	1/18/2015	Start Date:	1/18/2015
Demob Date:	3/20/2015	Completion Date:	3/25/2015
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	
FPN#:	E15804	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Transportation-Related: Pipeline Petroleum Spill

1.1.2 Site Description

At approximately 1030 MST on Saturday, January 17, 2015, a Bridger Pipeline controller at the control room in Casper, Wyoming, noticed some abnormal pressure readings on their Poplar Pipeline near Glendive, Montana. The pipeline's pressure alarms sounded, and the pipeline was shut down. Bridger Pipeline personnel in the field then attempted to confirm a discharge. They initially did not observe any oil nor sheen due to ice cover on the river and they were unable to determine what the problem was. A National Response Center (NRC) incident report (#1105930) was filed by Bridger Pipeline LLC (Bridger) at 1430 MST stating that there was a potential release of crude oil into the Yellowstone River. Bridger's aerial patrol plane ultimately confirmed a sheen on the Yellowstone River in open water approximately 3/4-mile downstream of the pipeline crossing and also near the Glendive municipal drinking water intake 6.5 river miles downstream. A second NRC incident report (#1105969) was filed at 1012 MST on Sunday, January, 18, 2015, confirming the spill. Based upon the second NRC report (#1105969), and communication with the Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (DOT PHMSA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) immediately mobilized a Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) and contractors to the scene.

The section of Bridger's Poplar Pipeline that was compromised is 12 inches in diameter and is located where the pipeline crosses the Yellowstone River. There are two block valves on either side of the river that are spaced approximately 6,800 feet apart. That section of the pipeline holds approximately 900 barrels of oil, and an estimated 300 barrels of oil, determined by pipeline metering, were reportedly discharged. Thus the quantity of crude oil released has been estimated at between 300 barrels and 1,200 barrels. The product in the pipeline at the time of the release was primarily Bakken Crude.

1.1.2.1 Location

The section of pipeline where the release occurred crosses the Yellowstone River near 47.031667 latitude and -104.770833 longitude. This is approximately 6.25 river miles upstream of Glendive, Montana, in Dawson County.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Crude oil released into the environment threatens downstream drinking water suppliers and agricultural users and could impact fish and wildlife along the river. The downriver cities with water intakes are Glendive, Montana, and Williston, North Dakota. There is also a downriver power plant with an intake in Sidney, Montana.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

The Yellowstone River is largely covered with ice. Crews have been continually monitoring the river corridor by air and by land for signs of sheen and residual oil. On Sunday, January 18, 2015, sheen was reported as far downstream as Crane, Montana (59 river miles downstream from the pipeline crossing). Recoverable oil is weeping to the surface at the location of the pipeline crossing and a small nonrecoverable amount of oil was discovered in a narrow crack on the ice approximately 3.5 river miles downstream of the pipeline crossing. No additional oil has been observed anywhere along the river. No impacts to wildlife have been observed.

By Monday, January 19, 2015, test results from the Glendive Water Treatment Plant (6.5 river miles downstream from the pipeline crossing) and odor complaints from residential water consumers indicated that the treatment plant had been contaminated by the oil spill.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

The objectives of the response effort are to:

1. Provide for the safety of all response crews especially those working on the ice.
2. Monitor and protect the water quality of the Glendive Water Treatment Plant.
3. Identify and recover residual oil as appropriate.
4. Assess and address impacts to the environment as appropriate.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Site Safety:

This operational period (characterized as "Phase II") was a transitional in nature, dominated by the melting and break-up of river ice. Once the ice break started in earnest around March 14, 2015, all equipment and personnel were pulled off of the river until March 19, 2015. On-water and shoreline activities resumed on March 20, 2015.

Protection of Glendive's Drinking Water Supply:

- On February 25, 2015, an in-line VOC water monitoring instrument was fully operational and on-line at Glendive's Water Treatment Plant (WTP). This instrument provides VOC readings at 15 minute intervals at the water intake, and is used to guide adjustments to the water treatment to remove VOCs as needed. Once this was brought on-line EPA's mobile laboratory was demobilized.
- In anticipation of an abrupt spike in VOC levels associated with ice break-up, over March 12-13, 2015, the City of Glendive fully filled its pre-sedimentation basins, holding tanks, clear well, and treatment units. This provided the city with the ability to provide treated water to Glendive without adding any water for roughly 2.5 days. On the morning of March 14, 2015, the ice on the Yellowstone River upstream of the WTP began to break at a prodigious rate. At this time the city shut down its water intake. As was expected, VOC levels jumped from non-detect up to >200 ppb over the course of the day.
- On March 14, 2015, the UC, in consultation with the City of Glendive decided to add an aeration unit to the first cell of the sedimentation basins to strip VOCs. In addition, the WTP increased the amount of activated carbon used with its dual media filters. These adjustments were in-place by the afternoon of March 14, 2015.
- On March 14, 2015, the UC and the City of Glendive issued a public request for residents of Glendive to conserve water while adjustments were being made at the WTP. To aide in this request the UC made bottled water available for pick-up by the public at the County DES Office.
- On March 15, 2015, with the additional treatment in place, the City of Glendive resumed pumping water from the Yellowstone River.
- On March 16, 2015, the request for water conservation was rescinded. VOC levels in the intake water had decreased to normal levels by March 17, 2015.

Identify and Recover Residual Oil:

- No oil was recovered from the Yellowstone River during this operational period.
- On March 20, 2015, aerial and water recon was resumed. The only oil observed in the river was associated with stained ice, and very intermittent and highly weathered sheens coming from this ice. No oil was observed in a recoverable condition from the vicinity of the pipeline break down to the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers.
- After consultation with the State of Montana (as required by the NCP at 40 CFR 300.320(b)) and communication with the affected Natural Resource Trustees, FOSC Peronard declared federal response efforts complete as of March 22, 2015.
- The State of Montana remains in Unified Command with the Bridger Pipeline Company to complete the Phase III Assessment (see Plan) and conduct any further remedial action deemed appropriate.
- The Natural Resource Trustees also will continue their NRDA work.

Assess Environmental Impacts:

- No oiled wildlife impacts have been observed nor reported up to date. Fish tissue samples were collected by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MT FWP) in support of the precautionary fish consumption advisory that was issued and results indicate that fish may have been impacted. However, subsequent testing indicates VOC levels in fish have declined. the Montana FWP collected fish samples over the period of March 21-23, 2015. The fish consumption advisory will remain in place until results from this testing are received.
- There are aquatic (Pallid Sturgeon), avian (Interior Least Tern, Piping Plover, Greater Sage Grouse and the Northern Long-eared Bat) Threatened and Endangered Species in the Area of Operations for this spill. At this time there is no evidence of impact to these species as a result of Response Operations. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that there is "Likely No Adverse Impact" to Threatened and Endangered Species as a result of Response Operations. As per the standing MOA between USCG, US EPA, and the US FWS, the EPA has met its requirements for an Informal Section 7 Consultation, and no Formal Post-Response Consultation is required.

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

The pipeline is owned by Bridger Pipeline LLC.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

No oil was recovered during this operational period. 496 barrels of oil had been recovered from the broken pipeline segment itself and approximately 60 barrels of oil have been recovered from the river at the location of the pipeline crossing during earlier operational periods.

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

EPA has ended federal participation as part of the Unified Command. The State of Montana and Bridger Pipeline will continue in Unified Command to complete what has been previously described as "Phase III; Post-Melt Operations." EPA will take an advisory role as an assisting agency. The Phase III Plan has established the next overall objectives response as follows.

Phase III: Post-Melt Response Operations

1. Maintain Unified Command and coordinate Phase III response operations.
2. Keep the community informed and maintain media relations.
3. Monitor water quality conditions at the Glendive Water Treatment Plant. Collect confirmation samples as appropriate.
4. Monitor the Yellowstone River for water quality, residual oil and wildlife impacts. Collect confirmation samples as appropriate.
5. Assess sediment conditions in the Yellowstone River.
6. Conduct shoreline assessments.
7. Conduct additional assessment and response actions as required.

A detailed plan has been developed to meet these objectives and can be found at www.epaossc.org/BridgerPipeline.

2.2.1.2 Issues

EPA will remain engaged with the spill response as needed to support the remaining operations.

2.3 Logistics Section

Not Applicable

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff


2.5.1 Safety Officer

There are no incidents to report.

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

EPA is coordinating response activities with local wildlife experts with the Montana Department of Fish, Game and Parks.

2.5.3 Information Officer

- The Public Information Officers are responding to requests for information/interviews from the press. A hotline has been set up for the public to get more information and is staffed by contract toxicologists: HOTLINE NUMBER - 888-959-8351 

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

EPA
MT DEQ
Bridger Pipeline LLC

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Dawson County DES
MT DES
MT DNRC
MT FW&P
USFWS
DOI
DOT - PHMSA
ATSDR
USCG NPFC

4. Personnel On Site

EPA OSC - 1
USCG (Strike Team) - 1
MT DEQ Staff - 1
Bridger Personnel - 5
Bridger Contractors - 9

5. Definition of Terms

START - Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team
USCG - U.S. Coast Guard
PST - Pacific Strike Team
DOI - Department of Interior
DOT - PHMSA - Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
NPFC - National Pollution Fund Center
ESAT - Environmental Services Assistance Team
ATSDR - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
<http://www2.epa.gov/region8/bridger-pipeline-release>

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
<http://www.deq.mt.gov/yellowstonespill2015.mcp>

Dawson County <http://www.dawsoncountymontana.org/>

Bridger Pipeline LLC Poplar Response
<http://www.poplarresponse.com>

CDC/ATSDR
http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/yellowstone_river.html

6.2 Reporting Schedule

This is the Final POLREP. Updates from the remaining state lead operations will be posted on the epaosc.org website for the event.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.