

**United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Region IV  
POLLUTION REPORT**

**Date:** Tuesday, May 3, 2005

**From:** Rick Jardine

**Subject:** Initial POLREP Explorer Transport Oil Spill

Explorer Transport Oil Spill

Highway 75 North, Hiawassee, GA

Latitude: 34.8150030

Longitude: -83.7426420

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	1	<b>Site #:</b>	Z4HK
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	28APR - 02MAY05	<b>D.O. #:</b>	N/A
<b>Start Date:</b>	4/28/2005	<b>Response Authority:</b>	OPA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	4/28/2005	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>		<b>Contract #</b>	None - RP clean-up
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>		<b>Reimbursable</b>	05HR04R0XHK 302D91C
		<b>Account #</b>	Z4HK
<b>FPN#</b>	E05409		

**Site Description**

On 28 April 2005 at approximately 09:30 EDT, a highway tanker ran off of GA Highway 75 and overturned down an embankment onto the National Forest impacting headwaters to the Hiawassee River. The tanker contained 9200 gallons of gasoline, on- and off-road diesel fuel. Approximately 800 gallons of gasoline was transferred from the wrecked tanker into a sound tanker. The rest of the product was discharged to the environment. Some oil ran overland to streams, some seeped into the soil and is observed weeping out into several springs within 100 yards of the impact site.

**Current Activities**

On 28 April 2005 the US Forest Service responded to the incident with heavy equipment within hours of the discharge. USFS Operators retarded the flow of oil by constructing impoundment areas along the stream routes. USFS rerouted up gradient tributaries around the impact site by hand to minimize water flow through the oil at the impact area. USFS and GAEPD also constructed a stone underflow dam approximately one mile down stream from the impact site. EPA OSC Jardine provided oversight and direction.

Explorer transport contracted for the removal of the wrecked tanker truck. Town County Fire Department and EMS provided protection for the wrecked vehicle operation. EMS earlier provided care for the truck driver.

Explorer transport contracted response contractors Good Earth and Hepaco to recover oil from the wrecked tanker, install containment booms, and recover product using vacuum trucks, absorbent booms and pads. The working response waterway included approximately five river miles of the Hiawassee River. Subsites are as follows:

Impact site

Site #1 - impoundment - approx 200 yards down gradient from the impact Site

Site #1A - impoundment - approx 0.25 miles down gradient from the impact Site

Site #2 - rock underflow dam - approx 1 mile down gradient from the impact Site

Site #3 - hard and absorbent boom approx 2 miles from the impact Site

Site #4 - hard and absorbent boom approx 5 miles from the impact Site

On 29 April 2005, USFS converted impoundment Site #1A to an underflow dam with 2 six-inch and 3 four-inch PVC pipes. Oil recovery continued along oiled tributaries and at all underflow and boom locations. Oil continues to weep from springs 100 yards down gradient to the impact site. EPA OSC Negron provided oversight and direction.

GA DNR conducted fish kill investigation preliminarily identifying approximately 50 dead juvenile trout, salamanders, and worms. Official findings and report are pending. USFS Archeologist identified significant historical features within work zone, specifically the original mountain tumpike. Archeological team flagged the areas to be avoided during removal operations.

Towns County EMA continues to provide support to all operations.

On 30 April 2005, S&ME, response consultant to Explorer Transport, contracted for and directed the removal of an estimated 60 tons of oil saturated soil from the impact area. S&ME immediately backfilled the excavation due to impending rainfall. Oil recovery from aforementioned sites continues.

On 02 MAY 2005, Site #4 is decommissioned due to no observable oil. Minimal staining is observed on absorbent boom at Site #3. Site #3 is refurbished. Rock underflow dam Site #2 is reinforced with sand bags. Oil recovery continues at all locations. HEPACO is demobilized at sunset.

#### **Planned Removal Actions**

Planned activity includes mobilization of personnel to continue oil recovery, extending culvert through excavated/backfilled soil at impact area, providing for erosion control along all disturbed soil, and constructing new underflow dam at oil weep location approximately 100 yards below impact area.

S&ME will develop 14- and 30-day Work Plans for all proposed activity.

[response.epa.gov/explorertransport](http://response.epa.gov/explorertransport)