

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region IX
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Thursday, February 21, 2008

From: Robert Wise

Subject: Continuation of Cleanup
Greka Bell Lease 3
6801 Palmer Road, Santa Maria, CA
Latitude: 34.8279500
Longitude: -120.3254400

POLREP No.:	4	Site #:	
Reporting Period:	02/11-20/2008	D.O. #:	
Start Date:		Response Authority:	OPA
Mob Date:	1/29/2008	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:		Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:		Reimbursable Account #	
FPN#	E08906		

Current Activities

Greka began to flush the creek using cold water. The flush consisted of surface flushing and sparging. Cold water was used to minimize the liberation of historic asphaltic crude in the creek.

On February 14, 2008, EPA, START, PST, CADFG, ACTI and Greka walked the creek from spill origin to the end of the spill zone. There was still visible contamination of the surface in the form of light to heavy sheen, black oil droplets and active liquid oil seeps. At that time it was decided by the Unified Command to flush the creek one more time and then let it sit for a couple of days to see what came to the surface. The flush was completed on Saturday, February 16, 2008.

On the evening of February 16, 2008, Greka contacted EPA to notify them that they had reached an agreement with Santa Barbara Co. officials to remove some of the stagnant fluids from the UCAL and Bell Leases into their injection wells. Due to the impending rain, EPA waived the three day notification rule so Greka could begin to pump right a way.

On February 19, 2008, EPA, PST, DFG, ACTI and Greka walked the creek and there was still wide spread oil contamination. The contamination was the most concentrated in areas of deep sediment. After the walk the Unified Command decided to continue to flush the creek and mechanically remove hot spots using a Guzzler Vacuum Truck (super sucker). Greka also began preparing the wastewater ponds for excavation. Preparation included the removal of the bird netting and the plastic sheeting covering the oily sediment.

Greka began to remove bulk oil from the waste water pond. The bulk oil was being placed into the injection ponds. After consulting with the County, and due to the possible entrainment of sediment in the oil that would be deposited into the injection ponds, EPA directed Greka to deposit the oil removed from the wastewater ponds into baker tanks.

On February 20, 2008, ACTI began to flush and sparge the creek. The water from the flush was trapped behind earthen dams and the oil skimmed off. ACTI also began to remove hot spots. The supersucker was used to remove contaminated sediment. The supersucker also brought a large amount of contamination to the surface where it would be collected during the flushing. The material collected by the super sucker is being placed in a temporary holding area so it can be dewatered prior to placing it into roll-off-bins.

Also on February 20, 2008, EPA and PST met with SBCOFD on-scene. EPA explained the cleanup process and showed SBCOFD the progress in the creek. EPA also explained to the SBCOFD the issue with the oil being placed in the injection ponds. EPA, PST and SBCOFD examined the injection pond area and found a large amount of gross oil contamination in the secondary containment and a crack in one of the ponds. At the command meeting that evening, EPA directed Greka to cease all addition of material

to the injection ponds until they could be fixed. EPA also directed Greka to remove the gross oil contamination from the secondary containment area prior to the rain.

Planned Removal Actions

1. Continued sparging of the creek and the mechanical removal of hot spots. The entire creek will be flushed and then evaluated again.
2. The mechanical removal of the wastewater pond sediment.
3. Sampling of the creek after the cleanup is completed.
4. Restoration of the creek.

Next Steps

1. Flush and removal of hotspots from the creek.
2. Removal of liquid oil from the wastewater ponds.

Key Issues

If the flushing of the creek does not work, removal activities will be changed to mechanical removal of contamination. This may lead to the removal of some of the historical asphaltic crude in the creek. It is believed that the current and recent spills have liberated some of the oil from the asphaltic crude by acting as a solvent and also the material to seep from the historic spills. In addition, it is believed that current and recently spilled crude is in the cracks and crevices of the historic spill areas and is being liberated by the flushing and mechanical removal.

[response.epa.gov/Greka_Bell_3](https://www.epa.gov/response/Greka_Bell_3)