

July 9, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY 9, 2010 MDEQ UPDATE ON OIL MATERIAL IN MISSISSIPPI

BILOXI, Miss. – Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) staff through aerial surveillance with the Mississippi National Guard, MDEQ response staff, and Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams (SCAT) have observed the following Friday (as of 6:00 p.m.) and sent to Unified Command for review and appropriate response:

Morning flight information:

Large area of sheen mixed with emulsified oil and dispersed tar balls approximately 200 yards off of Cat Island. (N 30 13.37, W 89 09.00)

One-half mile long scum line containing mixture of emulsification and tar balls due east of Silver Slipper. (N 30 14.23, W 89 24.62; N 30 14.67, W 89 24.67)

50 feet by 600 feet area of emulsified oil. (N 30 13.55, W 89 08.91; N 30 13.11, W 89 06.72)

Tar balls between boom and shore south of Cat Island. (N 30 13.11, W 89 06.42)

Tar balls and subsurface dark streak south of West Ship Island. (N 30 12.38, W 88 50.92; N 30 11.67, W 88 57.83)

Area of heavy sheen with two feet by five feet mousse patties dispersed at one percent approximately six miles south of Ship Island. (N 30 06.94, W 88 54.44)

Emulsified substance with sea grass 0.2 miles wide. (N 29 34.39, W 88 47.70)

Afternoon Flight Information:

Possible recoverable oil. (N 30 14.96, W 89 04.36; N 30 14.24, W 89 03.56)

25 feet by 25 feet area of rainbow sheen. (N 30 15.58, W 89 23.31)

Other information from MDEQ staff:

One-quarter inch to one inch tar balls off Henderson Point moving from southwest to northeast.

Reports of skimmable oil near Graveline Bayou in Jackson County.

A 10 to 15 meter patch of tar patties approximately one-half inch in size in Biloxi near Veteran's Avenue. (N30 23.508, W88 56.837)

Reports of oiled private beach along First Avenue on Henderson Point in Pass Christian.

A 10 meter patch of one-half inch to two inch size tar patties just west of the Isle View Casino in Gulfport. (N 30 21.621, W 89 6.286)

A 100 yard patch of one-quarter inch to two inch size tar patties at the intersection of Highway 90 and Fournier Avenue. (N 30 21.378, W89 6.9)

A large tar patty mat underwater just off shore in Pass Christian beach at N30 20.178, W89 10.319.

Tar patties ranging in size from one-quarter inch to 12 inches in diameter along beach in Pass Christian with patchy sections located at N30 19.283, W89 13.425, N30 19.456, W89 12.917, N30 19.705, W89 11.935, and N30 20.127, W89 10.459.

Trace amounts of two to four cm mousse balls in the water and marsh at Grand Bay Refuge. (N30 21.247, W88 24.589; N30 21.505, W88 24.67).

SCAT team began assessments at the Silver Slipper Casino and continued west by boat, tar balls and mousse patties were along every segment observed. The team observed on average 5 percent mousse patties coverage in the marsh; however, in some spots there was as

much as 20 percent coverage. Also, there was 100 percent coverage of oily sheen on marsh grasses in every segment.

SCAT team began assessments at the northeastern shore of Petit Bois Island and continued west along the coastline. Tar balls and patties were found at a frequency of one percent in the middle tidal zone and less than one percent in the upper tidal zone. Further west, tar balls and patties were found at a frequency of four to five percent in the upper tidal zone and in the tidal pool for an area approximately 70 yards along the coast line.

Mississippi Skimmer Activities

Nine of Mississippi's skimmers were actively operating and reported successful recovery. Patches of tar balls and weathered oil are skimmed and corralled by Vessels of Opportunity and BP contractors. Skimming is used to remove streams of emulsified oil, tar balls, and tar patties. Tar balls and mousse patties on land are removed with shovels and rakes.

More information and links about MDEQ's and DMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm.

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