



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention Preparedness and Response Program
SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SITREPS ARE DENOTED IN RED

Hilcorp Natural Gas Leak from 8-inch Pipeline



SITREP #: 6 and Final

SPILL #: 17239903801

TIME/DATE OF DISTRIBUTION: 4:00 p.m. May 22, 2017

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP): Hilcorp Alaska, LLC (Hilcorp)

INCIDENT LOCATION: Cook Inlet between Platform A and Nikiski. (Lat/Long: 60.776367, -151.43365)

TIME/DATE OF SPILL: Unknown

HOW/WHEN SPILL WAS DISCOVERED AND REPORTED: A Hilcorp helicopter flying between Nikiski and Platform A around 3 p.m. on February 7, 2017, identified bubbles resulting from a natural gas leak. Hilcorp reported the gas leak to the National Response Center and to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) at 4 p.m. on the same day.

TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED: The natural gas being released is not natural gas from the platform. The gas is processed dry natural gas (98.67% Methane), providing fuel gas to four platforms: Platform A, Platform C, Dillon Platform and Bakers Platform. The exact amount of gas released to water is unknown at this time.

CAUSE OF SPILL: Hilcorp was unable to determine the cause of the spill until recently when ice conditions allowed divers to access the site. A large rock, approximately 3 feet by 10 feet, was identified as causing a breach on the line that is 3/16 inch wide by 3/8 inch long.

SOURCE CONTROL: The 8-inch pipeline is an underwater pipeline at approximately 80 feet below Cook Inlet waters. Divers successfully installed a temporary repair clamp on the evening of April 13 and stopped the leak. **Divers successfully installed a permanent repair clamp.**

RESPONSE ACTION: **On May 10, U. S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration approved the permanent repair plan. The dive contractor remobilized to the site on May 13 to commence permanent repairs. The divers successfully completed permanent repairs on May 19. Divers returned to the site on May 20 and detected no bubbles or leaks.**

To date Hilcorp has provided five extended wildlife observation overflights for state agency personnel utilizing their Otter, a fixed wing aircraft. The wildlife observation overflights were conducted on February 23, March 9, March 23, April 6 and April 20. Overflights have included personnel from the ADEC and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Hilcorp has conducted several independent wildlife observation overflights utilizing a Cook Inlet Spill Prevention and Response, Inc. (CISPRI) protected species observer and a wildlife professional

from International Bird Rescue. These overflights were conducted utilizing a helicopter at an altitude of 350 feet to 1,000 feet. No wildlife has been observed in the vicinity of the leak.

To date Hilcorp has completed and submitted nine sampling and monitoring reports. ADEC is currently reviewing the report.

RESOURCES AT RISK OR AFFECTED:

Shorelines - Shoreline type varies throughout upper Cook Inlet. Shorelines around the East Forelands area include mixed sand and gravel beaches, coarse-grained sand, and exposed tidal flats. Redoubt Bay and Trading Bay on the west side of Cook Inlet include salt and brackish-water marshes and sheltered tidal flats which are of high importance to bird and invertebrate species.

Marine Mammals - Species likely to be present in upper Cook Inlet include Cook Inlet beluga whale (Endangered Species Act [ESA]-listed as endangered), western Distinct Population Segment (DPS) Steller sea lion (ESA-listed as endangered), Mexico DPS humpback whale (ESA-listed as threatened), harbor seals, killer whales, Hawaii DPS humpback whales, harbor porpoise, and Dall's porpoise. The Southwest Alaska DPS Northern sea otter (ESA-listed as threatened) is known to occur in lower Cook Inlet. The discharge location is within designated Critical Habitat for Cook Inlet beluga whales. Cook Inlet beluga whales are likely utilizing offshore waters in upper Cook Inlet during winter and will concentrate near forage fish locations as those populations arrive.

Birds - Steller's eiders are ESA-listed as threatened and are known to overwinter south of the gas release along both the eastern and western shores of lower Cook Inlet; however, a small portion of this species has been known to overwinter in the Nikiski area. Waterfowl and shorebirds are overwintering in upper Cook Inlet. Notably, rock sandpipers are known to overwinter in upper Cook Inlet feeding on bivalves, including almost the entire population of the subspecies *Calidris ptilocnemis ptilocnemis*. Bald and golden eagles are also present in Cook Inlet year round. Migratory birds, including waterfowl, seabirds, and shorebirds will likely begin arriving in high numbers in the Cook Inlet area in late March to early April.

Fish - Several species and different life stages of fish are likely present in Cook Inlet near the vicinity of the gas release, including all five species of Pacific salmon (Chinook, coho, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon), Dolly Varden, rainbow trout, Pacific eulachon, Pacific halibut (spawning and hatching occurs in winter months), Pacific herring, Bering cisco, Humpback whitefish, American shad, Walleye pollock, sablefish (adults spawn in winter in deep waters, larvae are present at the water surface, and juveniles are found in nearshore waters), Pacific and saffron cod, yellowfin sole, and smelt. This area is Essential Fish Habitat for all five species of Pacific salmon.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Divers will finish stabilizing the line. After stabilization efforts are complete, divers will demobilize.

WEATHER: Today: Partly cloudy and windy; high 49°F; winds southwest at 20 to 30 mph. Tonight: A few clouds; low around 40°F; winds south southwest at 15 to 25 mph.

COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:

SOSC: Geoff Merrell, ADEC

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT DISTRIBUTION: This is the final report.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

AGENCY	NAME	PHONE NO.
ADEC – State On-Scene Coordinator	Geoff Merrell	(907) 269-7682
ADEC – PIO	Candice Bressler	(907) 465-5009
ADF&G	Jeanette Alas	(907) 267-2805
PHMSA	Dave Mulligan	(720) 963-3193
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	Julie Speegle	(907) 586-7032
Hilcorp Alaska	Lori Nelson	(907) 777-8300

INCIDENT WEBPAGE: http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/response/sum_fy17/170215201/170215201_index.htm

AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST: Please refer to the SITREP #3 distributed March 1 for the agency/stakeholder notification list. The link to the SITREP can be found in the **Additional Information** box above.