



Year of spill



One year after spill



Thirteen years after spill

Tundra Treatment Guidelines

A Manual for Treating Oil and Hazardous Substance Spills to Tundra

Third Edition



Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation



Cover Photo Series

Drill Site 16, Prudhoe Bay Oilfield (top to bottom)

1. March 1997: A mixture of crude oil, methanol, and water affected 0.5 acre of tundra. Snow was used as an adsorbent, and the tundra surface was flooded and flushed with hot and warm water to melt contaminated ice and snow, and to recover contaminants.
2. June 1997: After the snow melted and the site was dewatered, propane torches were used to burn small areas of residual oil remaining on plants and on the soil surface. Fertilizer was applied to promote biodegradation and plant growth.
3. August 2009: After 13 growing seasons, indigenous plants have revegetated the affected area, giving it an appearance similar to the surrounding tundra. These plants originated from rootstock that survived the spill and cleanup operation.

Map by Allison-Zusi Cobb and photographs by Timothy C. Cater, both of ABR.