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## **Prudhoe Bay GC2 Spill Incident Joint Information Center (JIC)**

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**NEWS RELEASE—March 4, 2006**

### **UPDATE 2: 570 Barrels of Fluid Recovered to Date; 24-Hour Clean-up Continues**

**Anchorage, Alaska**—The safety of oil spill responders remains the top priority in the crude oil cleanup on the North Slope, as extreme cold temperatures continue to be a considerable factor. Frostbite is a concern, so response crews are frequently swapped and warm-up shacks have been provided for the workers.

Operations at the spill site are focused on two areas – clean-up of the spilled oil and locating the source of the leak. With temperatures dipping below -10 F °, the crude oil is gelling into a thicker, more viscous material. As a result, clean-up crews are now using two specialized pumps to remove the more viscous liquid. To date, 570 barrels of fluids have been recovered.

The spill area adjacent to the pipeline has been delineated using earth removing equipment (Bobcats) to remove snow to expose the leading edge of the oil. Almost two acres of tundra and frozen lake surface may be impacted. Snow removal along and under the pipeline continues.

Large shipments of special fiberglass mats are being loaded in Fairbanks and will be trucked up to the spill site. These mats will be laid down to help minimize impact to the tundra and provide a non-slip work area for workers.

Workers are using ultrasound and guided wave testing equipment to pinpoint the source of the leak. This is a specialized, non-destructive means to assess the condition of the pipe. Plans are also being developed in case the caribou crossing under which the pipes cross needs to be excavated.

Workers have been stripping away the insulation to examine the pipe. Pipeline sections exposed thus far have not shown damage. Volume of the spill and the cause of the leak have yet to be determined.

A total of 60 spill responders, 30 for the day shift and 30 for the night shift are working in the field cleanup efforts. BP Alaska continues construction of a 400 foot ice pad and an ice road to improve site access and stage response equipment.

The Unified Command, comprised of representatives from BP Alaska, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the North Slope Borough and the Department of Environmental Conservation, is evaluating the need to empty the oil from the transit line. A BPXA business resumption team, responsible for integrity of the pipe, pipeline repair, freeze protection and restart of the line and facilities, is coordinating its efforts with the response team.

Photos of the response effort, fact sheets, diagrams and maps are being made available on the Unified Command website at [www.dec.state.ak.us](http://www.dec.state.ak.us), click on the Quick Link “GC-2 Oil Transit Line Spill”.

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