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North
Slope
Borough

Prudhoe Bay GC2 Spill Incident Joint Information Center (JIC)

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NEWS RELEASE—March 5, 2006

UPDATE 3: Source of Crude Oil Leak Located; Clean-up Continues

Anchorage, Alaska— Spill response workers found the location of the leak on the 34” crude oil transit line around 1:40 a.m. Sunday. The discovery was made following snow removal around the culvert in the caribou crossing, located about one mile from Gathering Center 2 (GC-2).

The night shift workers heard noise emanating from inside the culvert, and illuminated the area. Oil could be seen “slowly dripping” from the line, about 10 feet inside the buried culvert. The culvert surrounds the transit line as it passes under the caribou crossing. An oil spray pattern was also noted on the inside of the culvert.

As of 7:00 a.m. this morning, approximately 1009 barrels of total liquids have been recovered. During the first 36 hours of the response, approximately 501 barrels of oil were collected after being separated from water. Fluid recovery efforts continue with vacuum trucks and specialized pumps to handle the viscous oil.

A BP Alaska 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. An excavator is scheduled to arrive on site today to begin excavation of the pipeline at the caribou crossing. Once this is complete, a detailed repair plan will be developed. It is still too early to determine when the line will restart.

Work progresses with caution and care to ensure worker safety and to prevent worsening the spill. Ninety-five percent of the spill area is contained by snow berms that are being strengthened by spraying water on them, allowing them to ice over.

The Unified Command, comprised of representatives from BP Alaska, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the North Slope Borough and the Department of Environmental Conservation continue to focus efforts on oil recovery and clean up.

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, click on the Quick Link “GC-2 Oil Transit Line Spill”.

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