



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention and Emergency Response Program
SITUATION REPORT

CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SITREPS ARE DENOTED IN RED
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St. Lawrence Oiled Wildlife Incident

SITREP # 3 (Revised)

SPILL #: 12389931001

TIME/DATE OF DISTRIBUTION: 4:00 p.m. November 13, 2012

POTENTIAL RESPONSIBLE PARTY (PRP): The responsible party is unknown at this time.

INCIDENT LOCATION: Reports of oiled wildlife have been confirmed in the St. Lawrence Island communities of Gambell and Savoonga. The source of the discharge has not yet been determined.

TIME/DATE OF SPILL: On November 7, 2012 at 12:16 p.m., ADEC received a National Response Center (NRC) incident report regarding an unknown discharge, which had effected wildlife and caused oil soaked debris to wash ashore.

TYPE/AMOUNT OF PRODUCT SPILLED: At this time, the product spilled is unknown. The ADEC has provided samples to a laboratory in Anchorage in an effort to characterize the substance.

CAUSE OF SPILL: The cause of the release is unknown. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and ADEC are working with the local communities to investigate the discharge and control the source.

SOURCE CONTROL: Source control has not been established. At this time the source of the release remains unknown.

RESPONSE ACTION: A HC-130 Hercules over flight by USCG representatives on November 8, 2012 reported no visible sheen in the waters surrounding St. Lawrence Island. **On November 10-12, 2012, representatives from ADEC, USCG, USF&WS and local representatives from the village of Gambell travelled along the St. Lawrence shoreline, northwest and southwest of Gambell. The group did not find the source of the release nor did they find additional oiled wildlife or debris. Representatives from ADEC and Nome UAF Marine Advisory Program travelled to Savupkuk Mountain, where a large sea lion population is present. Wildlife did not appear affected and oil was not detected at the location.** The team also inspected a local landfill and took oil samples from the soil. Both sets of samples will be sent to Anchorage for testing.

Samples collected from the subsistence harvested spotted seal on St. Lawrence Island, near Gambell, were analyzed. The results indicate that the individual was affected by a "heavier" petroleum product.

A Unified Command for this incident response was established the morning of November 8, 2012. The Unified Command is made up of federal, state and local agencies. A command post has been established at the USCG facility in Anchorage.

A subsistence advisory was distributed by Unified Command on November 9, 2012 to ensure hunters are aware of what to do if they encounter oiled wildlife.

RESOURCES AFFECTED: At the time of this report, there have been confirmed reports of oiled wildlife which include three common murres, one crested auklet and two spotted seals. In addition to oiled wildlife already reported, another oiled Murre was discovered Friday evening by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist. The bird was found in good condition and was sent to Anchorage for rehabilitation. **A ringed seal was harvested outside of Gambell on November 12, 2012. The hunter noticed a light coating of a brown substance along its back. Samples collected from the seal are currently being transported to Anchorage for analysis.**

There are many environmentally sensitive habitats within the area that have the potential to be affected. Nearshore waters are an important habitat for Spectacled and Steller's eiders and have been designated as a critical habitat area. Many other seabirds may be present. Ringed and spotted seals, as well as clams and crabs may be found in the nearshore environment. Blue, fin, orca and North Pacific right whales are present within the nearshore and offshore environment. Stellar sea lions are found in the area and are listed within the Endangered Species Act. St. Lawrence Island lagoons are habitats for overwintering waterfowl and are connected to anadromous streams.

Potential impacts to subsistence fishing and hunting areas are being monitored.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: ADEC will continue to monitor the response actions and work as part of Unified Command to determine the source of the pollution and work towards remediation. **Samples collected from each of the oiled wildlife will be analyzed to determine if the findings can be linked. After the current weather system has moved through, a representative from the Nome UAF Marine Advisory Program together with local representatives from the villages of Gambell and Savoonga will conduct an over flight along the St. Lawrence island shoreline to check on sea lion populations. During that over flight, the area will also be surveyed for oiled debris, wildlife or a potential source. The Unified Command will meet after the over flight is conducted.**

WEATHER: Today, mostly cloudy with a chance of snow; Highs of 30°F with windchill around 9°F; winds 20 mph NE.

UNIFIED COMMAND AND PERSONNEL:

SOSC: Tom DeRuyter, ADEC
FOSC: Captain Paul Mehler III, USCG
LOSC: Myron Kingeekuk, City of Savoonga
LOSC: Erika Apatiki, City of Gambell

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT DISTRIBUTION: As the situation warrants

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT: Ty Keltner, ADEC (907) 388-8822

Unified Command website is available at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/stlaw>

AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION LIST: Please refer to the first sitrep distributed November 8, 2012 for the agency/stakeholder notification list. The link to the first sitrep can be found in the **Additional Information** box above.