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ExxonMobil Pipeline Company Continues Cleanup Operations in Montana

ExxonMobil Pipeline Company provided the following update as cleanup operations continued Monday following a release of oil into the Yellowstone River.



More than 280 people are now involved in the response and cleanup effort including ExxonMobil's North America Regional Response Team, the Clean Harbors and ER oil spill response organizations and additional contractors. More than 150 people cleaned up oil along the river banks today.

A unified command has been established to manage response activities, including recovering oil, monitoring air and water quality, and addressing questions from local residents. ExxonMobil is coordinating the response with the Environmental Protection Agency; the Montana Department of Environmental Quality; U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services; and Yellowstone County commissioners.

For the purposes of the response, the area downriver of the spill has been organized into four zones. Cleanup activities are focused in the first two zones, Laurel to Duck Creek Bridge, a distance of seven miles from the spill location, and Duck Creek Bridge to Johnson Lane (12 miles). Reconnaissance and evaluation activities are under way in the second two zones, Johnson Lane to Miles City (144 miles) and Miles City to Glendive (78 miles).

Active clean up continues in the first two zones closest to the spill site. More than 48,000 feet of absorbent boom and 2,200 feet of containment boom and 2,300 absorbent pads are on site and being used to clean up oil adjacent to the river. Vacuum trucks and tankers have also been deployed to pick up and dispose of the oil.

We have received 94 calls to the community claims line. Of those, 36 were reports from landowners related to oil on their property. We continue to encourage individuals in the community who might have been impacted by this event to contact the claims hotline number (1-888-382-0043).

We are actively conducting reconnaissance in the second two zones. We are ready to deploy resources as needed to clean up oil that may be identified from the spill in these areas.

Daily aerial flights over the river are being undertaken to identify additional oil locations and monitor and direct cleanup activity. As part of our reconnaissance, we are also walking the parts of the shorelines where it is safe to do so.

Given the current flooding and very swift river currents, we will need to wait until it is safe to get into some areas. When we have determined that conditions are safe, we have eight boats staged at Coulson Park for deployment for reconnaissance and monitoring on the river.

We continue to monitor air quality and all previous reports have confirmed no danger to public health. The EPA has conducted water quality sampling and will publicize those findings when they receive the results. Municipal water systems are being notified to monitor water quality but no reports of impacts have been received to date.

Workers from the International Bird Rescue have arrived in Billings. The Montana Audubon Conservation Education Center and Yellowstone Valley Audubon have offered to provide wildlife recovery services and facilities. We have not received any confirmed reports of impacted wildlife but will continue to monitor the area.