MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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MDEQ JULY 30 UPDATE ON OIL MATERIAL IN MISSISSIPPI

BILOXI, Miss. – Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) staff through aerial surveillance with the Mississippi National Guard, MDEQ response staff, and Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams (SCAT) have observed the following Friday (as of 5:30 p.m.) and sent to Unified Command for review and appropriate response:

Flight information:

- Unknown subsurface substance, maroon in color, extending from midpoint to west tip of Horn Island, 200 yards off the shoreline (N30°14.02/W88°46.43). Samples were taken.
- A 100 yard patch of oil and sheen on the southeast shore of Petit Bois Island (N30°11.90/W88°26.71). Area likely mostly seaweed with possible tar balls and other oil product.
- An area, 10 to 15 yards wide, that contains sheen with ribbons and patches of what appears to be degraded, emulsified oil that is white or tan in color. It runs south of East Ship Island about 5 NM to just east of Cat Island and then runs 5 NM southwest to the south of Cat Island. Samples were taken. (N30°12.30/W88°58.21; N30°13.57/W89°03.83; N30°08.89/W89°06.51)

Other Information from MDEQ staff:

- Harrison County:
  - Investigated a report of brown oily sheen leaching from the sand in Long Beach. Determined to be dead, beached jellyfish.
- Jackson County:
  - Tar balls found on Graveline Beach in Gautier.
  - No oil-related waste was found on Front, East, or Lake Mars beaches in Ocean Springs.
- Hancock County:
  - Sporadic tar balls, less than one percent coverage with an average size of 2 to 3 cm, found along all the beaches. Approximately 900 pounds of oily waste removed from the beach last night with clean up resuming tonight.
- SCAT team on the Barrier Islands:
  - Aerial reconnaissance of all Barrier Islands. Walking observations of Cat Island and East Ship Island revealed trace amounts of tar balls in the tidally influenced areas on both islands. Also, patches of tar balls and patties, which had previously washed ashore, were observed in the subsurface of the upper intertidal zone and on the surface in the supratidal zone. These patches have already been observed and mapped for clean-up operations. Beach cleaning crews were observed conducting cleaning operations on Cat Island, West Ship Island, and Horn Island.

More information about MDEQ's and DMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm. Water sampling information: http://opcgis.deq.state.ms.us/oilspillmap, air monitoring data: http://gulfcoast.airnowtech.org, and beach monitoring information: http://www.usm.edu/gcrl/msbeach/index.cgi.

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