Water Quality Protection Division

Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico

Region 6 Update

Subject: **Water Quality Division Update # 19**
Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico

Date: May 26, 2010

Reporting Period: May 26, 2010 1300 – May 27, 2010 1300

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Situation Status:

- NOAA forecasts created on 5/25/10 at 2100 CDT for 5/26/10 at 1200 CDT forecasts the oil slick to stretch from southeast of the Mississippi Delta westward past Terrebonne Bay. Satellite imagery analysis performed by NOAA indicates that the main portion of the slick remains southeast of the delta with smaller slicks inside Terrebonne and Barataria Bay and west of Isles Dernieres at Caillou Bay. Also some of the slick extends to the southeast towards the Loop Current. Winds are forecast to be relatively light throughout the week. The westward spread of the oil slick is expected to be minimal due to light winds and weakening westward currents.

Figure 1 NOAA Oil Slick Estimate provided in NOAA situational report for Deepwater Horizon incident

Figure 2 NOAA forecast of oil slick near Loop Current.

Monitoring and Assessment

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit as they develop the Region 6 sampling plan. It is anticipated that Region 6's sampling plan and Region 4's sampling plans will be appended to an overarching executive summary, and that this will be posted on EPA's website and presented as EPA's overall sampling plan. Region 4 and 6 are coordinating to ensure that their sampling plans are consistent with respect to the analytes being measured and the analytical methods being utilized.

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit on the review of incoming water quality monitoring data, including results received from recently collected oil

sample data (e.g., source oil, oil and debris, tarball, and mousse-like consistency oil samples).

- Continuing to coordinate with HQ (Office of Water) as they finalize the screening levels under development for use in evaluating water and sediment quality monitoring results and as they develop a data analysis plan.

- Attending regular meetings and calls with Region 4, HQ, & REOC.

Drinking Water

- Drinking water intakes, public drinking water wells, and domestic wells have not been impacted by the oil sheen and are not projected to be impacted.

- EPA Region 6 is providing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) daily situation report as well as data summaries as they become available.

- EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate closely with the LDHH on all drinking water issues.

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

- Oil that has been reported in the following locations may potentially impact the following CWPPRA projects that are located nearby:

Barrier Islands

- Western end of Marsh Island
  - TV-14 Marsh Island Hydrologic Restoration Project (USACE sponsored)
  - **TV-21 East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (EPA co-sponsored)**
- Raccoon Island
  - TE-48, Raccoon Island Shoreline Protection/Marsh Creation (NRCS Sponsored)
- Trinity Island
  - **TE-24, Isles Dernieres Restoration Trinity Island (EPA Sponsored)**
  - **TE-37, New Cut Dune and Marsh Restoration (EPA Sponsored)**
  - **TE-20, Isles Dernieres Restoration East Island (EPA Sponsored)**
- Whiskey Island
  - **TE-27, Whiskey Island Restoration (EPA Sponsored)**
  - **TE-50, Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (EPA Sponsored)**
  - **TE-52, Barrier Island Vegetation Demonstration (EPA Sponsored)**
- East Timbalier Island
  - TE-25, East Timbalier Island Sediment Restoration, Phase 1 (NMFS sponsored)
  - TE-30, East Timbalier Island Sediment Restoration, Phase 2 (NMFS sponsored)
- Chandeleur Islands
  - PO-27, Chandeleur Islands Marsh Restoration (NMFS Sponsored)

Marsh

- Terrebonne Bay Marshes
  - TE-45, Terrebonne Bay Shore Protection Demonstration (USFWS Sponsored)
- South Pass to Pass a Loutre area
  - MR-09, Mississippi Delta Wide Crevasses (NMFS sponsored).

Headlands

- Cheniere au Tigre area
  - TV-16, Cheniere au Tigre Sediment Trapping Demonstration (NRCS sponsored)
- West of Bayou Lafourche at Belle Pass on Gulf Shoreline
  - TE-23, West Belle Pass Headland Restoration (USACE Sponsored)
- South Pass to Pass a Loutre area
  - MR-09, Mississippi Delta Wide Crevasses (NMFS sponsored).

- Access has been restricted to Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (TE-50) and Enhancement of Barrier Island Vegetation Demonstration (TE-53) on Whiskey Island. Talks are underway with other resource agency partners to grant special access to complete plantings for these projects.

- East Marsh Island Marsh Creation Project (TV-27) is scheduled to begin dredging from Cote Blanche bay in mid-June. Oil residue believed to be from the BP spill has been noted in the area of the project which has raised concerns about the possibility contaminated sediments in the borrow site. Project sponsors are considering options on the best scenarios for continuation of the project

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Figure 3 SCAT map illustrating areas of shoreline impacts. Map created by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 5/25/

Coastal Habitat Impacts

Louisiana Large-Scale Coastal Barrier Plan:

- Staff is coordinating with OW, Region 4, and Region 6 attorneys and managers regarding Ocean Dumping Act and Clean Water Act aspects of dredging and disposal operations associated with the sand berm proposal by the State. Initial draft regulatory scenarios have been prepared and conference calls are scheduled for today and tomorrow.

Corps Emergency Authorizations for Coastal Protection Features:

- The Corps has coordinated with Region 6 and OW on the following emergency authorization requests: aerial placement of sand bags along Pelican and Scofield Islands, Barataria Bay; sand fill and closure of gaps between Elmer's Island and Grand Isle, Barataria Bay; installation of booms and pilings in the Biloxi Marsh area, St. Bernard Parish; installation of HESCO baskets and sand placement along sections of beach between Fourchon and Grand Isle, Barataria Bay; sand berm construction along the Isle Dernieres island chain, utilizing Ship Shoal and South Pelto sand sources; and "Tiger Dam" installation along Grand Isle, Barataria Bay. Regional staff members are supporting responses by OW.

Corps Navigation Maintenance Dredging:

- A decision is pending by BP contractor, Entrix, on a Corps request (backed by rationale provided by Regional staff) for including the EPA-designated SW Pass Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS) in a larger request to drag sorbent material in navigation channels to see if oil is present in the lower portions of the water column or on the sediment surface.

OW Ecological Impact Analyses:

- Ongoing analyses are underway concerning hypoxia, long-term landscape-scale impacts to coastal habitats, and other ecological impact scenarios.

- Bryon Griffith, Director of the Gulf of Mexico Program, will be in the office today and will engage Region 6 managers in discussions regarding oil spill impacts.

Data Management – Mapping Efforts

- Efforts continue on gathering data sets and maps to determine if water and sediment samples collected by contractor and considered base line were impacted by the oil spill.

- Produced a map of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program area.

NPDES

- Continue to coordinate, as required, with 6WQ, 6EN, 6RC, and HQ staff on NPDES permitting and enforcement issues.

- The NPDES Permits and TMDL is evaluating its authority in implementing a moratorium on future offshore drilling operations.

- NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch continues to be available to provide technical assistance as needed.