

Pipeline P00547 Incident Factsheet

Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA)

One year ago on Oct. 1, 2021, an underwater pipeline running from Platform Elly to Long Beach spilled approximately 25,000 gallons of crude oil into San Pedro Bay. The initial release occurred roughly 4.5 miles offshore of Huntington Beach in Southern California.

Natural Resource Trustees, made up of state and federal agencies, are assessing the ecological injuries and human use losses caused by the spill. Through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process, the trustees quantify injuries to wildlife, habitat, and lost human use of those resources, and develop a restoration plan for public comment. A claim for funds from the responsible party will be made in order to implement restoration projects.

The trustees invite the public to submit restoration concepts or project proposals that aim to protect, restore, and enhance resources potentially impacted by the spill. Project submissions will be evaluated during the preparation of a Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan (DARP) as the assessment and restoration planning progresses. Please email submissions to fw8cfwocomments@fws.gov using the subject line, "Pipeline P00547 Project Proposal."

Join an upcoming virtual meeting
to learn more about NRDA.

January 25, 2023
9 AM and 6 PM PST

To register, email:

fw8cfwocomments@fws.gov

Subject line, Pipeline P00547 virtual meeting

Natural Resource Trustees: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Parks and Recreation, California State Lands Commission, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Department of Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management

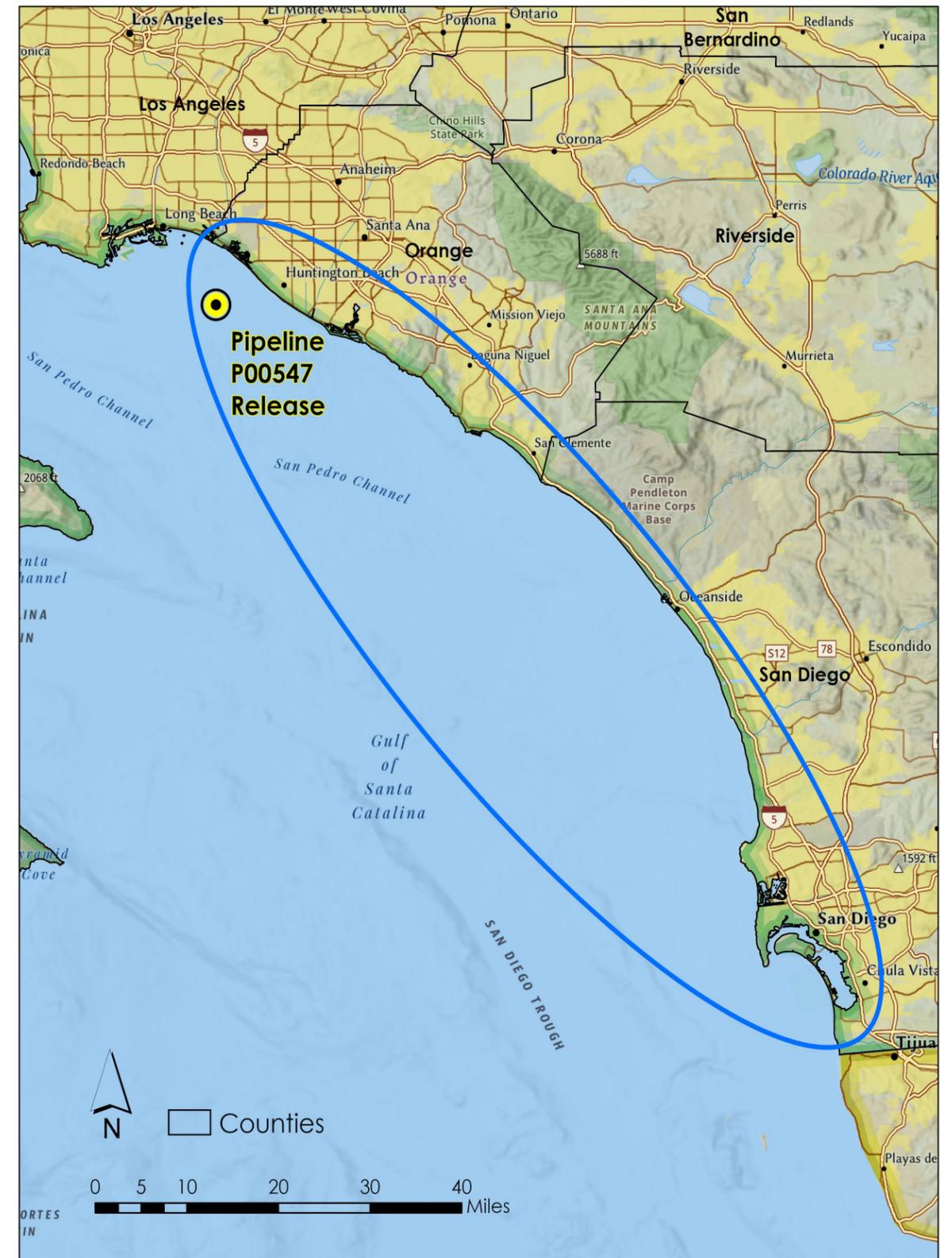
For questions about this factsheet or NRDA activities, please email the Natural Resource Trustee contacts below with subject line, Pipeline P00547 NRDA Factsheet.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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wildlife.ca.gov/OSPR/NRDA/Pipeline-P00547



Within the oval: area of Natural Resource Trustees' ecological and human use injury assessment activities (updates provided on next page)

Yellow radar button: location of oil spill discharge



Assessment Updates (as of Oct. 3, 2022):

The trustees, through Technical Work Groups, are studying resources potentially impacted by the spill, including the following wildlife, habitat and human use resource categories. Please note that preliminary findings provided below are subject to further refinement and analysis.

Birds - A total of 116 birds were recovered by response personnel. Oiled birds were observed and documented from Sunset Beach in Orange County down to Coronado in San Diego County immediately following the spill. More than 30 live oiled birds were collected during spill response and rehabilitated, including the threatened western snowy plover, of which seven were treated and released. Western snowy plovers continue to be observed and monitored in Orange and San Diego counties to help evaluate potential post-spill effects that may have occurred to them and their coastal-dependent habitats.

Marine Mammals - It is being evaluated whether an increase in stranded marine mammals and excess mortalities occurred after the spill compared to historical (2006 through 2020) monthly stranding rates in Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties. From the time of the spill to the end of 2021, more than 100 marine mammals were documented as stranded along Southern California's shoreline.

Marsh Habitat - Fifteen acres of marsh and four acres of mixed marsh habitat were oiled in Orange County, as well as 483 acres of marsh were potentially exposed to a short duration of tar balling farther south. Decreases in invertebrate species abundance are suspected in areas of heavier oiling. Upcoming studies are planned for Orange and San Diego counties to compare before and after ecological community metrics, like species diversity and abundance.

Rocky Intertidal Habitat - Multiple rocky intertidal habitat areas were impacted by oil or tar balls from Newport Beach to Point Loma, San Diego, including five acres of fully rocky intertidal habitat and 37 acres of rocky intertidal habitat mixed with sand. Upcoming studies are planned to compare before and after ecological community metrics, like species diversity and abundance.

Subtidal Habitat - Evidence of submerged oil in subtidal sediments or coating subtidal invertebrates or vegetation was not observed.

Sandy Beach Habitat - Approximately 771-826 acres of sandy beach were oiled (light to moderate oiling, primarily as tar balls), and 4,404 acres of sandy beach were potentially exposed to short durations of tar balling. Decreases in species abundance and diversity in sandy beach invertebrate communities were observed in Orange and San Diego counties, and upcoming studies are planned to further assess impacts to those communities.

Water Column - Observations and predictions of surface oiling from satellites, aircraft and on-water vessels, and oil trajectory, fate, and effects models are being evaluated to determine the spatial footprint and duration of oil on the water surface and impacts to water column habitat and resources.

Fish - Shortly after the spill, fish were collected from nearshore waters along the coast. Bile fluids collected from fish livers contained polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon metabolites indicative of oil exposure.

Human Use - A range of recreation closures and advisories were instituted in Orange and San Diego counties following the spill, including a closure of recreation fishing and cancellation of the final day of the 2021 Pacific Airshow. Information on recreation in the spill area was collected last fall, including surveys of beachgoers and overflights documenting levels of beach use across most of Orange and San Diego counties. Compilation and evaluation of existing data related to recreation is ongoing. Additional data collection is planned this fall to address data gaps by using 2022 as a reference year.