



TEXAS CITY "Y" RESPONSE

Official Area Command Response Information Site

Serving Galveston and Matagorda Incident Command Posts

Home

News and Info

Questions/Comments

Site Map

[Home](#) > [News Releases](#) > Update 7/Video: Matagorda Bay

Document Number: 53

Texas City "Y" Response Area Command



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: March 31, 2014 7:19:00 PM CDT

Update 7/Video: Matagorda Bay



Task force crews undergo decontamination procedures before removing oiled debris from South Matagorda Island, Texas, March 31, 2014. Crews working along South Matagorda Island have collected 610 bags of oiled debris including sand, tree limbs, seaweed, and other man-made and natural objects. U.S. Coast Guard video by Petty Officer 2nd Class George Degener. Available in high definition.

PORT O'CONNOR, Texas — Response teams were out early this morning to continue the aggressive removal of oiled debris and sand from South Matagorda and tar balls on Mustang Islands.

The Unified Command, with Kirby Inland Marine, United States Coast Guard, and Texas General Land Office utilized wildlife expertise from Texas Parks and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife continue their vigilance in ensuring the protection of bird and marine life in areas that may be impacted by the oil spilled in a March 22 incident in the Houston Ship Channel.

More than 470 response contractors were involved in shoreline recovery efforts during the day. Crews working along Bird Island have now removed boom from areas not impacted by the spill.

Matagorda Island is a unit of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and an overlay to a state Wildlife Management Area of Texas Parks and Wildlife. The 56,6000-acre island includes beaches, salt marshes, tidal flats, and uplands. It is host or home to a diversity of wildlife, including the last naturally wild flock of whooping cranes. All of the whooping cranes alive today, both wild and captive, are descendants of the last 15 remaining cranes found wintering at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in 1941.

As of late afternoon today, crews working along South Matagorda Island have collected 610 bags of oiled debris including sand, tree limbs, seaweed, and other man-made and natural objects. Approximately one mile of shoreline has now been cleaned on South Matagorda Island. There are no reports of oil reaching Matagorda Bay.

Along Mustang Island crews had collected 340 bags of debris by 5 pm Monday. Each bag of debris weighs an estimated 25 - 40 pounds. Debris removal continues to be done largely by shovels, rakes, brooms, and buckets.

While small tar balls continue to make their appearance along some stretches of shoreline, they appear to be confined at this time to patches of seaweed along J.P. Luby Beach.

As of 5 p.m. today, fifteen deceased birds have been recovered on South Matagorda Island and Mustang Island and one deceased fresh water turtle was also recovered. Further testing will determine the cause of death. A wildlife treatment and rehabilitation facility continues to be available on site. Multiple federal and state agency personnel are actively engaged in patrolling potentially impacted areas off Corpus Christi to remain vigilant to any additional impact. Persons who observe any impacted wildlife should not attempt to capture or handle them but are urged to call 888-384-2000.

Incident Command Post teams have maintained a continuous reconnaissance of shoreline and ocean from the Colorado River to the Rio Grande River in Brownsville, TX, which covers approximately 225 miles of south Texas shoreline.

County and city officials and agencies are receiving daily briefings from the Unified Command, including representatives of the United States Coast Guard, Texas General Land Office, Texas Parks and Wildlife, NOAA and Kirby Inland Marine.

Residents, tourists and others who may observe tar balls are urged to refrain from attempting their own clean-up activities and are asked to call 361-939-6349 to report the exact locations of any sightings. Persons who may be physically impacted by the oil should take quick action to wash the affected area with soap and warm water. The public is discouraged from accessing Matagorda Island until the Unified Command announces that response operations are complete.

Air monitoring continues to confirm no risk to the public from any of the affected areas.

A claims line has been established for persons who may have questions regarding personal impacts from the incident. The number is 855-276-1575.

For more information, visit www.TexasCityYResponse.com, or contact the Matagorda Bay joint information center at 214-225-8007.

###

For more information contact:

Matagorda Response JIC

Texas City "Y" Response Area Command

(214) 225-8007

3674 W. Adams St.

Port O'Connor, TX 77982

TexasCityYResponse@gmail.com