

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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March 24, 2000

**TO:** Coastal Commissioners and Interested Parties

**FROM:** Jaime C. Kooser, Deputy Director  
Alison J. Dettmer, Manager, Energy and Ocean Resources Unit  
Dan Chia, Coastal Program Analyst

**SUBJECT:** **Guadalupe Oil Field Spill Remediation Status Report – April 2000**

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**Staff Note:**

*This status report provides an account of abandonment and cleanup activities occurring at the Guadalupe site for the period February 22, 2000-March 10, 2000. Some of these are ongoing activities authorized under San Luis Obispo CDP/DP D870558D, and others began following Coastal Commission approval of CDP No. E-99-009 on November 3, 1999.*

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**SITE ACTIVITIES, FEBRUARY 22, 2000-MARCH 10, 2000****Activities Occurring in the Coastal Commission's Coastal Permit Jurisdiction****5X West Site**

- Unocal contractors completed all activities on the 5X West site by February 29. All fencing materials and most of the wood lathe (survey markers) around the 5X site have been removed. Unocal has fenced off the pad sites along the A Road to prevent any disturbances to potential snowy plover breeding habitat at these sites. Additionally, Unocal has marked (with pin flags) access corridors to monitoring wells along the east side of the 5X site.

**Loop Road Violation**

- On February 23, 2000, Unocal submitted to the Coastal Commission a coastal development permit application to (a) remove road base material placed on the "loop" road and in adjacent wetlands, and (b) mitigate impacts to the La Graciosa thistle caused by the road improvement

activities. Unocal improved the loop road in March 1998 without benefit of a coastal development permit.

In this application, Unocal proposes to remove all road base material (about 400 tons of 1.5 inch rock and 50 tons of sand) placed on the pre-existing loop road and in the wetlands (about 183 cubic yards) and develop a La Graciosa thistle research program and restoration plan. Unocal is also considering modifying its pending application to remove most of the pre-existing loop road. A narrow section of the pre-existing road would be kept intact as a berm to protect Marsh Pond B.

The Commission's marine ecologist, John Dixon, is also working with Unocal and other resource agencies to develop a La Graciosa thistle research program as the first step toward Unocal developing and implementing a thistle restoration plan.

This permit application is tentatively June meeting in Santa Barbara.

#### Other Activities

- As a part of site-wide sump assessment activities, Unocal contractors began collecting soil samples from the TB4 sump site using a rubber-tired drill rig. Five soil samples were collected from the TB4 site and a temporary monitoring well was installed downstream of the site.

#### Activities Occurring in San Luis Obispo County's Coastal Permit Jurisdiction

- Unocal contractors continue to be present onsite during any large rain event to ensure that retention ponds at the B5 and LTU sites do not overflow. Under current conditions, vacuum trucks are required to vacuum water out of these two retention ponds and then empty water into the site recovery system at TB8. All activities occurring at night, which include repeated trips from the B5 and LTU retention ponds to the TB8 tanks, are accompanied by a Unocal wildlife monitor.
- Unocal contractors have completed spreading driftwood over the 8X restoration site to recreate snowy plover habitat on the site.
- Unocal installed a rope-fence barrier around the TB8 stockpiled material in order to dissuade mule deer from accessing the contaminated sand.
- After a complete survey and red-legged frog relocation effort, consistent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its Biological Opinion, Unocal contractors removed all of the water and sand from the TB8 west retention pond. Unocal monitors first conducted night surveys at the site and then inspected during the day immediately prior to pumping the pond. Pumps installed inside the retention pond were fitted with three levels of screen to ensure that amphibians and other animals could not get caught in the pumping systems. As the water level decreased in the retention pond, Unocal monitors seined the area for tadpoles and young frogs. In total, Unocal monitors captured and removed two juvenile California red-legged frogs, one red-legged frog tadpole and two western spadefoot toads from the retention

pond. All of these animals were relocated to the marsh ponds. Unocal plans to continually pump the water out of the west retention pond.

- Unocal monitors continue to track radio-tagged frogs each day for the five-day work week. Monitors locate the frogs once a day in the morning. Four California red-legged frogs that have radio-transmitters and had been relocated to the P1 wetland are regularly observed each day in the area of the wetland. The fifth frog relocated to the B2W1 wetland continues to be observed in the area of that wetland. The radio-telemetry units will soon be removed because Unocal monitors believe that the red-legged frogs are unlikely to move to other wetlands.