

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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TO: Coastal Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Jaime C. Kooser, Deputy Director
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SUBJECT: **Guadalupe Oil Field Spill Remediation Second Quarterly Status Report: April-June 2002**

This status report provides an account of abandonment and cleanup-related activities occurring at the Guadalupe site for the period April 2002-June 2002. 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.

SITE ACTIVITIES, APRIL 2002-JUNE 2002

Activities Occurring in the Coastal Commission Permit Jurisdiction

- Unocal closed the A Road and beaches to all foot and vehicle traffic on March 1, 2002 due to the start of the western snowy plover nesting season. Since then, Western snowy plover monitors regularly survey the beach for the presence of plover nests. As of June 11, 2002, the monitors have observed a total of 52 nests with over half showing evidence of failure, predominantly due to avian predation.

Activities Occurring in the County's Permit Jurisdiction

- Condition F8 of the County's coastal development permit/development plan (CDP/DP) requires Unocal, prior to initiation of pilot (remediation) studies required by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) in Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 98-38, to submit pilot plans to San Luis Obispo County, the Executive Director of the Coastal Commission (Executive Director), and the California Department of Fish and Game for review and approval to ensure that the CDP/DP's conditions of approval adequately mitigate for the pilot project's impacts. On February 12, 2002, Unocal submitted a Hot Water/Steam Injection & Fluids Extraction pilot work plan to Commission staff. Unocal

developed this steam pilot test in collaboration with the RWQCB, a Pilot Test Panel (comprised of independent technical experts), and the pilot test proponent. This test generally involves the construction and operation of a pilot-scale in situ remediation system that floods the capillary zone of a contaminated area with hot water and steam in order to mobilize residual hydrocarbons for extraction through a network of wells.

- In its review of the pilot test, the County prepared an Addendum (April 2002) to the Guadalupe Oil Field Remediation and Abandonment Project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This addendum concludes that the proposed project changes do not result in any new significant impacts that were not identified in the original EIR. Additionally, the Addendum found that "...the respective conditions in the [coastal development permit (CDP)] illustrate that the proposed project changes are in substantial conformance with the existing CDP". The Executive Director of the Commission concurred in the above finding and approved the pilot plan on April 29, 2002.
- Unocal contractors are currently installing monitoring equipment, extraction wells, and other infrastructure at the steam pilot test site. Prior to any ground disturbance, Unocal and its biologists conducted biological surveys (vegetation, small mammals and arthropods) at the site. During project construction and operation, Unocal will implement impact avoidance and minimization measures, including delineating the limits of construction zones, daily wildlife monitoring of roadways and work areas prior to the start of work, and salvage and relocation of sensitive plant species. After the project is complete, the site will be restored consistent with a restoration plan approved by the County and Executive Director.
- As directed by the RWQCB, Unocal has completed most of the well installations and soil borings in the Diluent Tanks and Compressor Plant areas for a Natural Attenuation study. The data collected from these wells is being used to evaluate natural attenuation of source zone (separate phase diluent) contaminated areas and will be useful in interpreting the results of studies associated with the hot water/steam injection pilot test.
- Condition F65 of the County's CDP/DP requires Unocal to develop, in consultation with resource agencies, a Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Research Program for review approval by the County and Executive Director. The purpose of this program is to develop specific practical techniques to foster the recovery of particular sensitive species impacted by clean-up and abandonment activities. Among other things, the program shall include a scientific advisory panel (SAP) to review the program and provide guidance in its implementation. Unocal and the agencies nominated Drs. Peter Raimondi, Norman Scott, and Adrian Delnevo to sit on the SAP. The SAP met in late April at the former Guadalupe Oil Field to tour some of the research and project areas and have requested information on habitat and species distribution throughout the site. The SAP will review this information and ultimately submit recommendations and findings for future work and research on the site to the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, composed of agency and Unocal representatives.