



For Immediate Release

January 05, 2021 14:00 PST

Unified Command Joint Advisory: Foss 153 Diesel Spill Diinan Kahlii *Dinan Bay* Haida Gwaii

The Council of the Haida Nation, Canadian Coast Guard, BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Taan Forest were the Unified Command who oversaw the Foss 153 Diesel Spill Diinan Kahlii *Dinan Bay*, Haida Gwaii.

In May 2020, two rounds of tissue samplings were completed on mussels and clams in 15 sites determined by the Council of the Haida Nation (CHN) including low tide beaches from Juskatla Narrows, Sewall to the head of Dinan Bay in Masset Inlet. Additionally, three reference sites were identified and sampled as controls for baseline numbers to target as non-affected areas in Masset Inlet. Reference sites included low-tide beaches at Yakoun River estuary, Kumdis Island and the Kumdis Slough.

Results of the tissue samples indicated that 6 of the 15 sites had higher concentrations of hydrocarbons than the reference sites. The sites with higher values were concentrated close to the spill site and were re-sampled again in October. The October samples showed values at or below that of the reference sites with the exception of the spill site itself. The results of the spill site are likely attributed to historical commercial use rather than solely caused by the diesel spill. Annual monitoring by the CHN and Taan Forest of the spill site will continue to observe if the numbers change or remain consistent. No remediation action is required at this time.

Immediately after the incident occurred, Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Teams (SCAT) consisting of trained personnel from multiple local agencies including CHN and Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, deployed and walked the beaches that were potentially affected to determine if there was any visible evidence of impacts. These assessments showed very little if any impact to the beaches and were completed to agreed upon endpoints.

As a result of the sampling outcomes and planned long-term monitoring of the spill site, Unified Command has stood down, ending the formal incident response. Should numbers from the long-term monitoring show results requiring remediation, the Incident Command may resume as needed.

Due to the Foss 153 diesel spill occurring during COVID-19 pandemic restricting access to Haida Gwaii, Government Agencies off Haida Gwaii and contracted spill agencies were unable to respond in-person to the spill. Haida Gwaii Responders were able to mobilize quickly with local spill resources. Post response debriefing identified access to spill caches on Haida Gwaii was unnecessarily delayed. From this debrief, Taan Forest has created caches of spill equipment which exceed emergency spill gear requirements located at its water-based operations from Diinan Kahlii to Louise Island which can be quickly accessed as a resource to Island responders if needed.



Taan Forest would sincerely like to thank everyone who assisted with the fast response and spill cleanup, organization of sampling and support from government agencies.

Special thanks to:

Council of the Haida Nation – Jason Thompson, Stuart Crawford and team

Canadian Coast Guard Haida Gwaii, James Cowpar and Robert Russ

Highlander Marine, Danny Robertson, Trent Moraes and team

LNR Excavating for efforts and supplies during the clean up

MAD Milling for clean up efforts

North Arm Transportation for lending spill supplies

Pacificus Biological Services for all the sampling and organization and Chain of Custody of samples

Canadian Coast Guard Seal Cove

Summary

- Spill reported early Wednesday morning, April 22, of 4500L from FOSS 153. Initial estimates from a NASP overflight found 1900L on the water, with over 50% evaporating and dissipating within first 24hrs. On Thursday April 30, the NASP overflight reported no visible sheen or recoverable product.
- Absorbing booms and sorbent pads were deployed upon the discovery of the spill.
- During response efforts, the focus was on deflecting diesel plumes from shorelines and environmentally and culturally sensitive sites. All booms and absorbent materials were collected by afternoon of April 24, 2020.
- Sampling and SCAT (Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Technique) surveys were completed.
- Initial sampling of water, soil and marine life completed Sunday May 10.
- Analysis of samples is ongoing by laboratories in Vancouver and Ontario.
- Results of analysis have been reviewed by the Environmental Unit and Unified Command.
- There have been no observed fish kills by response personnel, sampling personnel, or shoreline assessment personnel.

For Further Information: Karen Dean (250) 626-9722

Sonia Rice (250) 626-9049