

News Release UPDATE

Date: Jan 28, 2013

13th District External Affairs

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Derelict vessels sank in Hylebos Waterway

SEATTLE — The Coast Guard, Department of Ecology, and Ballard Diving and Salvage continue to monitor the Helena Star, which sank while moored at Mason Marine near Tacoma, Wash., in the Hylebos Waterway, Friday. The Golden West, which was tied to the Helena Star, was dragged over to an extreme angle but has not sunk.

The Helena Star and Golden West shifted with the tide, Monday, causing the Helena Star to leak approximately 20 gallons of lube oil within the contained area surrounding the vessels.

The Coast Guard, along with the other responding agencies, worked through the weekend to ensure any contaminants leaking from the two derelict vessels were contained and removed, and not released into the Hylebos Waterway.

During the weekend's response efforts, approximately 1,500 gallons of contaminated water was vacuumed out and the absorbing oil pads were changed.

According to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, a few birds were located in the sheen during an initial reconnaissance flight on Friday. Focus Wildlife International, an oiled wildlife response contractor, was hired to conduct wildlife surveys throughout the spill area. Several hundred birds and many seals were observed during surveys conducted on Friday and Saturday within the vicinity of the spill, but none of the animals observed were visibly oiled or showed behavioral signs of oiling.

All agencies involved will continue to monitor the situation.

For more information, contact the 13th Coast Guard District Public Affairs Office at (206) 220-7237; or Petty Officer Jordan Akiyama at (206) 605-4817. For information on the role of the Department of Ecology, contact Linda Kent at (360) 791-9830, linda.kent@ecy.wa.gov. For information on the role of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, contact Brian MacDonald at (360) 902-8122, brian.macdonald@dfw.wa.gov.

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