Oil Spill Discussion - May 6

Posted by Gail the Actuary on May 6, 2010 - 10:26am
Topic: Miscellaneous
Tags: deepwater horizon, oil spill [list all tags]

Drumbeat will continue to have a lot of oil spill articles. But to keep oil spill discussion together, this is a separate thread, with a few links.

BP reports on its website:

> Work continues to attempt to bring the MC252 oil well under control, to stop the flow of oil and to contain the oil subsea.
>
> A valve that had been attached to the end of a broken drill pipe, one of the three points from which oil was leaking, was closed. This has stopped the flow from this point, but is not expected to affect the overall rate of flow from the well. BP continues to use remotely operated vehicles to monitor the flow of oil from the other two leak points.
>
> A containment dome was loaded aboard a transport vessel at Port Fourchon, Louisiana, and began its transport to the MC252 well site. The 40x24x14 feet steel vessel, which weighs almost 100 tons, is expected to be lowered to the seabed today.
>
> The drilling of the first relief well, which began on Sunday May 2, continues. It is estimated that it will take some three months to complete.

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The most worrying story from Drumbeat is

Gulf Oil Slick Moves Near Southwest Pass, Port Official Says

> Oil leaking from BP Plc's damaged Gulf of Mexico well has drifted within 1.5 miles of the buoy marking the entrance to Southwest Pass, the main approach to the Port of New Orleans, a port official said.
>
> "I just got a call from the port commissioner, and he said the oil is a mile and a half away from the main entrance," Wayne Mumphrey, secretary treasurer of the Port of New Orleans said in an interview in New Orleans. "Once it passes the buoy, we have to start decontaminating every ship coming into the port."

> Mumphrey said two floating decontamination stations have been set up near the buoy to scrub oil from the hulls of ships entering the Mississippi.
>
> It will take 10 to 12 hours to decontaminate each ship, which will dramatically slow incoming port traffic and that may cause ships to begin backing up into the Gulf, he said.

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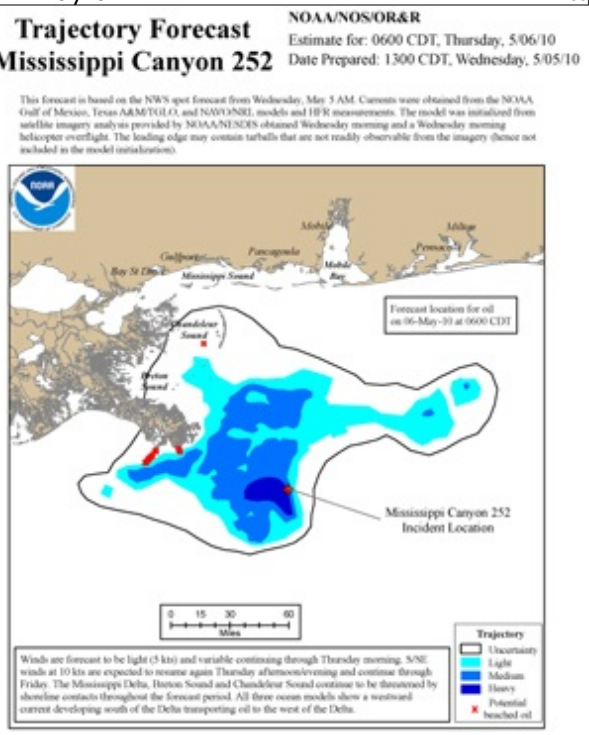
NOAA is saying:

> The latest trajectory forecast shows a potential for westward movement of the oil. Twice daily, NOAA oceanographers continue to release updated trajectory maps showing the predicted trajectory of the oil slick. Drifter buoys have been placed near areas of the slick to provide tracking data that will be used to ground truth NOAA's predicted trajectories. The buoys transmit location information and can be used by the NOAA modeling team to better understand how currents and winds are moving the slick and accompanying buoys.



So this would seem to indicated the spill seems to still be staying mostly away from the coast.

NOAA also says:

> Decreasing wind and sea state should allow the full spectrum of surface operations until the weekend. NOAA's National Weather Service has created a special forecast for the incident area which you can access here: http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lix/

Earlier, Rigzone reported:

Loop Current Should Stay Away from Spill - NOAA

> Charlie Henry, an oil spill expert and NOAA's support site coordinator with the U.S. Coast Guard, indicated that he does not expect the approximately 5,000 b/d of oil leaking from Macondo well to enter the current. The Loop current, which flows clockwise and is part of the Gulf Stream, largely governs the movement of water in the Gulf of Mexico. Platts stated that the current travels south of Macondo, which is in Mississippi Canyon Block 252, and that NOAA does not expect the current to move closer to the well site.
>
> Henry explained that "strong" northern cold fronts appear with extended winds this time of year, reducing the potential for the oil slick to connect with the Loop current.

MMS keeps updating its news. The big news item now is photos of the cofferdam, being loaded on a ship.