

Less oil visible as rough weather breaks up slick

VALDEZ, Alaska (AP) -- Aerial surveys showed "significantly less oil visible on the water" after two days of high winds and rough seas broke up much of the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the Coast Guard said Wednesday.

Off the coast outside Prince William Sound, where the tanker ran aground on Bligh Reef and lost more than 10 million gallons, observation flights found little more than patches of light sheen and spots of thick crude mousse, said Coast Guard spokesman Brad Smith.

But state officials disputed that account.

An overflight they conducted Tuesday in poor visibility spotted a

medium sheen of oil around Chugach Islands and Barren Islands on the edge of the Cook Inlet, which leads to Homer, Kodiak Island and Anchorage.

"If it keeps moving in the general direction it's going to get there," said Dan Lawn, a Department of Environmental Conservation official in charge of tracking the oil.

Smith said only small amounts of sheen and frothy mousse were observed in various areas of the southern part of the sound, but some islands and bays remained heavily oiled.

Cleanup operations continued on oil-covered areas like Naked Island, where workers used absorbent pads

to scour the coastline, according to the Coast Guard, which assumed management of the cleanup under President Bush's order last week.

However, winds began to shift to the southeast, the National Weather Service said, meaning they could blow oil from the nation's worst-ever spill back toward Prince William Sound.

"It doesn't appear to be a threat," Smith said. "It seems the front line of the oil hasn't been advancing and has been breaking up."

Fishing towns along the coast have spent three tense days waiting for the oil to hit land. Officials note that until all oil has broken up and swept to sea, changes in the weather could still throw crude ashore.

"I don't want to say it's over because something may change, but the oil is breaking up very rapidly," said John Whitney, an official with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

"The combination of winds and waves is taking care of it nicely."

In other developments: ● Adm. Paul Yost, commandant of the Coast Guard, was scheduled to arrive from Washington at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska, on Wednesday and fly over the spill area Thursday.

● The flow of oil from the North Slope has returned to normal, the operator of the trans-Alaska pipeline said. It also said it has complied with a state order for more tanker safety

measures and a full-time emergency spill response team.

● In Washington, the House Interior Committee voted to use subpoenas if necessary to gather information in its investigation of the accident. Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., who made the proposal, said he felt it was important to "send a strong message to the interested parties that we expect all parties to cooperate."

● British Columbia and Washington state officials announced a task force to prevent future spills. Premier William Vander Zalm and Gov. Booth Gardner said the first test is to prevent the Exxon Valdez from polluting more coastal waters and beaches en route to Portland, Ore., for repairs.

Senators say bill is in 'right direction'

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Nebraska should not go this far because no other state has done so yet.

Calling the problem a "time bomb," Sen. Chris Abboud of Omaha said he would be proud if Nebraska becomes the first state to go this far.

Sen. Arlene Nelson of Grand Island agreed.

"Why not be the first state that takes a step forward?" she asked.

Wesely said his five-month-old baby has made him the current expert on diapers. He said he does not want to return to the days before disposable diapers but said using them makes him feel guilty.

Wesely said he does not want diapers to continue cluttering the

landfills. It is "unappropriate and irresponsible," he said.

Senators said the bill could even help raise corn prices. Corn starch is the product added to plastics to help them dissolve in five to 10 years instead of hundreds of years. According to Hefner, it has been estimated that 300 million bushels of corn would be used in this industry.

Speaker: Current job market needs immigrants

By David G. Young
Staff Reporter

The United States cannot achieve economic growth in the future without allowing illegal immigrants into the work force, said Jorge Bustamante, president of El Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Tijuana, Mexico.

Bustamante spoke to about 250 people in Love Library Auditorium Wednesday night as part of the Center for Great Plains Studies Symposium.

The conditions which encourage undocumented immigrants to

enter the United States are not entirely due to poverty and overpopulation in Mexico, he said. Immigration also is a result of conditions in the United States, Bustamante said.

"The phenomenon would not exist if it were not for one important factor, which is an inexhaustible demand for cheap labor in the U.S.," he said.

High rates of immigration are a result of the failure of the United States to enforce its immigration laws, he said.

"If the U.S. economy goes into a recession, then what you will see

is a full (enforcement) of the law," Bustamante said. "If the U.S. is in a state of economic growth then you will see the law not being fully implemented."

Bustamante told the story of a San Francisco mushroom processing plant that was forced to fire its illegal immigrant employees by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The INS made the owner replace the workers with people on welfare, he said, but the new workers all quit within a week. A few days later, the illegal immigrants were back on the job, he said.

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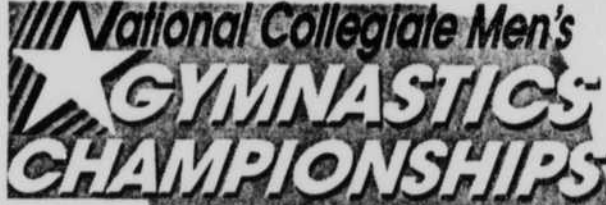
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"GOOD LUCK HUSKERS", FROM METTLER FAMILY BAKERY

Students to protest despite threat

PEACE From Page 1

Eckersley said the Department of Energy has hired mercenary soldiers to guard the test site and arrest those who practice civil disobedience. The soldiers turn over the arrested protesters to sheriffs who take them to jails in surrounding towns.

'I think my presence is a strong enough message without breaking the law.'

--Sorrell

This year's peace test has been going on since April 6, Eckersley said, but the main day of protest will be April 15. On the main day last year, she said, 2,000 protesters were arrested.

When a large number of arrests occur, she said, it is almost impossible for authorities to hold the arrested for long because they refuse to give their names. This is called jail solidarity, she said.

This only works if there are many people arrested, she said. Everyday people are crossing the line onto the test site and are arrested, she said.

The least form of civil disobedience would be to cross the line onto the site, Eckersley said. Some cross the line and try to make it to Mercury, a former town within the test site which is now a settlement for test-site workers and an operating base for the Department of Energy. This is called deep-woods action, she said. Authorities use helicopters and dunebuggies to catch those who attempt to reach Mercury, she said.

"These people are really out to get us," Eckersley said.

Trespassers who are arrested are subject to a \$150 fine, which can be paid off by spending six days in jail at \$25 a day. Protestors also can be arrested for being a public nuisance and resisting arrest.

Eckersley said she is not sure how many in the group plan on practicing civil disobedience. The group has rented a van, she said, and many students cannot afford to miss more school, so they can't stay longer than planned.

Sorrell said he doesn't know how constructive it would be to practice civil disobedience and get arrested.

"I think my presence is a strong enough message without breaking the law," Sorrell said.

Eckersley said one of the main goals of the trip is to meet others who share their interests and to "get a good network going" of people opposed to nuclear testing.

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