



## **NRC 1158584, Pelham Pipeline Spill Pelham, Shelby County, Alabama**

### **SITUATION REPORT #2**

1800, September 11, 2016

#### **INCIDENT DESCRIPTION**

On September 9, 2016, at 1449 hours, Colonial Pipeline reported a gasoline spill from a 36" subsurface transmission line to the National Response Center. The gasoline traveled overland for approximately 500 feet to a pond (Pond 2 on the attached Figure) that feeds into Peel Creek which is a tributary of the Cahaba River. The initial report to Colonial was made by the property owner, but there was no volume estimate. The exact amount of the release was unknown; however, Colonial Pipeline initially reported to the responding OSC that between 1000 and 2000 gallons of gasoline entered the pond (the spill volume has been updated to 100,000 gallons in the pond – See "Current Operations" for more information).

The local fire department responded and established a secured zone around the spill site. Dangerous explosive gas levels have been detected around the spill location. Shelby County Emergency Management responded and confirmed that there are no public or private drinking water sources threatened by the spill. Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has integrated into Unified Command and is coordinating with State and County Agencies. An Incident Command Post was established in Hoover, Alabama. The spill location is in a remote area, and no evacuations are necessary. The nearest residential neighborhood is located 2 miles from the spill location.

Colonial Pipeline has confirmed that the impacted transmission line is shut down. Environmental contractors for Colonial Pipeline are on site to conduct air monitoring and remediation activities. Work to remediate the spill is delayed due to the high concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOC) emitted for the large areas of pooled gasoline. There is an increased risk of rain for Sunday and Monday September 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Threatened and endangered species in the area of the spill have been identified and communicated to Unified Command. No T&E species have been reported impacted from the spill, although several common species have been impacted.

At this time, a Regional Response Team 4 (RRT4) activation is not planned. The appropriate members were engaged during the initial response notification process. A RRT4 call will be held if conditions change.

#### **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Chuck Berry was deploy to the Incident Command Post and has integrated into Unified Command, which includes EPA, Colonial, ADEM, and Shelby County. OSC Englert, OSC Williamson, and 4 US Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team members have been deployed to assist within field observations. A Public Information Officer (PIO) was requested and will assist in the Joint Information Center.

Current number of EPA Personnel Assigned: 3

Current number of United States Coast Guard Gulf Strike Team (USCG GST) Members: 4

## **REPORTING SCHEDULE**

Situation Reports (SITREPS) will be delivered 1800 EDT daily.

## **CURRENT OPERATIONS**

While the pipeline pumps are shut off, the pipeline continues to drain into Pond 2. The flow rate has lessened over the last day, but visually appears to be approximately 3 gallons per minute. Colonial continues to excavate the pipe and install stopples to block the flow, but hard rock has delayed this process. Colonial currently estimates the pipe to be blocked and evacuated Tuesday. There is no update to the discharge volume.

The high level of explosive vapors is the greatest limiting factor to recovery operations. Colonial contractor CTEH is on site providing air monitoring services. They have set up an air monitoring network and are also providing roving and escort services for personnel working inside the hot zone. Lower Explosive Level (LEL) readings as high as 99% have been observed for short periods of time. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) levels remain high near the pond, with the highest observed level coming from a remote monitor at 2,999 parts per million (ppm). Benzene is also being monitored for, with a highest reading of 366.7 ppm. All personnel entering the hot zone are required to have flame resistant clothing and an air monitoring escort. Action levels for benzene, VOCs and explosive vapors have been set. Work is frequently stopped due to excess benzene and LEL readings, slowing recovery.

See the map below for the layout of the emergency response site

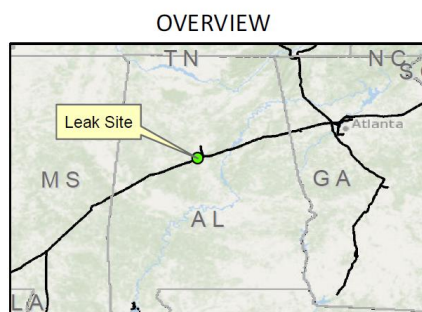
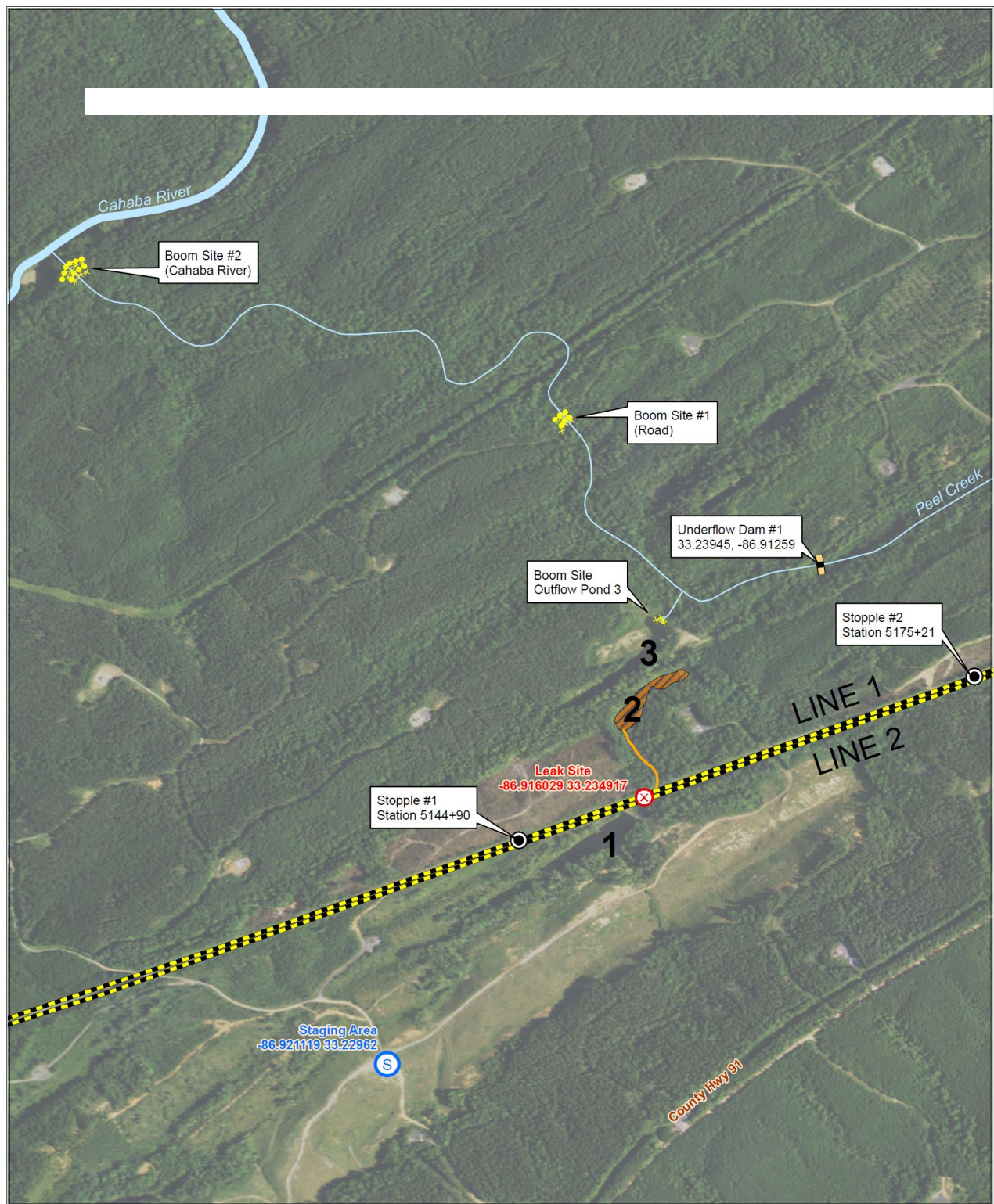
Colonial has removed 18260 gallons of liquid from Pond 2. The initial tactic of pumping directly into vacuum trucks is being transitioned to pumping into portable tanks first, with vacuum trucks hauling the material to other portable tanks at the staging area. Currently, Colonial has been unable to pump due to elevated vapor levels; no product removal has occurred for the last 30 hours. There is no exact figure for the total volume of liquid in Pond 2, but the pond is 1.2 acres in size. Conservative estimates put the total volume approximately 1,000,000 gallons of petroleum contaminated water (3 feet deep).

Sheen was reported yesterday on Pond 3. UC decided to augment the existing protection, building an underflow dam and emplacing additional boom at the outfall. Subsequent investigation of the sheen showed it was biological in nature. However, it is assumed there is some hydraulic connectivity between the two ponds. Colonial is investigating additional diversion/collection structures further along the currently-dry Peel creek bed prior to its confluence with the Cahaba.

EPA/GST is incorporated into Operations and air monitoring. OSC Williamson and 2 GST members spent today on site monitoring safety and progress. EPA/GST assisted Colonial with installation and planning of the Pond 3 augmentation and will continue to coordinate those efforts. OSC Englert is assuming Deputy Incident Commander role for EPA during the overnight shift, but will maintain a field presence. Two GST members will also assist with the overnight shift.

## **PLANNED RESPONSE ACTIVITIES**

- Continue to participate in UC
- Monitor removal activities
- Monitor safety air monitoring
- Review and monitor the contingency booms and diversion activities in preparation for future rain events. It should be noted that, based on the best available information now (which is limited due to terrain, vapors, and thick forest) there is little expectation for overtopping of the pond due to the small amounts of rain expected, based on NWS predictions.



### Legend

Colonial Pipeline



Staging Area



Leak Site



Stopple

### Boom Type

Hard Boom

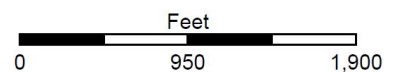
Soft Boom

Underflow Dam

Spill Plume

CR 91 Event

Situation Status Map



9/11/2016 @ 08:50