

# **Spill Investigation Program**

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Protecting a noisy landscape

When the landscape is quiet again....let those who follow be able to say, we did a good job.

Paraphrased from Governor Art Link October 11, 1973

# The Spill Investigation Team

## ● Full Time Spill Response

- Bill Suess – Program Manager
- Brian O’Gorman – ES III
- Scott Stockdill – ES II
- Kory Crowdus – ES II
- Taylor Souder – ES II

## ● Part Time

- Russell Martin (Air Quality)
- Brady Espe (Water Quality)

## ● Volunteers

- Air Quality
  - Sandy Washek
- Municipal Facilities
  - Ivana Striebel
- Waste Management
  - Emily Tintes-Schiwal
  - Kathleen Kangas
  - Brad Torgerson
- Water Quality
  - Michael Cooper
  - Pete Wax
  - Shawna Nieraeth
  - Derek Kannenberg





# Producer Assignments

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- Each Spill Team member becomes the point of contact for individual producers.
- Responsible for communication and follow-up with that producer.

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# Triage and Reporting

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- First step in the process
- Making sure everyone goes through the proper reporting process.
- Determine when a site is investigated.
- Assign site to proper agency or staff.
- Begin communication with the Responsible Party and other agencies.

# Who Responds?

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- NDIC – Spills that remain on E&P exempt facilities.
- MHA Nation – Spills within the Fort Berthold Reservation.
- NDDoH – All other spills
- All Agencies will support each other and work with federal agencies such as EPA, USFS, USFWS, USACE



# Emergency Phone

1-800-472-2121

- Environmental calls go through Emergency Services and State Radio.
- Phone is monitored 24/7.
- Myself, Karl Rockeman or Dave Glatt will determine if an immediate response is required.



# Emergency Response

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- At least one staff member on call every weekend.
- At least two staff members in the field during the week.
- Respond immediately to large spills and incidents that impact or threaten water resources or public health and safety.
- Maintain communication with all parties.
- Coordinate with other agencies as needed.



# Investigating a Spill

## WHAT DO WE DO?.....

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- At least two inspectors out each week
  - One North of Lake Sakakawea
  - One South of Lake Sakakawea
- Question we ask
  - Is there a risk to water or other resources?
  - Is there a risk to human or environmental health?
  - How do we assure these resources are protected?
  - What are the steps necessary for clean-up

## FOLLOW THE SCIENCE

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# Plan Review

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- ◉ What are you doing to rectify the impacts to the environment?
- ◉ Open to new ways of handling a situation.
- ◉ We will not approve plans, but will provide objections or comments.
- ◉ Suggest and recommend tactics to properly clean up a location.
- ◉ We will help where and when needed, but we will NOT become the consultant.

# Types of Sampling

- Soil Sampling
- Water Sampling
  - Surface Water
  - Ground Water
- Fish Sampling
- Biota Sampling



# Reasons For Sampling

## RESPONSIBLE PARTY

- Source Sampling
- Spill Investigation
- Site Delineation
- Site Monitoring
- Confirmation Sampling

## DEPARTMENT

- Environmental Protection
- Human Health Protection
- Unknown Responsible Party
- 10% Cleanup Verification
- Enforcement Action

# Enforcement Actions

- Letter of Apparent Non-Compliance
- Expedited Settlement Agreement
- Notice of Violation



# NOV Assessment Milestones

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- Release
- Failure To Report
- Not Contained
- Contained But Not Delineated
- Delineated But No Improvement
- Improvement But Still Below Standards





# Other Things To Consider

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- Speed of Response
- Severity of Spill
- Damage Caused
- Willfulness or Negligence
- Cooperation
- Previous NOVs

# Public Relations

- Communication with DES
- Press Releases
- Media Follow-up
- Communication with Other Agencies

It is important to remember that we work for and represent the citizens of North Dakota

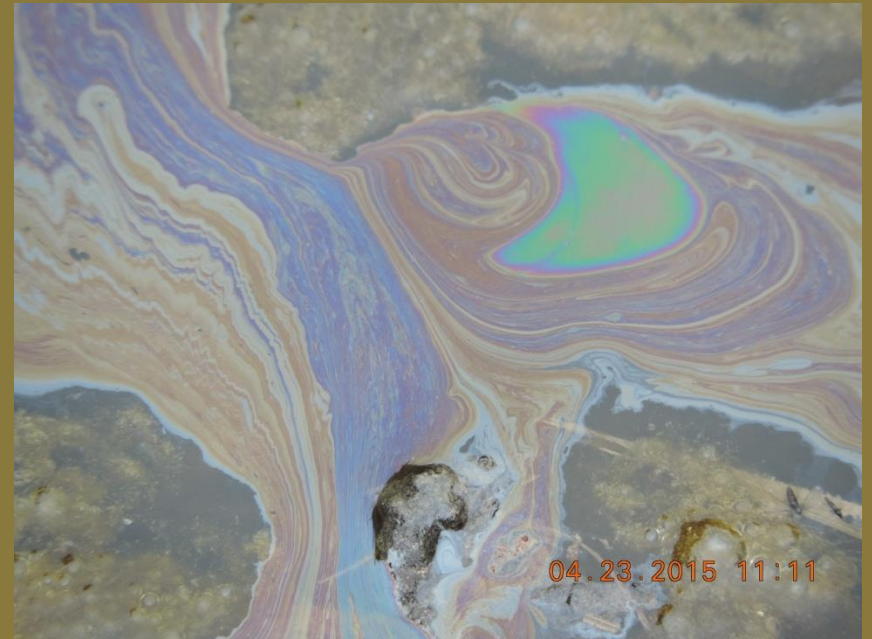


# Tesoro Pipeline Spill



# Blacktail Creek

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# Average Inspected Location

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# How the Oil Patch is Often Seen

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## **THE BAKKEN OILFIELD**



**YOU WILL NEVER FIND A MORE WRETCHED  
HIVE OF SCUM AND VILLAINY. WE MUST BE  
CAUTIOUS.**

# But Really

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Not as bad of place as you might expect

- Most of the people working in the oilfields are trying to do the right thing but just need a little guidance.
- Landowners in the oilfield are often looking for someone to talk to... and who will listen.

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# Goals

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- Protection of Public Health
- Safety of Personnel
- Protection of Water Resources
- Protection of Livestock
- Protection of Aquatic Life
- Protection of Agricultural Lands

# 2015 In Numbers

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- 2,003 Reported Spills
- 1,813 Outside MHA Nation
- 55% Remained on E&P Exempt Facilities
- NDDoH Responded to 822 Spills
- 65% of NDDoH Spills Closed
- Majority of Spills are Cleaned Up to Background
- The Department is Developing Cleanup Standards



# A Healthy Environment Is Cool





# A Quiet Landscape



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# Questions?

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North Dakota Department of Health

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NORTH DAKOTA  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH