

Oil Problem

Areas Off

Marin Coast

Thousands of volunteers, hundreds of Standard Oil Co. employees and the weather man all cooperated yesterday to ease the threat of disastrous oil contamination of Bay Area and ocean shores.

Philip Brubaker, assistant to the director of Standard's cleanup operations in Marin county, said two problem areas remained at mid-afternoon yesterday.

At Duxbury Reef (Bolinas), a patch of floating oil 50 to 100 feet wide and nearly 2000 feet long had moved in so close to the rocky shore that seaborne equipment could not reach it, Brubaker said.

Townspeople from Bolinas were working as best they could to clear the black, thick globs from the rocks, and Brubaker said, "We're trying to devise means to get the oil back out to sea far enough so our skimmer boats can clean it up."

AREA

The other problem area, he reported, was at Muir Beach, where a smaller ribbon of oil, 20 feet wide and perhaps 200 feet long, swirled in tidal currents which made it difficult to control.

Stinson Beach, however, was "in pretty good shape," he said: and residents around Bolinas Lagoon, the last blue heron rookery in the whole region, said makeshift booms (end-to-end strings of floating logs) have continued to save the lagoon from any serious inflow of oil.

And meteorologist M. L. Caldwell of the Weather Bureau said a large high pressure area off the West Coast — although drifting slowly southward — "is expected to remain far enough north to continue shunting Pacific storms into the Pacific Northwest."

A storm would add tremendously to clean up problems.

CLEANUP

Standard Oil's cleanup headquarters reported early yesterday afternoon that one of its two skimmer vessels had picked up approximately 200,000 gallons since daybreak, from the oil concentration offshore from Bolinas.

Of the total spill resulting from a Golden Gate collision

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of two tankers on Monday, half has been recovered, Standard said. The company said it had 700 workers on the cleanup job yesterday, in addition to the thousands of volunteers.

Much of the spilled oil, meanwhile, has been emulsified — suspended in the ocean water below the surface — outside the Golden Gate, Commander Gordon G. Dickman of the Coast Guard reported yesterday. "It's like a snowstorm where the flakes swirl around in huge masses, never touching the bottom," he said.

The Coast Guard will convene a hearing into causes of the tanker collision at 10 a.m. today, with the two skippers, Captains Morris E. English and Harry H. Parnell, as key witnesses.

At the mouth of Bolinas lagoon, saved in mid-week by day-and-night work by volunteers plus oil company and Marin county crews, a new double boom was under construction yesterday — to reach from the Stinson Beach sand spit to Bolinas.

It should be finished sometime today, Bolinas District Fire Chief Jose Silva reported, and will be faced with wire mesh extending above and below the water, to trap oil globs and oil-absorbing clumps of straw.

Meanwhile, he said, "there's no oil in the lagoon, and we're not too much worried at the moment unless we get a big storm." Aside from the large concentration of floating oil at sea off Bolinas late yesterday, the Coast Guard reported various other light streaks of thin oil, or patches of heavier globs and chunks, southward down the coast to Half Moon Bay and beyond — but no major crisis.

Coast Guard Commander Dickman said tidal currents had carried more than half the spilled oil out through the Golden Gate shortly after the ship collision, and that "the vast majority" of the patches and streaks that remained inside San Francisco Bay have already been cleaned up.

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