



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: April 17, 2009
District: 4 - Oakland
Contact: Lauren Wonder
Phone: (510) 715-6730 cell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FISHING VESSEL GROUNDED ALONG THE SAN MATEO-HAYWARD BRIDGE TO BE REMOVED THIS WEEKEND

PARTNER AGENCIES HAVE DEVELOPED SAFE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND STRATEGY

SAN FRANCISCO - Caltrans, the Coast Guard, and California Department of Fish and Game have developed a plan to remove the fishing vessel grounded along the San Mateo Bridge beginning tomorrow.

Caltrans has issued an emergency contract to remove the damaged boat, which is wedged under the bridge, and to repair the chipped concrete on the bridge rail. Flatiron Construction will repair the rail while Vortex Marine Construction will remove the boat from the water using a barge and crane.

Caltrans will close the right lane of westbound 92 on the bridge for a half mile in order for crews to work on the rail. Closures will be in place from 6 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. tomorrow, Saturday, April 18. The shoulder will continue to be closed after that to allow crews to continue to work through the night on the boat removal. If closures are necessary on Sunday, the same closure times will apply. The contractor intends to remove the boat completely before Monday morning.

Coast Guard, California Department of Fish and Game and other environmental agencies will be on hand to monitor any potential fuel release during the removal operations. Presently, there are booms around the boat to prevent spills.

Caltrans engineers will conduct further investigations of the bridge structure for any damage on the underside once the boat is removed. Light poles that were sheared off on Tuesday will be replaced at a future date when materials are available.

On Tuesday evening, the fishing vessel "Big Timber" lost propulsion and ran aground after colliding with the bridge during a storm that brought high winds and heavy seas to the bay. Two crewmembers aboard were rescued by the Coast Guard and the other crewmember climbed onto the bridge after the vessel struck it.

The Coast Guard contracted with the National Response Corporation to remove 1,300-gallons of diesel fuel, which was successfully recovered on Wednesday. As weather and sea conditions improved on Friday, contractors were able to deploy a network of hard boom at collection points





NEWS RELEASE

just north and south of the vessel. The containment and recovery strategy has been effective in removing any sheen created by oiled debris coming from the vessel.

Multi-agency assessment teams conducted shoreline surveys throughout sensitive environmental sites north and south of the vessel and have reported no oil spill impacts.

###

