

Stillwater Train Derailment Press Release

Reed Point, Montana (June 29, 2023) – 12:30pm

Unified Command has confirmed that crews have safely removed three cars from the river since the last update at 1 p.m. yesterday. One asphalt car was removed late afternoon on Monday and an additional asphalt car and a sulfur car were removed this morning. At this time, a total of five cars have been removed from the river and five cars remain. The five cars remaining in the river include two asphalt cars, two sulfur cars, and a car filled with scrap metal. Construction to the causeway continues, enabling the crews on site to continue their work to access and remove the remaining cars. Work is being performed on the eastern side of the bridge for contractors to begin transferring the contents of the remaining loaded asphalt cars on the eastern span of the bridge. This process will entail transferring the contents of the cars into stable railcars which will then be moved to a safe location away from the site.

Work continues on assessing downstream effects of asphalt to establish cleanup objectives and action plans. Focus is being given to mitigation efforts that will allow headgates and irrigation ditches to be safely reopened. Daily water and air quality testing and monitoring continues to be conducted at 10 downstream locations and three upstream reference locations. Results thus far continue to show no detectable levels of petroleum hydrocarbons and downstream sulfur levels are consistent with those being reported at the upstream sampling locations. At this time, there are no known risks to public drinking water or private drinking water wells.

The cause of the derailment is unknown and under investigation by the Federal Railroad Administration. Unified Command is focused on the response effort.

A public meeting was held last night at the Columbus High School Gym to provide an update on the status of the site and the response efforts currently underway. Unified Command plans to send out the next press release Friday afternoon.

To report observed asphalt material, submit information to: rpderailment@mtrail.com.

To report an oiled animal, call the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) Response Hotline at 888-ASK-OWCN (888-275-6926) and provide the animal's location, time last seen, and your contact information.

For more information, please visit the response websites at:

<https://response.epa.gov/stillwatertrainderailment>

<https://www.stillwatercountymt.gov/train-derailment/>



Causeway and construction equipment.



Rail car removal.

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This response is operating under a Unified Command which enables different jurisdictions and organizations to jointly manage and direct incident activities. Unified Command for this incident is comprised of representatives from Stillwater County Disaster and Emergency Services, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Montana Rail Link.

