

# Stillwater Train Derailment Press Release

**Reed Point, Montana** (July 5, 2023) – 12:00 p.m.

Construction activity and preparation work continued Tuesday evening as bridge reconstruction efforts ramp up. Additional resources continue being brought on site to assist with the bridge work. All impacted rail cars involved in the derailment have been moved to a dedicated staging area where they will be cleaned and processed for safe disposal.

Environmental crews continued expanding cleanup and retrieval efforts of asphalt material, with additional resources deployed on the water. As of Tuesday evening, over 12,000 pounds of asphalt material has been recovered. Cleanup efforts continue to focus on areas of highest concentration, which have been identified at multiple points immediately downstream from the derailment site. The assessment area extends 240 miles downstream with the goal to cleanup as much asphalt material as retrievable, while limiting the impact to the ecosystem.

The Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) did observe and collect a second dead animal impacted by the asphalt material on Tuesday, a garter snake. Environmental crews continue to look for and monitor for wildlife impacts daily.

Unified Command would like to thank all members of the public for continuing to share any sightings of asphalt material. This has been a tremendous help in collection efforts and greatly appreciated. A public drop-off location has also been stationed at Holmgren's Fishing Access for those members of the public who have retrieved material on their own. For any future sightings of asphalt material, please continue to notify via the email address noted below.

Daily water quality testing has continued to show no detectable levels of petroleum hydrocarbons and downstream sulfur levels remain consistent with those that have been reported at upstream sampling locations. Due to these consistent results, and no known risks to public drinking water or private drinking water wells, water quality testing will no longer be performed daily.

“This is good news, we have not seen any impacts to water quality” said Chad Anderson, On Scene Coordinator for the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. “We are able to place our focus on cleanup and recovery.”

Unified Command continues to communicate with local stakeholders and agencies as the situation evolves. A second public meeting will be held Thursday, July 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the Columbus High School Gym, 433 N 3rd St, Columbus, MT 59019 and via Zoom. For more information and details please visit: <https://response.epa.gov/stillwatertrainderailment>.

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Members of the public are encouraged to continue reporting sightings of any asphalt material they observe to the email below and continue to avoid touching the material with bare skin. This email can also be used for any impacted landowners to start the process of filing a claim. To report observed asphalt material, submit information to: [rpderailment@mtrail.com](mailto:rpderailment@mtrail.com).

Anyone with information about oiled wildlife are encouraged to call the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) Response Hotline at 888-ASK-OWCN (888-275-6926).

For more information, please visit the response websites:  
<https://response.epa.gov/stillwatertrainderailment>  
<https://www.stillwatercountymt.gov/train-derailment/>

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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.

