



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

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Director of Division of Water Quality

Drain Captures Groundwater Seeping into Willard Bay

Most Recent Data Shows No Contamination Outside Containment Booms

A french drain constructed to intercept contaminated groundwater flowing into Willard Bay appears to be working.

“Our latest sample results indicate that contaminant levels both within and outside the shoreline booms are decreasing,” explains Walt Baker, director of the Division of Water Quality (DWQ). “Levels outside the booms are not at concentrations that pose a threat to human health or wildlife.”

Continued trace levels of diesel-related hydrocarbons in surface water samples last week suggested to DWQ scientists that groundwater flowing into the Bay had been contaminated by the spill. Since the installation of the drain, levels of contaminants have decreased. DWQ anticipates these reductions in trace contaminant levels will continue over time.

Groundwater contamination from the pipeline leak will not jeopardize the park’s drinking water, which is supplied by the city of Willard. Preliminary assessments by the Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Health suggest that fish from Willard Bay will likely be safe to eat. DWQ is considering sampling of fish for diesel-related contamination to support this finding.

Monitoring wells will be constructed to evaluate the extent of groundwater contamination over the long term.

“We will continue to vigorously sample Willard Bay waters to monitor the level of contaminants,” added Baker. “Protecting the park’s water quality is our number one

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priority.”