

Groundings and management of vessels in Puerto Rico



Low Profile Vessel in Mona Island, Puerto Rico

Day 1- 31 August 2023

DNER staff could identify that the vessel aground the South coast of Mona was a low profile vessel

It was spilling diesel, although due to strong surge a sheen could not be observed

Extremely strong odors of fuel

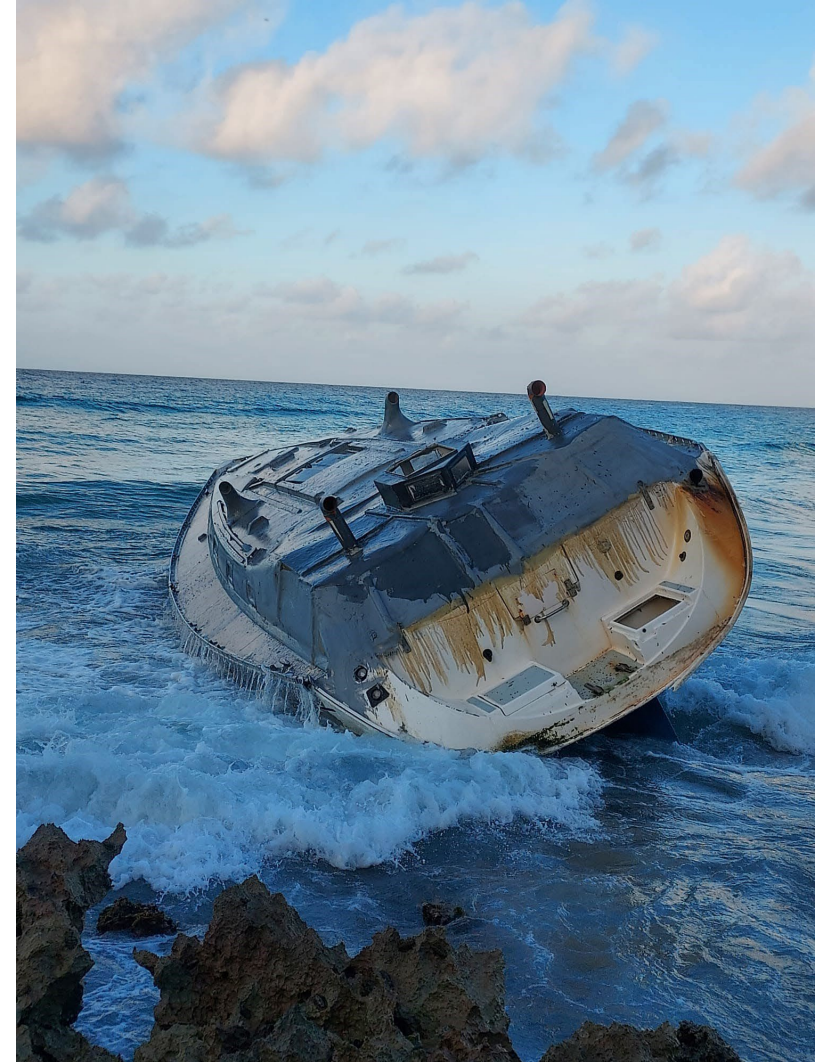
Dead marine creatures in the vicinity

Downstream of it, one of the main nesting beaches of Hawksbill in the peak of nesting season

In water, the only two reported alive colonies of *Dendrogyra cylindrus*, threatened coral species being proposed to classify as endangered

Photos, videos and information sent to the USCG

USCG making arrangements to get staff on scene next day



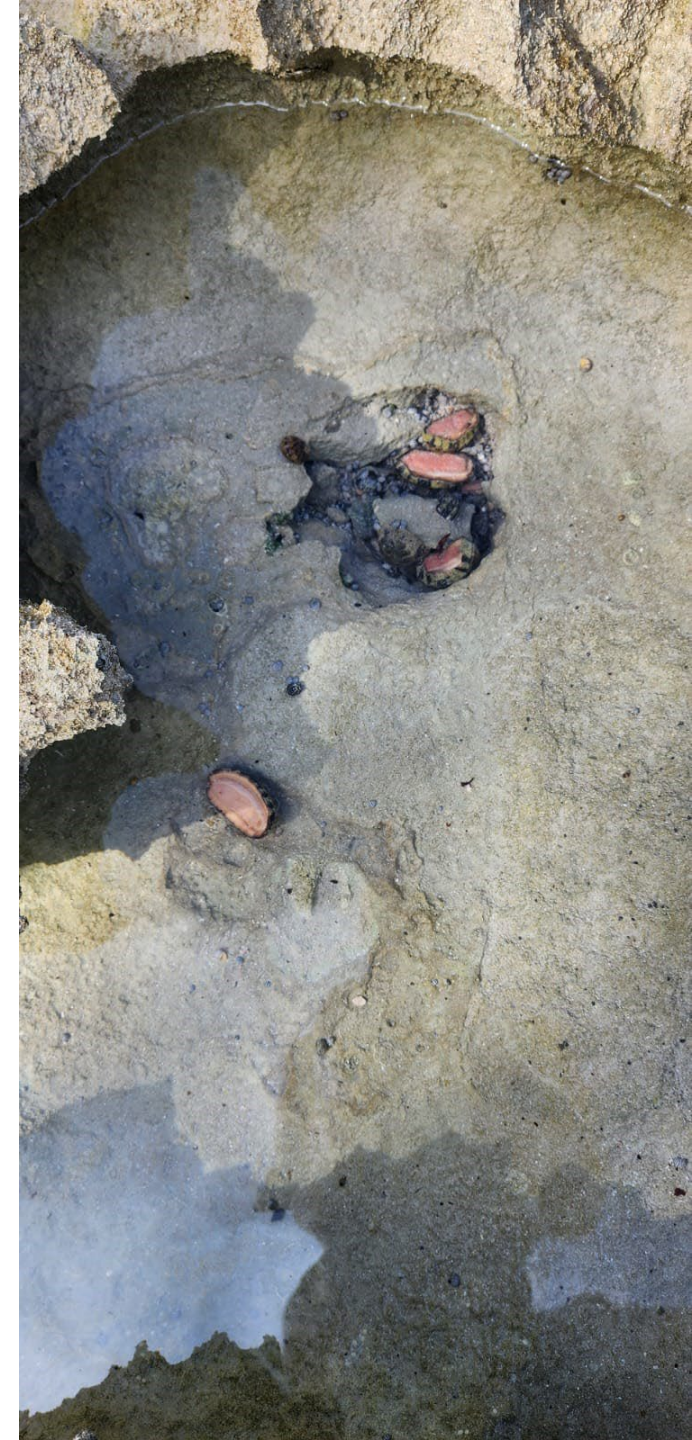
Day 2- 1 September 2023

USCG reported that Clean Harbor was the company hired to go to Mona but they had an issue with their equipment. They were trying to make it for next day. USCG requested additional photos and status.

DNER reported diesel odor still extremely strong and inquired about other options, companies, bringing gear by helicopter due to weather conditions

USCG- No other options and asking if we had an idea on amount of fuel discharged and update pictures

DNER reports no form of being able to determine the amount discharge, highlight active nesting of Hawksbill, females arriving at beach and hatchlings coming out. Vessel conditions seem to be the same



Day 3- 2 September 2023

DNER sent more pictures of conditions

USCG reports that Clean Harbors is still having equipment problems.

They were working on subcontracting another company and coordinating an overflight for next day, yet there was an overflight that same day

USCG reporting receiving information on 100 gallons spill- not sure where it came from as we were the only ones going to check the boat daily

USCG staff indicating that booms were going to be deploy, yet seems that was not correct.

Communication seemed to be erratic so DNER tried to establish communication between USCG Captain and DNER Secretary



Day 4- 3 September 2023

USCG informed they will arrive next day to the scene by helicopter

Another contractor from Florida was being hired for the management of fuel (Resolve Marine) with back up from Seatow in water for staff transportation



Day 5- 4 September 2023

Two USCG staff arrived at Mona Island

Resolve staff with gear and equipment arrived by helicopter

DNER provided transportation and brief on access pathways, protected resources, native poisonous plants and Hawksbill nests location

Access path was marked by DNER staff

Staging area established

Resolve estimated 500-600 of diesel on board. Bad sea conditions



Radios do not transmit to the camp, thus staff without communication on site

Day 6- 5 September 2023

Calls to discuss the response

Information that DNER doesn't want the vessel removed because of the damages to resources, we requested clarification.

The information didn't come from DNER, but it seems that the federal agencies were considering this.

Fuel removed from the vessel

Conference call- The best path for adequate removal of all contaminated debris is to remove the vessel



Day 7- 6 September 2023

USCG asked DNER to submit a letter requesting assistance to remove the vessel in order to enable its removal, confirm that no other resources were available to remove it. Letter submitted the same day.

Discussions on the best way to remove the vessel in a secure manner takes place

DNER was asked if the agency could take possession of it once on main land to dispose of it, to which the agency agreed.



Day 8- 7 September 2023

Due to potential hurricane passing, the staff is remove from Mona Island

Day 15- 14 September 2023

USCG informs that they consider their response completed and highlighting a comment made during the email discussions by a NOAA staff that stated that the damage from a light sheen of diesel would be local and shorted lived with diesel not being a highly persistent oil and a lighter fuel oils.

Even though the trustees stressed the concern for the remaining residual oil and debris, the letter only acknowledges the debris concern and concludes that the trustees had no strong concerns for the oil.

Day 28- 27 September 2023

DNER reports the vessel still on the same position, and strong fumes coming out of the vessel



Day 56- 26 October 2023

Vessel moved from the original site by surge, hull started braking against the rocks

Spill unavoidable

Further impact to critically endangered Hawksbill
Debris removal by other venues after 56 days

Quote for vessel removal before it moved from site- ~\$85,000

AREAS TO IMPROVE:

Trustees communication and understanding



Hurricane response ESF10- Fiona

- Inventory of approximately 25 impacted vessels
- Requested support in different forms
- Last request rejected because it was the owner's responsibility to remove the vessel
- Vessel removal responsibility of a vessel whose owner could not be identify becomes the responsibility of the state



Hurricane response

Abandoned vessel: expired registration for 6 months or more; owner could not be located through the database information; illegally tied to a mooring buoy; at a pier without the proper authorization; grounded, sank or partially sank; constitute a threat to public health or to ecosystems





THANKS

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