

# Olympic Pipe Line Explosion

Whatcom Creek - June 10, 1999

More than 277,000 gallons of gasoline flowed into Hannah and Whatcom creeks in Bellingham.



The fuel pipeline near the city water treatment plant had ruptured, leaking gasoline that ultimately exploded when ignited and burned.



Gasoline continued to burn in the creek after the explosion. Water treatment plant<sub>(right)</sub> and area where pipeline ruptured.



# Blast site after local first responders put fire out.



The fire left 1.5 miles of Whatcom Creek and its tributaries smoldering.



# Aerial views of Whatcom Falls Park and Valencina Street Bridge following pipeline rupture, explosion and fire.



# Fire closes Valencia and Woburn street bridges.



# Whatcom Creek near I-5.



# Scorched creek bank and house virtually destroyed by fire near Valencia Street Bridge.



# Whatcom Creek empties ash, dead fish and debris into Bellingham Bay.



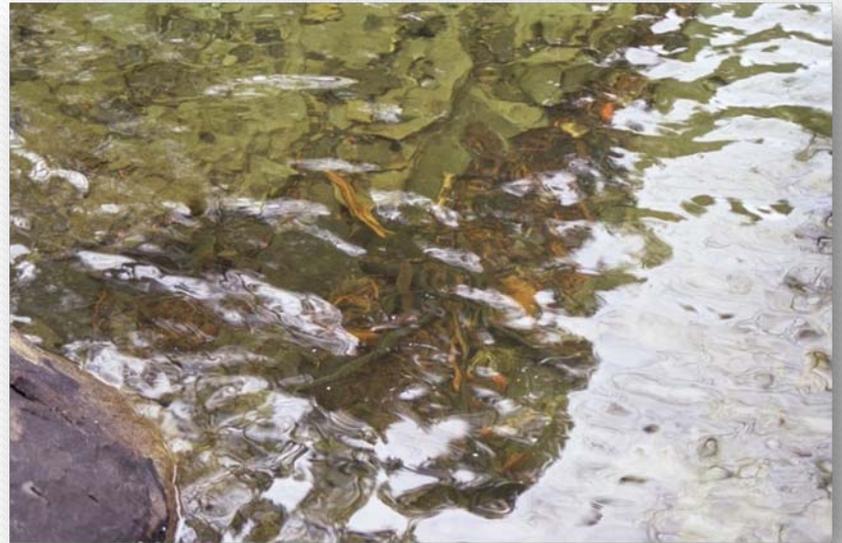
# Fire destroys Hanna(left) and Whatcom(right) creeks.



# Extensive fire damage to upper Whatcom Creek.



Creek area next to burned house.  
Gasoline sheen and dead crayfish  
rise to creek surface.



Local first responders set out boom to absorb spilled gasoline.



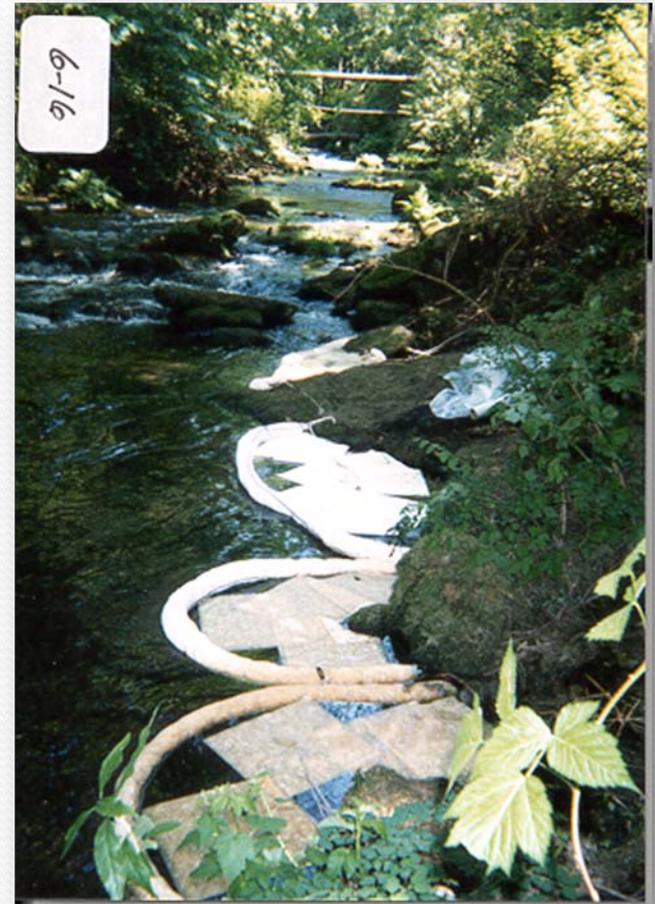
Absorbent boom set in place.  
Creek covered in ash.



Series of absorbent booms in creek;  
responders deploy  
sediment trap to  
capture residual fuel.



# Drum skimmer and absorbent boom set up to remove fuel.



Absorbent pads in creek bed. Backhoe moves debris to improve habitat.



Spider equipment releases gasoline trapped in creek bottom by agitating stream bed.



# Dead fish found in Bellingham Bay estuary near mouth of Whatcom Creek.



More dead fish flushed into estuary,  
including lamprey and salmon.



Some areas upstream escaped being burned; transition where fire occurred is clear.



# Response teams assessing environmental damage to watershed.



# Evaluating stream damage and sampling for invertebrates, critical for fish survival.



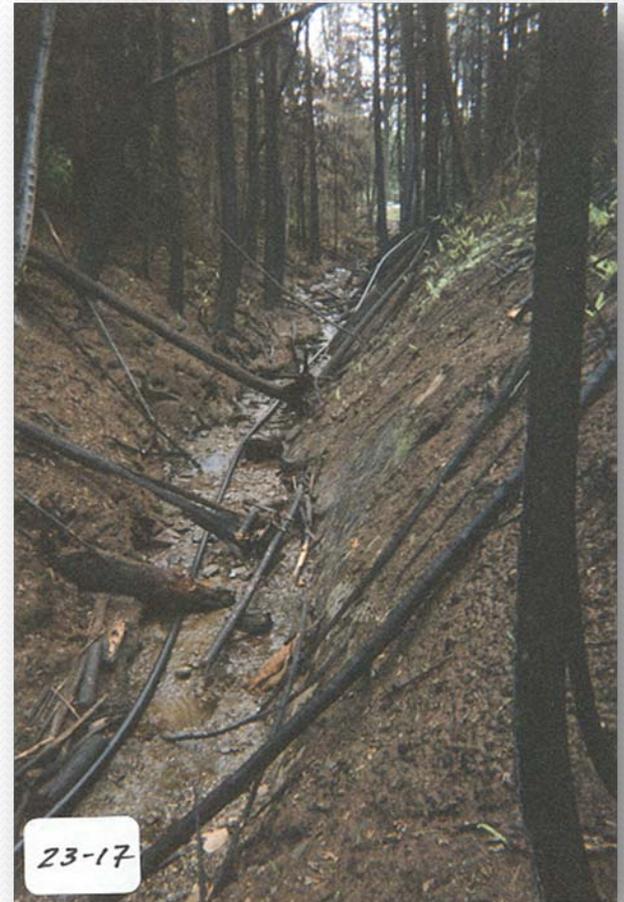
No invertebrates were found throughout affected area.



Responders find explosion and fire wipe out all vegetation and wildlife in watershed.



# Destruction to Whatcom and Hanna creeks.



23-17

Responders reflect on long,  
depressing day in the field.

