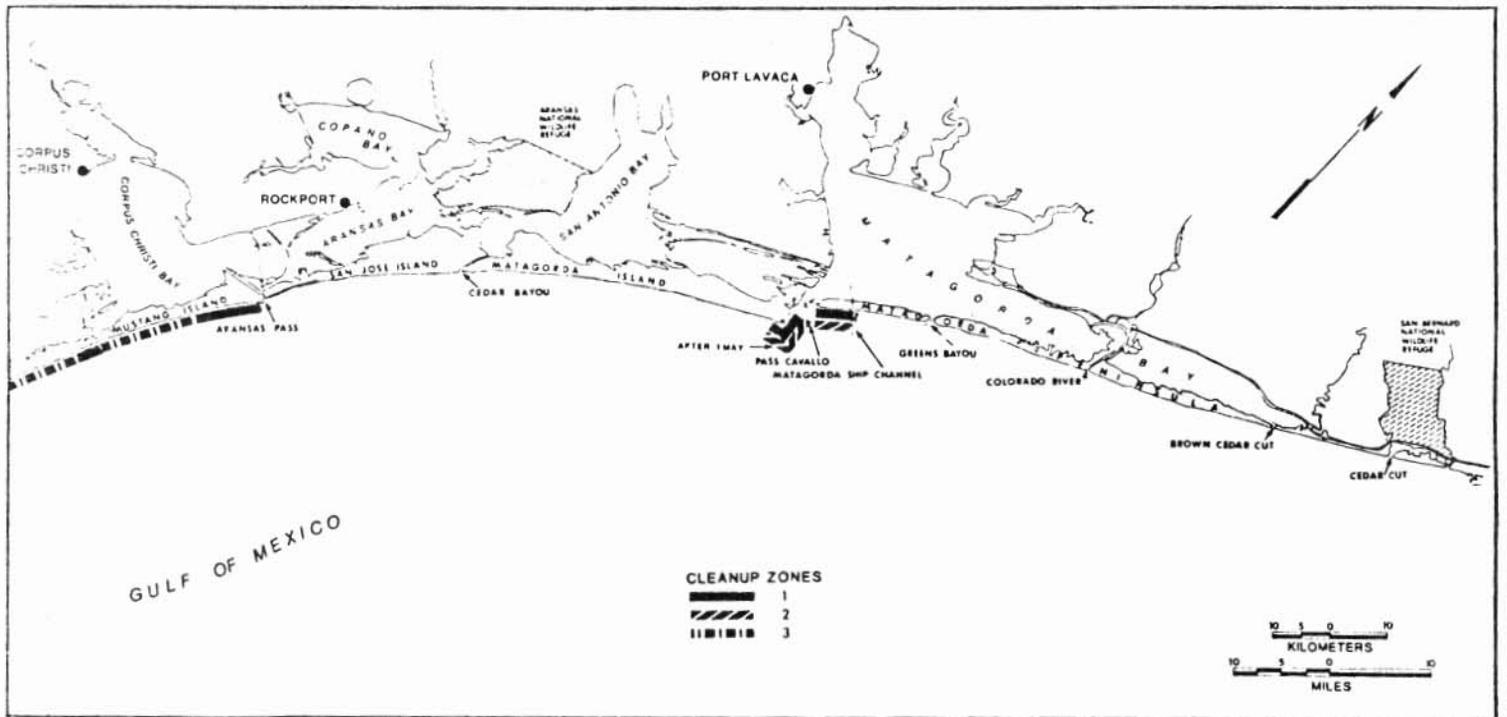
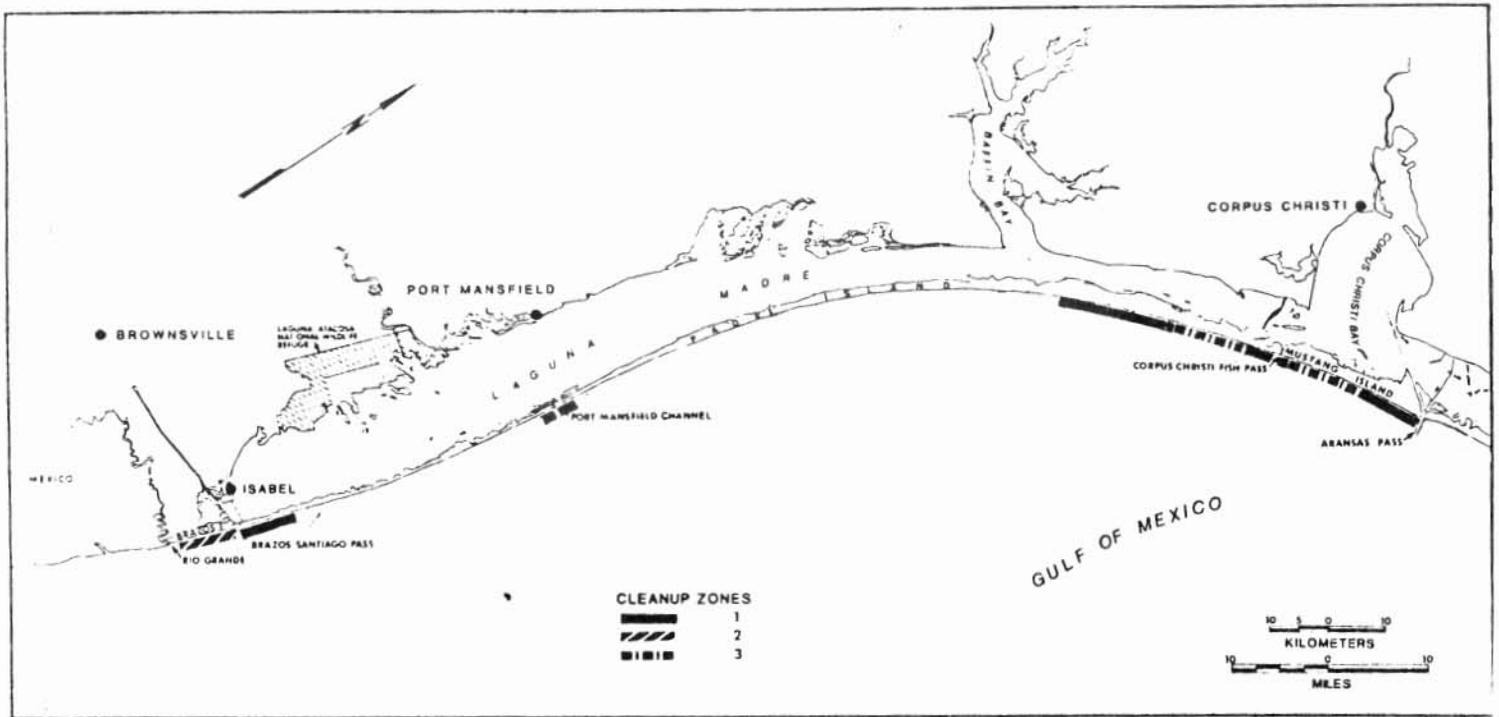


CLEANUP MEASURES

The oil from the IXTOC well arrived in the form of tar balls around the 7th of August. When the oil arrived the Coast Guard Open Water Oil Containment and Recovery System (OWOCS) was in place, together with backup booms and skimmers. Cleanup crews used vac-alls, graders, and front-end loaders to scrape the oil from the beaches. As indicated earlier in this report, the policy of the RRT was to keep the oil out of the bays and estuaries and to use the barrier islands as a natural boom. The oil on the high use beaches was removed as quickly as possible and the other beaches were left to naturally biodegrade. To date the U.S.C.G. has removed 13,757 cubic yards of oiled sand and tar balls, 46,975 gallons of an oil/water emulsion, and 55,080 pounds of oiled debris.

Criticism arose from the policy of the RRT especially from Dr. Roy Hann from A&M University. He felt that if the oil was left on the beaches, cleanup at a later date would be more difficult because the oil would mix with the sand and seaweed. Hann felt if the oil was not removed from the remote areas, storms and tides would redeposit the oil on other Texas beaches. Dr. Hann prepared for this committee an extensive proposal entitled "Potential Components of a More Effective Oil Pollution Control Program for the State of Texas."

While the most practical and short term solution of oil on the beaches is to remove the oil from the sand, the most ecological method is the cleaning of the sand which is a long-term process. The committee has heard testimony to the effect that it is increasingly dangerous to remove sand from an already eroding beach line. During the cleanup operation reports were received that cleanup crews were removing up to six inches of sand when it was only necessary to remove two inches. The unnecessary removal of sand diminishes the Gulf beaches which are a public resource. Dr. W. L. Fisher, Director of the Bureau of Economic Geology at Austin submitted a report to the Texas Department of Water Resources which covers the feasibility of using beach cleanup materials (a mixture of oil and sand) for dune nourishment and stabilization.



LEGEND

Zone 1 - Cleanup should take place when oil coverage in the intertidal region reaches 15%.

Zone 2 - Cleanup should take place when oil coverage in the intertidal region reaches 85%.

Zone 3 - Cleanup at the discretion of OSC.

BEACH CLEANUP ZONES

On January 29, 1980, an advisory board consisting of Federal and State agencies as well as personnel from the Research Planning Institute met in Corpus Christi to reevaluate measures to be taken if the oil from the IXTOC well once again threatened the beaches of Texas. The consensus of this group was:

"It is proposed that a conservative approach be taken to beach cleanup during periods of chronic oil impact. Cleanup operations should be based on economic considerations as well as the physical and biological characteristics of the shoreline. In those areas where cleanup is undertaken, the methods employed should be practical from both a physical and economic perspective."²²

The Advisory Board recommended that major cleanup activity should be concentrated in regions of high recreational usage or areas in close proximity to entrances through the barrier island system. Lower levels of cleanup are indicated for areas of moderate recreational usage, however, for the majority of the coastline no cleanup is recommended during periods when impacts may be expected to continually occur.²² (See Chart, p. 65)

Dick Whittington, in a letter to Captain Gerald Hinson, OSC, on behalf of the Texas Disaster Council, stated that "cleanup should be extended to include areas where a single impact occurs with no anticipation that another impact will occur and to areas where oiling occurred on multiple days but has finally ceased and where it will not recur ever or for an extended period of time."²³

FEDERAL/STATE LOCAL POLICIES

The U.S. Water Quality Act of 1977² created a national contingency fund to pay for cleanup costs; and does not cover economic damages. The Federal Small Business Association makes long-term, low interest loans available both for physical damage to private property and economic injury to private businesses.

The State Disaster Act of 1975⁴ authorizes state agencies to accomplish whatever is necessary to alleviate the effects of any disaster including oil spills. The Disaster Act does permit "arms length" assistance to local governments and individuals when assistance for physical damage is authorized by the federal government. The