

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 8 am Pacific
Tuesday, November 20, 2007

PRESS CONTACT PERSONS

Richard Charter, Defenders of Wildlife
707-875-2345, 707-875-3482

Warner Chabot, Ocean Conservancy
415-830-3215, cell: 510-375-2141

Deb Self, San Francisco Baykeeper
510-882-1882

John Amos, SkyTruth
304-260-8886

**NEW SATELLITE PHOTO OF SAN FRANCISCO
BAY SHOWS IMPACTS OF OIL SPILL**
Unique image released today by conservation groups

San Francisco – A coalition of conservation organizations today released a satellite photo of the San Francisco Bay that dramatically illustrates the extent of the November 7 bunker fuel spill from the container ship *Cosco Busan*.

The new photo shows numerous dark slicks around the Bay itself, as well as on the nearby open ocean, consistent with reports of oil appearing around the region and with beach closures at that time. The image was taken by the Radarsat-1 satellite, operated by MDA Geospatial Services Inc., at 6 a.m. Pacific time on November 12. Processing of the image data was sponsored by Defenders of Wildlife, Ocean Conservancy, San Francisco Baykeeper, and SkyTruth. Image processing and analysis was conducted on behalf of the sponsoring conservation groups by SkyTruth.

“We need to learn from the recent spill in order to increase society’s efforts at prevention. That’s why we’ve worked together to obtain this image and show it to the public,” said Richard Charter, with the Government Relations Program of Defenders of Wildlife. “San Francisco Bay and the surrounding coastal waters represent one of the most productive and sensitive marine ecosystems on the planet, and we cannot leave their fate to the whims of oil spills moving on currents, tides, and wind ever again.”

“This photo confirms that containing the oil in the first two hours is 100 times more important than chasing it all over the San Francisco Bay for the next two weeks”, said Warner Chabot, Vice President of Ocean Conservancy. “Our failure to contain the oil has created a catastrophe with a likely \$100 million dollar price tag.”

“This new image seems to confirm Baykeeper’s experience patrolling the Bay by boat this week, where we witnessed widespread oil contamination,” said Deb Self, Executive Director of San Francisco Baykeeper. “If the oil has spread as widely as this satellite image suggests, we may be looking at long-term harmful impacts to our critical tidal marshes in the South Bay.”

The Radarsat image shows San Francisco Bay as it looked on November 12, five days after the *Cosco Busan* struck a support pillar of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, spilling 58,000 gallons of heavy fuel oil. According to John Amos, President of SkyTruth and an experienced radar analyst, the satellite image shows dark gray streaks and patches that are consistent with the appearance of oil slicks, including both very thin “sheens” and possibly thicker, isolated pockets of oil that remained in the area five days after the spill.

The satellite image demonstrates that floating oil was widely transported around the Bay area in just a few days time, and that as of November 12, oily patches apparently remained in many areas. Built-up urban areas, port facilities, and bridges appear very bright in the image, while clean water is medium-gray.

The Radarsat image can be viewed and downloaded for publication or video broadcast at the following website:

http://skytruth.mediatools.org/objects/view.acs?object_id=11286

Photo credit line should read: Photo provided by Defenders of Wildlife, Ocean Conservancy, San Francisco Baykeeper, and SkyTruth, from image taken by the Radarsat-1 satellite, operated by MDA Geospatial Services Inc.

Image by SkyTruth, Copyright 2007 -- All rights reserved. RSAT-1 image data copyright MDA Geospatial Services Inc. Please contact SkyTruth (info@skytruth.org) for more information. JPEG format, 100dpi at 14" x 17" (a 200 dpi version is also available).

x x x x