

## Pipeline foes: Oil reached Caddo

By Glenn Evans [gevans@news-journal.com](mailto:gevans@news-journal.com) | Posted: Tuesday, November 4, 2014 4:00 am

Pipeline watchdogs are crying foul over an oil producer's claim that oil spilled from a ruptured pipeline did not reach Caddo Lake.

The company, Sunoco Logistics Partners, has said since the Oct. 13 spill that none of the 4,000 barrels of crude oil bleeding from a 20-inch pipeline from Longview had reached the state's largest natural lake.



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The spill occurred in Tete Bayou, a tributary of Caddo Lake on its Louisiana side less than 2 miles west of Mooringsport, Louisiana.

By Sunday, the company reported, 3,450 barrels of oil had been recovered from the bayou, which empties into Caddo at Hawley's Arm.

The company on Monday revised its spill estimate to 4,500 barrels.

Sunoco spokesman Jeff Shields said Monday evening that company and Environmental Protection Agency officials had inspected booms in the lake and discovered only naturally occurring water stains.

"No oil has been detected in Caddo Lake by the Unified Command operation that has included U.S. EPA, Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana State Police and Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office," Shields wrote in an email response to the newspaper.

The email contradicts Kathy DaSilva, an advocate with the anti-Keystone XL Pipeline group, Tar Sands Blockade, who with a colleague toured the waters off Hawley's Arm last Wednesday.

"We decided to take a canoe out and see for ourselves," DaSilva said. "We paddled about a half an hour. We started noticing a very, very heavy smell that was burning our nostrils."

The pair needed to wade at one point, DaSilva said, "and our legs got coated in oil. Very clearly, what we were seeing in the lake and on our skin was oil — despite the reports. It is entering from Tete Bayou. ... We saw zero water bugs, we didn't hear any frogs or see any life."

DaSilva said she was frustrated that both federal and Louisiana environmental officials appeared to have taken Sunoco's word that none of the crude reached Caddo Lake.

Sunoco's Mid-Valley Pipeline carries crude from Longview to Michigan.

The Tar Sands Blockade members shot still photography and video of what they saw.

"It should not be up to citizens to get in and check up," DaSilva said. "I was believing that (claim) myself, and I expected us to find nothing — and it was there. Anybody that wants to check up on this can just get a canoe."