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**Barge Collision Causes Bridge Damage and Oil Spill in Galveston, Texas**

A barge collided with the Pelican Island Causeway in Galveston, Texas, on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, around 10 a.m., resulting in significant damage to the bridge and an oil spill. The incident closed the 3,239-foot-long bridge, the only road connecting Pelican Island with Galveston Island, until further safety assessments could be made.

According to Galveston County Judge Mark Henry, the barge, owned by Martin Petroleum, was under tow when it broke loose and struck the bridge. The impact caused a section of the attached railroad trestle to collapse. Two crew members aboard the barge went overboard but were successfully recovered from the water.

The collision led to an oil spill from the barge, which has a capacity of 30,000 gallons of oil, although the exact amount of the spill remains undetermined. The US Coast Guard has responded to the scene to assess and manage the spill.

The closure of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway affects around 6.5 miles of maritime traffic along the Texas coast. The Texas Department of Transportation is currently evaluating the structural damage to the bridge. Local officials, including those from Texas A&M University at Galveston, which is situated on Pelican Island, are coordinating to provide necessary support, including on-campus dining for those stranded due to the incident.

In a related event, the Dali cargo ship collided with the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore earlier this year. The striking incident caused a bridge segment to collapse, resulting in six fatalities.

The investigation into the Galveston collision continues with no immediate timeline for reopening the causeway.