



GULF OF MEXICO NEWS

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May 2010



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NOAA Gulf of Mexico News

NOS Deepwater Horizon Spill Response

As response to the Deepwater Horizon incident continues, many offices within the National Ocean Service are contributing existing expertise to response efforts:

- Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services: [Deepwater Horizon Incident: Delivering Ocean and Weather Data](#)
- Integrated Ocean Observing System: [Ocean Observing Key to Oil Spill Response](#)
- National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science: [Tracking Contamination Following the Deepwater Horizon Incident](#)
- National Geodetic Survey: [Supporting the Deepwater BP Incident Response with a View From Above](#)
- NOAA's Coastal Services Center: [Impact Assessment Following the Deepwater BP Spill](#)
- Office of Coast Survey: [NOAA Nautical Charts Display Deepwater BP Oil Spill Projections](#)
- Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management: [Helping Gulf States Prepare for Potential Oil Spill Impacts](#)
- Office of Response and Restoration: [Responding to the Deepwater BP Spill](#)

For daily updates on the incident, please visit: [Office of Response and Restoration Deepwater Horizon Incident page](#).

Information on Fishing Closures

For current information on the federal fishery closure and other information regarding the BP Oil Spill, please go to the [Southeast Regional Office website](#).

This website is updated daily at approximately 12 noon EST (11 CT) with a "No Change" message or a revised closed area map that would go into effect at 6 PM EST (5 PM CT) that day. [> read more](#)

Fisheries

- [Fish Stocks in the Gulf of Mexico \(pdf\)](#)
- [Seafood Safety \(pdf\)](#)
- [Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill General Fact Sheet \(pdf\)](#)
- [Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: Federal Fishery Closure Frequently Asked Questions \(pdf\)](#)
- Report Oiled Seafood 1-888-INFO FDA (1-888-463-6332)

State Closure Information

Click on the map of each state for more information regarding individual state response to the oil spill:



Science Meeting Convened to Study Dispersant Use and Ecosystem Impacts of Dispersed Oil in the Gulf of Mexico

May 28, 2010

Thursday, over 50 experts and practitioners from government, academia and industry finished a two-day meeting looking at the potential long-term impacts of the prolonged use of large volumes of dispersants in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response efforts in the Gulf of Mexico. This is the third time NOAA and EPA have gathered top scientists to discuss dispersant use since the spill began. EPA and NOAA scientists are conducting rigorous ongoing monitoring and analysis of the effectiveness and toxicity of the dispersants used.

Should data indicate that the dispersants are causing significant environmental damage that outweighs the benefits of their use, EPA and the Coast Guard reserve the right to discontinue use.

Although the crude oil is more toxic than the authorized dispersants, much is unknown about the long term environmental impacts of dispersants when used in these unprecedented volumes on the surface and in the subsea. Because of this and due to the effectiveness of subsea applications, EPA and the U.S. Coast Guard directed BP to significantly ramp down their use of dispersants. BP has complied and has significantly reduced dispersant use.

The purpose of the two-day meeting was to provide input to the Gulf of Mexico Regional Response Teams (4 and 6) on the use of dispersants and the effects of dispersed oil going forward in the Deepwater Horizon incident. The meeting also identified possible monitoring protocols to be used in the event of continued aerial applications to surface water and subsea use.

"This conference provided us with additional scientific information about potential impacts of prolonged dispersant use that can help guide decision-making as we continue to support the U.S. Coast Guard's response to and clean up of this spill," said Craig Carroll, EPA Co-Chair of the Region 6 Regional Response Team.

"It is the consensus of the group that up to this point, use of dispersants and the effects of dispersing oil into the water column has generally been less environmentally harmful than allowing the oil to migrate on the surface into the sensitive wetlands and near shore coastal habitats," said Nancy Kinner, University of New Hampshire co-director of the Coastal Response Research Center.

“The meeting is adding to our knowledge, both in terms of helping identify key questions that should be asked and helping identifying new, quality sources of information and relevant expertise to draw on as we make these difficult decisions,” said Charlie Henry, NOAA’s Scientific Support Coordinator for the Unified Command Center in Roberts, La.

“The thoughtful scientific input from this meeting will prove valuable to responders as we continue to do everything possible to minimize damages caused by this unprecedented spill,” said Robert Pond of the US Coast Guard.

This was the third science summit in three weeks that builds on the unprecedented mobilization of science the federal government has brought to this incident. The Administration has engaged some of the world’s brightest scientific minds from the public and private sectors to mitigate the oil’s impact and ensure an effective response.

The results of the meeting will be presented in a report to the Regional Response Teams within the next week. [The report](#) is available on the [CRRC website](#).

NOAA Assists With Multi-Agency Effort to Decontaminate Ships Passing through Oil Spill

May 28, 2010

NOAA has begun work to survey a new ship anchorage site at the mouth of the Mississippi River in the Gulf of Mexico for ships to undergo inspection and oil decontamination before entering ports.

The contract magnetometer survey of a proposed alternate anchorage site would ensure the safety of ships, their crew, and the marine environment by making sure that there are no buried pipelines in the proposed area that would be ruptured by ships lowering their anchors. [NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey](#) is working with the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy to establish the alternative anchorage area.

Shipping vessels are currently facing increasing time delays and other challenges as they attempt to avoid the oil slicks caused by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Keeping maritime commerce going is important to many businesses, such as farmers who need to export their crops through the Gulf ports and the millions of stores throughout the country that rely on a constant flow of imports.

The survey will take place at the Southwest Pass, the primary deep draft entrance to the Mississippi, which is used extensively by ships bringing commercial goods to the U.S. The Lower Mississippi River ports are important players in the billion-dollar U.S. maritime economy.

Once the area is surveyed and the U.S. Coast Guard gives clearance, ships needing hull inspections for oil contamination from the ongoing spill could use this anchorage area for waiting.

So that work can start immediately, NOAA awarded the task order to C&C Technologies of Lafayette, La., under the agency’s existing hydrographic services contract. The team from C&C Technologies will deploy aboard a vessel under the command of the Naval Oceanographic Office. The results should be provided to the U.S. Coast Guard by June 1 at the latest, and possibly earlier. NOAA will update its navigational products based on the results of this survey and the Coast Guard’s determination of the area’s suitability as an anchorage location.

The Lower Mississippi River ports export over 50 million metric tons of corn, soybeans, and wheat each year, more than 55 percent of all U.S. grains inspected for shipment. Grain market participants and Midwestern farmers need efficient port operations to export product, as do segments of the economy that rely on timely import arrivals. NOAA's work in ensuring efficient maritime transportation during this ecological crisis is key to a healthy U.S. economy.

NOAA is also developing new chart products for Deepwater Horizon oil spill response. While NOAA's nautical charts are essential for safe navigation throughout the oil spill region, the agency continues to respond to specific charting requests that meet response needs. NOAA cartographers are supplying coastline contour data – depicting underwater surfaces – needed for planning boom placement. NOAA is also producing special nautical charts depicting points for water testing.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us on [Facebook](#).

NOAA Research Ship Gordon Gunter Expands Gulf Mission

Vessel to conduct research in BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill response

May 28, 2010



NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter*.
[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

The NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter* conducting sampling in the Gulf has expanded its mission to use its sophisticated sonar equipment and other scientific instruments to help define the subsurface plume near the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill site and adjacent area. The mission is a collaborative project among NOAA, academia and the private sector.

Previously conducting plankton sampling in the south Gulf important to establish baseline conditions related to the oil spill, *Gordon Gunter* will begin additional work using its sonar capabilities that can scan subsurface features.

Also aboard is a graduated net used for sampling fish larvae at different depths. The 224-ft. *Gordon Gunter* will conduct observations for fisheries, water, and acoustics sampling in the oil spill area and to the south.

“NOAA continues to provide assets on land, sea, and in the air to help the federal response in this effort,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter* has unique capabilities that will help us better understand and define the subsurface plume that is near the oil spill site.”

The *Gunter* will sail to the vicinity of the well head and begin a systematic survey using its 18 and 38 kHz sonar to define the shape and extent of the underwater plume. University of New Hampshire Joint Hydrographic Center scientists onboard will explore the feasibility of using mid-water mapping sonar to image the submerged plume in combination with new software that could result in 3-D images of what is happening underneath the surface.

If potential plumes are identified, the Gunter will deploy a unique autonomous underwater vehicle provided by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. Called the Gulper, the vehicle will take discrete water samples at various depths to allow precise characterization of any oil, dispersants, or other substances in the plume.

As the Gunter is sailing south, the R/V Weatherbird II from the University of South Florida in St. Petersburg will work up the Loop Current taking water samples and using advanced technology to detect the presence of oil products in offshore waters. The Weatherbird II will transit towards the Gordon Gunter.

“Making changes to a ship’s schedule and science mission requires a lot of cooperation and work to identify the science plan and get the proper personnel and equipment on board,” said Lubchenco. “We are fortunate we were able to expand the Gunter’s mission so quickly and we are grateful that our partners from the University of New Hampshire, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute and the University of South Florida were able to mobilize rapidly.”

The Gordon Gunter primarily supports [NOAA’s Fisheries Service](#). The ship is homeported in Pascagoula, Miss. The Gordon Gunter operates primarily in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. The ship normally conducts scientific surveys of the health and abundance of fishery resources and marine mammals. The vessel is operated by the [NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations](#).

NOAA Expects Busy Atlantic Hurricane Season

May 27, 2010

An “active to extremely active” hurricane season is expected for the Atlantic Basin this year according to the [seasonal outlook](#) issued today by [NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center](#) – a division of the [National Weather Service](#). As with every hurricane season, this outlook underscores the importance of having a hurricane preparedness plan in place.

Across the entire Atlantic Basin for the six-month season, which begins June 1, NOAA is projecting a 70 percent probability of the following ranges:

- 14 to 23 Named Storms (top winds of 39 mph or higher), including:
- 8 to 14 Hurricanes (top winds of 74 mph or higher), of which:
- 3 to 7 could be Major Hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of at least 111 mph)



Hurricane Ike, 2008.

[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

“If this outlook holds true, this season could be one of the more active on record,” said [Jane Lubchenco](#), Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “The greater likelihood of storms brings an increased risk of a landfall. In short, we urge everyone to be prepared.”

The outlook ranges exceed the seasonal average of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes. Expected factors supporting this outlook are:

- **Upper atmospheric winds conducive for storms.** Wind shear, which can tear apart storms, will be weaker since El Niño in the eastern Pacific has dissipated. Strong wind shear helped suppress storm development during the 2009 hurricane season.
- **Warm Atlantic Ocean water.** Sea surface temperatures are expected to remain above average where storms often develop and move across the Atlantic. Record warm temperatures – up to four degrees Fahrenheit above average – are now present in this region.
- **High activity era continues.** Since 1995, the tropical multi-decadal signal has brought favorable ocean and atmospheric conditions in sync, leading to more active hurricane seasons. Eight of the last 15 seasons rank in the top ten for the most named storms with 2005 in first place with 28 named storms.

“The main uncertainty in this outlook is how much above normal the season will be. Whether or not we approach the high end of the predicted ranges depends partly on whether or not La Niña develops this summer,” said Gerry Bell, Ph.D., lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center. “At present we are in a neutral state, but conditions are becoming increasingly favorable for La Niña to develop.”

"[FEMA](#) is working across the administration and with our state and local partners to ensure we're prepared for hurricane season," said [FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate](#). "But we can only be as prepared as the public, so it's important that families and businesses in coastal communities take steps now to be ready.

These include developing a communications plan, putting together a kit, and staying informed of the latest forecasts and local emergency plans. You can't control when a hurricane or other emergency may happen, but you can make sure you're ready."

The president recently designated May 23-29, 2010, as [National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#). NOAA and FEMA encourage those living in hurricane-prone states to use this time to review their overall preparedness. More information on individual and family preparedness can be found at [www.Ready.gov](#) and [www.hurricanes.gov/prepare](#).

NOAA scientists will continue to monitor evolving conditions in the tropics and will issue an updated hurricane outlook in early August, just prior to what is historically the peak period for hurricane activity. NOAA’s mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us on [Facebook](#).

NOAA, Navy Partner to Monitor Ocean Conditions Near Spill Area

May 26, 2010



Personnel aboard the NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson* prepare to launch a Naval Oceanographic Office glider as part of a Gulf of Mexico Loop Current research cruise. [High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson* is underway on a mission to deploy a variety of U.S. Navy ocean monitoring instruments in the vicinity of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The floats, drifters and gliders will aid researchers in monitoring the surface and deep currents that are distributing the oil. Of particular interest is the Loop Current and its potential to spread the oil to a much wider area.

“NOAA is proud to partner with the U.S. Navy in the ongoing effort to provide scientific data critical to understanding the Loop Current and the marine environment in the Deepwater Horizon spill area,”

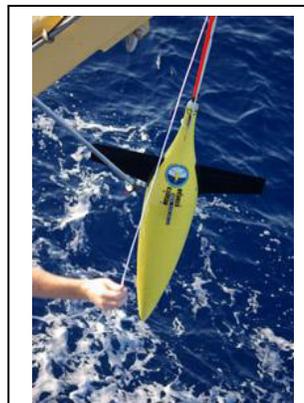
said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson*’s mission will add significantly to the growing body of information NOAA is gathering on the Gulf of Mexico’s dynamic environment in collaboration with our federal agency and university partners.”

NOAA Ship *Thomas Jefferson* was deployed to the Gulf of Mexico in early April to conduct surveys to update the nautical charts and to baseline benthic habitats in the [Flower Gardens National Marine Sanctuary](#). Operated by the [NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations](#), the 208-ft. hydrographic vessel has a crew of 36 NOAA Corps officers, survey technicians and wage mariners. The ship is homeported in Norfolk, Va.

The Naval Oceanographic Office, located at Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis, Miss., operates the instrumented drifters, gliders, and floats in support of U.S. Navy operations worldwide. The data collected from these instruments will be shared with the scientific community and used to improve the accuracy of circulation models in the Gulf of Mexico.

A NOAA Lockheed WP-3D Orion also has been gathering data on the Loop Current while other NOAA aircraft have been mapping the spill’s extent and surveying marine mammals in the affected area.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth’s environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources.



Closeup of a Naval Oceanographic Office glider. [High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

NOAA Baseline Sampling of Sediment, Shellfish and Water Sets Stage for BP Oil Spill Damage Assessment

Data of unaffected waters is critical to measuring ecological impact of Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill

May 24, 2010

In response to the Deepwater BP oil spill, [NOAA's Mussel Watch program](#) has mobilized three teams of scientists to test shellfish, sediment and water at 60 locations along the Gulf of Mexico from the Florida Keys to Brazos River, Texas.

The mission of this Mussel Watch effort is to collect additional baseline data on contamination in strategic areas of the Gulf shoreline so that if the oil hits a particular area, new samples can be taken that would reveal the full impact of the spill.

These preliminary samples will be tested for 60 oil-related compounds—to include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, known as PAHs. NOAA will use this data as part of the natural resources damage assessment that determines the type and amount of restoration that is required for the Gulf.

Mussel Watch has been monitoring contamination along the nation's coasts for more than 25 years, and has long-term data on the Gulf of Mexico that will also be used to assess the effects of the oil spill. The program's name refers to scientists' use of shellfish to test for ambient contamination. When shellfish feed, they filter water through their bodies. Any contaminants present in the water concentrate in their tissues. This gives researchers a good idea of what is present in the water and also what is entering the food chain.

Using small boats close to shore, or in some cases wading through water to pry shellfish off of shallow reefs, scientists have been working 12 hours or more each day to collect samples before oiling occurs.

“We are working virtually non-stop to ensure we're prepared for any scenario,” says Terry McTigue, one of the Mussel Watch researchers. “We have to keep going, making sure we are maintaining the scientific integrity of our samples.”

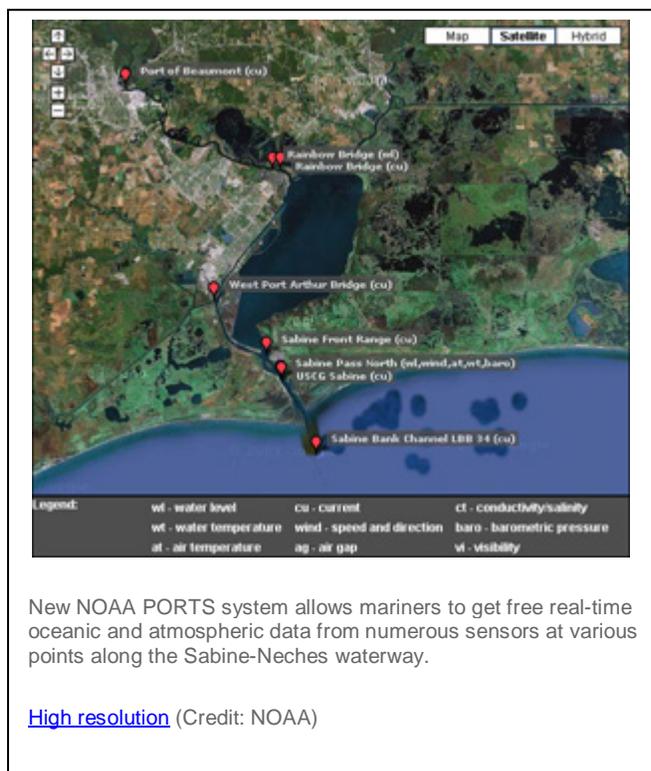
Oil from the BP spill has a unique chemical “fingerprint” of constituent PAHs and other compounds that should allow Mussel Watch researchers to distinguish contamination from the spill from that coming from other sources.

New NOAA Ocean Observing System Improves Safety and Efficiency of Ships at the Sabine-Neches Waterway in Texas

May 21, 2010

Mariners can now get free real-time information on water level, wind, and weather conditions for the Sabine-Neches Waterway of Beaumont and Port Arthur, Texas, from a new NOAA ocean observing system.

The [Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System \(PORTS®\) at Sabine-Neches](#) provides observations of tides, currents, water and air temperature, barometric pressure, and wind speed, gusts and direction through an easy-to-use [Web portal](#) and by phone at 888-257-1859 (toll free).



Administered by the [NOAA Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services](#), PORTS can significantly reduce the risk of vessel groundings and increase the amount of cargo moved through the waterway by enabling mariners to safely utilize every inch of dredged channel depth. The system also allows large ships to time their arrivals and departures more efficiently.

“PORTS provides mariners from near and far with the tools – and the confidence – needed to move valuable goods through this critical waterway,” said NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco. “NOAA is committed to working with the Sabine-Neches maritime community to provide quality tools and services to ensure the continued flow of commerce.”

In addition to the Sabine-Neches PORTS, 19 other PORTS are located throughout the nation. Estimates of economic benefits attributed to the systems range from \$7 million per year for Tampa Bay to \$16 million per year for

Houston-Galveston, according to studies conducted in those regions.

“The Sabine-Neches PORTS array has given our local maritime industry a great increase in situational awareness,” said Clayton Henderson, assistant general manager for the Sabine Neches Navigation District. “Knowing the currents and water levels ahead of arrival greatly increases efficiency and safety for our mariners.”

Governed by the Jefferson County Waterway and Navigation District, the Sabine-Neches Waterway is a set of interlocking river channels and canals extending from the Gulf of Mexico to Port Arthur, Beaumont, and Orange, Texas. The principal cargoes moving through the waterway’s ports are crude oil, petroleum products, and chemicals.

The Sabine-Neches Waterway also is home to one the nation’s newest liquefied natural gas terminals, making it a key transit point for crude ships bringing oil to refineries. The waterway holds 45 percent of the nation’s liquefied natural gas import capacity, and it supplies 20 percent of U.S. gasoline east of the Rockies. With PORTS, the Sabine-Neches Waterway will be better equipped to safely and efficiently move commodities through its waterways.

Real-time ocean conditions generated by PORTS are used by local officials, as well as port and marine pilot organizations, to determine if the waterway is open and safe for navigation. The newly installed PORTS at Sabine-Neches has already shown its value as a decision support tool. Data from the PORTS allowed an early reopening of the waterway following a January 2010 ship collision. More recently, during a low tide event at the waterway in March, real-time water level data alerted mariners of extremely low water levels. With confirmation from the new PORTS data, the Sabine Pilots put in a 37-foot vessel restriction (down from 40 feet) and held some ships offshore - an unprecedented move to for safe navigation thus preventing potential groundings.

OCRM Helps Gulf States Prepare for Oil Spill

May 7, 2010

In its role as NOAA's liaison to state Coastal Zone Management and National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRS) programs, OCRM is helping states prepare for potential impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. OCRM is facilitating communication among the Gulf Coast NERRS, State Coastal Management Programs, Coastal Services Center, and local Sea Grant representatives to make sure that all partners in the region know of each other's activities and have access to the latest information and NOAA resources. The Gulf Coast NERRS and Coastal Management Programs are actively involved in the spill response and are working with their State Natural Resource Trustee.

OCRM's Marine Protected Areas Center created the map, "U.S. MPAs in Proximity of the Deep Horizon Oil Spill," that shows the boundaries of MPAs that could be affected by the oil and other data (management agency, conservation focus, size, etc.). The map is posted on the Web at www.mpa.gov.

OCRM's Coral Reef Conservation Program has also posted information on oil spill impacts on coral reefs - http://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutrcp/news/featuredstories/may10/oilspill_coral/.

CPD Staff Discuss Beneficial Use of Dredge Material with Gulf Partners

OCRM's Coastal Programs Division staff and Division Chief traveled to the Gulf coast April 27-29 to participate in several meetings on the beneficial use of dredge material and meet with Gulf coast partners. On April 27th, staff attended the Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Habitat Conservation and Restoration Team workshop on regional sediment management, which included a discussion of the reuse of dredge material for habitat restoration and other beneficial uses.

A trip to Deer Island with the Mississippi Coastal Management Program (CMP) provided an example of how dredge material has played an important role in restoring valuable habitats. The Mississippi CMP, in cooperation with several partners, has devoted significant resources, using dredge material, to restore Deer Island, an important coastal preserve, to its size before Hurricane Katrina. (See article in [Coastal Management News](#)). The Division Chief also met with the Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to talk about next steps in resolving long-standing issues between Louisiana and federal agencies related to beneficial use of dredge material. The Louisiana CMP objected to the Army Corps of Engineers' determination that proposed dredge activities that do not involve beneficial reuse are consistent with the state's coastal policies.

OCRM staff also met with several programs based at NASA's Stennis Space Center, including U.S. EPA Gulf of Mexico Program Office, NOAA Gulf Coast Services Center, and the Northern Gulf Institute, to learn more about their programs, regional priorities, and partnership opportunities. The Coastal Management Programs in the Gulf are playing an important role to ensure dredge material can be reused to benefit coastal environments when feasible.

Texas Gets Help from NOAA in Responding to Harmful Algal Bloom Outbreak

A bloom of *Dinophysis* (a toxic algal species) in the western Gulf of Mexico prompted the Texas Department of State Health Services to temporarily close many areas to shellfish harvesting. *Dinophysis* produces toxins that can cause severe gastric distress in people who eat affected shellfish. The state was alerted to the presence of this bloom by researchers and volunteer monitors sponsored by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS). NCCOS is also responsible for developing a harmful algal bloom forecast for the western Gulf. In September 2010, this forecast is planned for transfer to NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services. Recent outbreaks of *Dinophysis* have prompted scientists to consider modifying the forecast to detect the species. At present, the forecast provides advance warning for *Karenia brevis*, a more common toxic species in the Gulf known for its distinctive red blooms. In the last three years, *Dinophysis* blooms have appeared twice in the western Gulf of Mexico. NOAA is helping Texas to detect these outbreaks and to stay alert for outbreaks of the more common *K. brevis*, which has plagued the state for many years. Contact: Quay Dortch Quay.Dortch@noaa.gov.

Mobile Bay Surveys Aid in Development of Gulf of Mexico Circulation Model

NOAA's Office of Coast Survey (OCS) conducted hydrographic surveys off the coasts of Alabama and Mississippi over the past 30 days, collecting bathymetry data that will set the foundation for a new northern Gulf of Mexico circulation model. The joint project (managed by OCS, the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, and National Geodetic Survey) was originally a proactive effort to support predictive capabilities in oil and hazardous material spills, planned well before the BP oil spill. In addition to providing data useful in planning or responding to oil spills, the new circulation model will improve forecasts for harmful algal blooms in the northern Gulf of Mexico, and will contribute to more accurate models for inundation from storm surge, tsunamis, and sea-level rise. For more information, contact [Rich Patchen](#).

Gulf of Mexico Climate Outreach Effort Initiated

A workshop held in late April in Florida marked the beginning of a long-term effort to engage coastal communities in adaptation planning. Following scientific information and perspectives from community leaders, attendees identified strategies for outreach and opportunities to collaborate. An online group was established for continued dialog after the workshop. Furthermore, a working group was established to craft a common message related to sea level rise. A second workshop is planned for next year. The workshop was facilitated by the NOAA Coastal Services Center and hosted by the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Regional Team and the Sea Grant programs from the Gulf states. For more information, contact [Heidi Recksiek](#).

Specialized Products Developed to Support Oil Spill Response

In order to support the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill response efforts, the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) has modified existing products to display real-time data and predictions in the Gulf of Mexico. CO-OPS has reengineered its hurricane-based product, the [NOAA Storm QuickLook](#), to include an Office of Response and Restoration spill graphic and provide a detailed view of CO-OPS water levels and meteorological data in potentially affected areas. CO-OPS has also developed a specialized display of Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®) data from Gulfport, Pascagoula, and Mobile Bay PORTS. Using MyPORTS, a customizable PORTS application, CO-OPS has created a display of [current speeds and directions](#) as well as [weather observations](#) in the spill region. In addition, CO-OPS and the Office of Coast Survey's Development Laboratory are accelerating a development project of a high-resolution hydrodynamic model for the northern Gulf of Mexico coast. This model covers the coastline from the Rio Grande River in Texas to Pensacola, FL, and produces forecasts of water levels and currents out to 48 hours.

Other NOAA News

NOAA's Modernized Positioning System Key to Improved Mapping, Emergency and Land Planning

May 13, 2010

NOAA's [National Geodetic Survey](#) – the official U.S. government source for determining precise latitude, longitude and elevation – is undergoing a modernization effort that takes into account advances in GPS and other technologies. The effort is important to all activities requiring accurate positioning information including levee construction projects, the design of evacuation routes in hurricane-prone areas and the forecast of sea-level rise in coastal communities. The modernized National Spatial Reference System will take even greater advantage of newer technologies and better track changes in position and elevation over time to improve and update digital maps.

The proposed changes will affect civilian-federal mapping authorities, as well as state and municipal governments that have adopted the National Spatial Reference System. A Federal Geospatial Summit held at NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring, Md. marked the beginning of a transparent dialogue with users to alleviate concerns and help plan far in advance for these necessary changes to infrastructure and operating methodologies.

“The reference frame in the past was hampered by being held static in time on an Earth that is constantly changing,” says Juliana Blackwell, director of NOAA's National Geodetic Survey. “The new methodologies better capture changes, such as subsidence or sea level rise, and the improved points of reference benefit everyone using positioning data for the foundation of their work.”

A modernized reference system will allow users to easily calculate accurate positions using a survey-grade GPS receiver in conjunction with a scientific model of Earth's gravity field. In 2009, a NOAA commissioned, independent socio-economic study estimated the value of these modernization efforts to

be \$4.8 billion over the next 15 years, including \$2.2 billion in avoidance costs from improved floodplain management.

“An improved vertical datum means elevation measurements will become more accurate and less expensive, helping the National Flood Insurance Program to reduce the impacts and losses caused by flooding,” said Paul Rooney, a Mapping Technology Specialist at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

MPA Federal Advisory Committee Delivers Recommendations to NOAA and DOI

On May 3, the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee (MPA FAC) formally transmitted a set of recommendations to Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco, and Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Thomas Strickland. The recommendations were developed at the April 20-22 MAP FAC meeting in Charleston, South Carolina.

Recommendations focus on climate change in the ocean and how the national system can help foster resilience to climate change impacts. The include: designing MPA sites, MPA networks and the national system of MPAs to be ecologically resilient to the impacts of climate change; evaluating and adaptively managing MPA sites, MPA networks and the national system in response to climate change. The Committee also transmitted a set of recommendations on a “Vision for the Cultural Heritage Resources Goal of the National System of MPAs,” which outlines the Committee’s vision of how the national system can benefit cultural heritage resources. A complete copy of the [recommendations](#) is available on www.mpa.gov.

OCRM-led Special Issue of Oceanography Now Online

Under OCRM’s leadership, the June issue of Oceanography, the magazine of The Oceanography Society (TOS), was guest edited by NOAA. The special issue on marine renewable energy is now posted on the TOS Website. Staff from OCRM, which developed and led the project, NMFS, and NOS, in partnership with the Oregon State University, prepared the publication. An introduction by NOS Acting Assistant Administrator David M. Kennedy launches the magazine, which includes articles on some of the scientific, economic, human, environmental, and regulatory aspects of marine renewable energy. Authors from academia, industry, government, and commercial fishing contributed articles and op-eds. The hard copy of the issue will be released in June, in time for distribution at Capitol Hill Ocean Week, where this year’s theme is clean energy and a healthy ocean. Read the Web version at of the June issue of Oceanography at <http://www.tos.org/oceanography/issues/current.html>.

UNH Stormwater Center 2009 Data Report Is Now Available

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) Stormwater Center 2009 Biannual Data report is now available. Created to support stormwater decision makers with a range of expertise, this report combines data from the Center's independent evaluation of stormwater treatment system performance with basic information about system function, design, and implementation. This edition also includes outcomes of the Center’s

targeted research into topics such as cold climate performance of systems and the impact of pavement seal coating on water quality.

The Center is unique in its ability to evaluate the water quality treatment and water quantity management performance of stormwater systems in a side-by-side setting. Its research field site is designed to test a range of systems, from low impact development style approaches to manufactured devices.

The report was produced with the support of the Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology (CICEET). It is one of several tools the Center uses to communicate the results of its research to coastal communities interested in designing stormwater projects that protect water resources and improve resilience in a time of rapid development and more frequent and intense storms. For more on the UNH Stormwater Center and its work, visit their web site,

www.unh.edu/erg/cstev. Download the report at:

http://ciceet.unh.edu/news/releases/unhsc_report_2009/report.pdf.

Expanded Coastal County Snapshots

The Coastal County Snapshots tool has recently been expanded to cover most coastal counties in the contiguous United States and Hawaii. This product gives coastal managers an instant picture of a county's exposure to flooding by providing information on county demographics, infrastructure, and landscape in easy-to-understand Web-based charts and graphs that can also be downloaded and printed as a report. In addition, users are provided with actions they can take to help address flooding in their communities.

While this product was originally designed for use at the county level, it can also be used at the state level to help in regional assessment and resilience planning. The NOAA Coastal Services Center has been working with the National Association of Counties to develop and increase the use of the [Coastal County Snapshots tool](#).

In the Gulf States

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Deeply Concerned About Effects of the BP Oil Spill Incident

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is deeply concerned about the potential environmental impacts the BP oil spill incident on the Gulf Coast region. Each Gulf state is implementing an emergency response plan, and due to the strong Gulf States alliance, agencies are coordinating to address the uncertain future of the region in the wake of the oil spill. Ongoing activities of the Alliance will support future mitigation actions related to water quality and the habitats impacted by this incident. The Alliance also offers its sympathies for those injured and unaccounted for after the explosion. For details, read the Alliance news release [5/6/2010 - Gulf of Mexico Alliance United to Address Effects of the BP Oil Spill Incident](#).

The [Gulf of Mexico \(GOM\) Sea Grant oil spill website](#), hosted by the four GOM Sea Grant programs, provides visitors with access to a wealth of data concerning the BP oil spill. Website content will be continually updated, and visitors should check back often for new and revised information.

The Alliance encourages the public stay updated on this unfolding event by following latest information on the [Joint Information website](#). To report oil on land, or for general Community and Volunteer Information, please call 1-866-448-5816.

For regional oil spill efforts, view the [Response, Recovery, and Restoration](#) page. More information is also available for Gulf state contacts and news at <http://www.gulfallianceeducation.org/index.php>.

The [Gulf of Mexico Alliance](#) (GOMA) is a partnership of the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. Partnerships in Mexico have also been established. GOMA has the goal of significantly increasing regional collaboration to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. Environmental education is one of six priority issues. All are regionally significant and can be effectively addressed through increased collaboration at local, State, and Federal levels.

Environmental Education Projects Awarded in Five U.S. Gulf States

Outdoor, experiential learning increased in the Gulf region.



DAUPHIN ISLAND- The Gulf of Mexico Alliance awarded grants to local agencies, educational and non-profit organizations, within the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The projects will educate people of all ages about coastal issues and stewardship. Overall, \$200,000 was distributed among fifteen projects.

As the result of a shared vision for a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico region, the States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas formalized the Gulf of Mexico Alliance in 2004. The Alliance recognizes the economy and quality of life for

citizens of the Gulf are linked to its ecological health. Through the collaborative leadership of local, state and federal government partners, and the active participation of businesses and non-governmental organizations, the Alliance is addressing six priority issues facing the Gulf region. *The Governor's Action Plan for Healthy & Resilient Coasts*, endorsed by all five Governors, outlines specific actions needed to achieve the Alliance's mission. To view the Action Plan and learn about the priority issues visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

The projects being carried out directly address goals outlined in the *Governor's Action Plan*. One project is using an innovative approach by having children teach their parents while aboard a research vessel. Texas Sea Grant conducts a Floating Classroom and students who participate are invited back to a "Saturday at Sea" for a chance to educate their parents. Another grant recipient, the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Discovery Hall Programs, received funding for a summer teacher workshop, *Marine Applications of Science and Technology (MAST)*. Teachers from Alabama will be able to attend for free and learn how to use the tools of geospatial data and visualization to incorporate in classroom activities. As stated above, fifteen projects were funded, for a full list of projects visit: <http://www.gulfallianceeducation.org/>

John Dindo, Environmental Education State Lead for Alabama, commented: "Providing ways for people to learn about and help the Gulf of Mexico stimulates a sense of empowerment and excitement. Planting marsh grass to restore an eroded wetland, using GPS technology for ocean discovery, and exploring coastal science through art are just some of the ways we're getting people excited."

The Alliance's Environmental Education Network works to raise awareness about priority issues affecting the Gulf's health and provides education on how to keep the Gulf resilient. The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill is a reminder of our connection with the Gulf of Mexico, of the precious resources it provides, and the need for protection and restoration. John concluded, "Each of us has the ability to learn from this oil spill and take action. Cultivating greater coastal awareness through outdoor, hands-on learning can help progress a healthier future for the Gulf region."

Funding Details:

The Dauphin Island Sea Lab (DISL), on behalf of the State of Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Coastal Section, wrote and successfully received a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coastal Services Center (NOAA CSC) for environmental education with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA). This grant allows funding for Gulf-wide environmental education. This press release presents year two of the award. In the 2009 cycle, seventeen projects were funded totaling \$225,000. Contact: Valerie Kleinschmidt, Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Specialist, vkleinschmidt@disl.org. www.gulfallianceeducation.org.

New Gulf of Mexico Alliance Diversity Website

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance recently launched the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Networks' Underserved and Underrepresented Populations Website <http://www.gulfalliancediversity.org>. The GOMA EEN Diversity website promotes the need for engaging underserved and underrepresented populations in environmental education and showcases successful programs being carried out in the Gulf Region. The website provides educators with resources, networking and funding opportunities, idea generation and insight into the realm of working with Underserved and Underrepresented Populations.

Alabama Initiates Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Responds to Threats Following Deepwater Horizon Accident

Since the Deepwater Horizon accident last month the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) has begun the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process. The primary purpose of the NRDA program is to identify and assess damage to natural resources arising from environmental contamination. The program provides the opportunity to ensure that injuries to natural resources are mitigated and damages are recovered. Additionally, the ADCNR has been assisting with response activities of the Unified Command in Mobile including assisting in preparation of the plans to stage and place oil booms, identification of critical natural resources and coordination of ADCNR response efforts.

ADCNR is assisting the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the Alabama Department of Public Health with collection of water quality samples, sediment samples and seafood tissue samples to ensure public health and ensure the safety of Alabama seafood. ADCNR has partnered with other agencies such as the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, Alabama Coastal Foundation and Mobile Bay Keepers to organize pre-event marine debris cleanups along the Gulf front beaches and inshore rivers and bays. Ten cleanups were held from May 3-8, 2010. These cleanup efforts focused on removing marine debris before they became contaminated with oil and thus becoming a hazard problem. Over 500 volunteers removed a recorded 11,300 pounds of marine debris from about 76 miles of shoreline.

For information on what you can do to respond to the oil spill in Alabama contact:

Alabama Coastal Foundation, info@joinacf.org

Mobile Bay Keeper, info@mobilebaykeeper.org

Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, mbnep@mobilenep.com

For information on response by the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program:

[Oil Spill Response, Recovery, and Restoration: Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Partners Taking Action.](#)

Governor Riley to Christen Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Newest Research Vessel

On Monday, May 24, at 11:00am, Governor Bob Riley will christen the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's newest research vessel, the R/V Alabama Discovery. Funded by an educational bond issue in 2008, this floating classroom is 65-feet long and 20-feet wide, and provides ample seating for up to 44 passengers and crew. The large stern deck area provides the necessary space to examine trawl catches within Mobile Bay and the near shore waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The vessel is equipped with the state-of-the-art electronics, including a remote LCD panel in the lab area for students to observe live animals and plants under a camera-ready microscope.

Students of all ages will benefit from this investment by the State of Alabama. During the academic year, students in grade K-12, and college will be able to take advantage of this educational platform. The undergraduate, high school, middle school students and teachers enrolled in the summer courses will all venture out on the water using the R/V Discovery.

Another key mission of the Alabama/Discovery is to assist in research. With 1200 horsepower, the vessel can reach speeds of 20 knots and get scientific personnel to sampling locations and back home quickly. The vessel is very economical at 10-12 knots, which will be its main cruising speed.

It is especially poignant that the receipt of this vessel at the Sea Lab coincided with the oil spill that threatens the Gulf of Mexico. "The capacity for DISL to provide research services is due entirely to the decisions by Governor Bob Riley and Senator Richard Shelby to establish and support such activities at the Sea Lab. Otherwise the State would have very limited ability to address this growing emergency," stated DISL Executive Director George F. Crozier.

Will Tagged Manatee Return to Oiled Waters?

The first manatee tagged in AL waters, dubbed "Bama," started her return migration toward Alabama, but she may be migrating into dangerous waters. Researchers at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Mobile Manatees Sighting Network (MMSN) are keeping a close watch on Bama's return path for two reasons.

Press Release from The Dauphin Island Sea Lab May 6, 2010
DISL Media Contact: Dr. Ruth H. Carmichael, Sr. Marine Scientist
Phone: 251-508-7010 (cell)
251-861-7555 (office, M-F)
E-mail: rcarmichael@disl.org

"We were very enthusiastic about her return to northern Gulf waters so that we could learn more about manatee migration patterns between Florida and Alabama waters", said Dr. Ruth Carmichael, Senior Marine Scientist at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and Founder of the MMSN.

The oil spill has unfortunately damped some of that enthusiasm. “We are concerned for several reasons”, said Carmichael. “The effects of oil on manatees is not well documented, but we know there is risk of intoxication and death. We also are concerned because Bama is likely not alone.”

[UPDATE] MMSN staff are receiving training today to handle oiled animals. The staff plan to travel to Apalachicola, Florida to observe Bama as soon as possible.

Manatees do not necessarily travel together like many other marine mammals, but they tend to migrate along common routes and during the same times of year. “We know other researchers have been monitoring tagged manatees in the FL panhandle. All of these animals are potentially at risk”, said Carmichael. Bama left Crystal River, FL on April 15, 2010 and reached Apalachicola Bay in the FL panhandle in 10 days, where she has remained for the past week. Bama spent nearly 4 months wintering at the warm water springs in Crystal River before making her way back to the northern Gulf of Mexico. A second manatee tagged in AL, a male, remains in the Crystal River area.

MMSN researchers will continue to monitor the movements of both tagged manatees and are working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to map manatee sightings in relation to the expanding oil spill. “It is extremely important that anyone who sees a manatee contact us immediately so that we can evaluate the animal and record their movements”, said Carmichael. MMSN researchers and volunteers are preparing to assist with emergency response efforts, in part, by completing special hazardous materials training.

MMSN asks the public to please report any sightings as soon as possible to authorities at MMSN, 1-866-493-5803. Assisting an oiled or stranded animal may be dangerous to you and the animal. Federal law prohibits interfering with a manatee’s behavior, or harassing them in any way. The best rule is to stay at least 100 feet away and report the sighting. This research and the MMSN are funded by the AL Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries under Traditional Section 6 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For more information, to volunteer, or to support this research, visit <http://manatee.disl.org> or call MMSN.

Alaskans Share Lessons Learned from Exxon Valdez Oil Spill



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 20, 2010
Contact: Melissa Schneider, Communications Coordinator
228.818.8838 (office) www.masgc.org
melissa.schneider@usm.edu

Should an oil spill occur in Alaska, 300 local vessels with crews trained to lay boom and pick up oil with skimmers are on standby. Fifty of these local vessels are available to begin clean up within six hours of the spill, and another 250 vessels are available to respond within 24 hours. This immediately available citizen response and other lessons learned as a result of Alaska’s Exxon Valdez oil spill were topics of discussion at a forum attended by seafood industry and community leaders and representatives from state and federal agencies last week at the International Trade Center in Mobile, Ala.

The forum, presented by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, was an opportunity to learn first-hand from others who have experienced the environmental and economic effects of a major oil spill.

In 1989, Joe Banta and Torie Baker were Alaskan fishermen when the Exxon Valdez spilled about 11 million gallons of oil in Prince William Sound. Their experiences during the spill and the 21 years that have followed seemed to take on more value when the Deepwater Horizon oil leak began in the Gulf of Mexico on April 22.

Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Director LaDon Swann invited Baker and Banta to the Gulf of Mexico to share the lessons they learned and to answer questions from extension agents and industry leaders. Baker, an Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Services fisheries specialist and commercial salmon fisherman, and Banta, project manager for environmental monitoring with Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, visited Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama the week of May 10 to share their first-hand knowledge from the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the partnerships they formed to assist the affected water-dependent industries in Prince William Sound.

“No more. We can’t let this happen to our coastline again,” said Banta as he described efforts in Alaska that led to more stringent regulations for oil companies who drill in Alaska waters. Alaskans were able to take advantage of the effects of the oil spill to pass laws to protect their waters and shoreline. And the immediate response vessels permanently on standby are funded by the oil companies. Another preventative measure requires at least two high-powered towing vessels to escort all oil tankers through Prince William Sound. This offers a line of defense that can help correct problems before spills happen.

Today, the herring fishery (which was one of Alaska’s largest exports) in Prince William Sound, has not come back. Salmon, another large export, has recovered, although it was affected for many years, according to Baker. Immediately after the spill, the fishing industry developed monitoring protocols which included logs on boats as well as monitoring and more inspections at processing plants to assure the public of seafood safety, Baker said. To help the hard-hit fishing industry, the Alaska Seafood Marketing Association conducted a campaign to fight a public perception that all Alaska seafood was damaged.

“For some people in our community, the losses were devastating,” Banta said. He described a peer-listening training program used to help members of the community assist others who were wiped out financially and emotionally. “Fisherman might not go see a counselor, but needed help dealing with the depression of losing their very way of life,” he said. Banta and Baker also warned of the long-term stress of extended litigation. In Alaska, all claims were bundled into a class action suit against Exxon Mobil Corporation. The suit dragged on for 21 years.

Another point they made is that there is a marked difference between communities that suffer natural disasters and those who go through technological disasters. While communities usually work together to bounce back from a natural disaster, communities going through a disaster that has a responsible party have a harder time. Technological disasters create corrosive communities that lose their sense of community and experience increases in divisiveness, alcohol and drug use, domestic violence and suicide.

Banta brought copies of the “Coping with Technological Disasters Guidebook,” which the citizens’ council created after the Exxon Valdez went aground. The guidebook says businesses can expect to lose employees to better paying jobs related to the cleanup, cities may need to hire people to deal strictly with spill-related issues, families may experience separations due to oil-related jobs and government offices may be swamped with requests for information. The guidebook can be found at <http://pwsrca.org/docs/d0001001.pdf>.

For more information, see these resources:

- Alaska Sea Grant, Exxon Valdez Spill 20th Anniversary website:
<http://seagrants.uaf.edu/conferences/2009/evos-anniversary/index.html>

- Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council (PWSRCAC): <http://www.pwsrcac.org/>
- Coping with Technological Disasters Guidebook: <http://pwsrcac.org/docs/d0001001.pdf>
- Appendices to Coping with Technological Disasters Guidebook: <http://pwsrcac.org/docs/d0001002.pdf>
- Coping with Technological Disasters Peer Listening training videos: <http://pwsrcac.info/community-impacts/>

Florida Deepwater Horizon Response

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been designated the lead state agency for responding to potential impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill along Florida's shoreline. This website will serve as the primary location for updates and information on response actions and impacts to the state of Florida.

On Tuesday, April 20, 2010 an offshore oil drilling platform, Deepwater Horizon, exploded in the Gulf of Mexico near Louisiana. The rig, owned by Transocean Ltd, was under contract to BP. Submerged at the bottom of the Gulf, the rig continues to discharge in the range of 35,000 to 60,000 barrels per day. BP, the United States Coast Guard and the Minerals Management Service are the lead response agencies on the oil spill. For information, please visit www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com.

Governor Charlie Crist has made Florida's preparation and response for impacts of the oil spill a top priority. Since Governor Crist's first flyover of the oil spill on Tuesday, April 27, 2010, he has worked to ensure that Florida is vigilant to take every necessary action to protect the Sunshine State's beaches and the health and well-being of both residents and visitors. For information and news, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm>.

Florida Recognizes the Week of May 16-22 as Water Reuse Week

-DEP stresses 'reuse' as a key factor in the future of Florida's water-

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recognizes May 16-22 2010, as Water Reuse Week, highlighting the fact that water reuse is essential to ensuring safe, clean and sustainable water resources. A national leader, Florida currently reuses over 243 billion gallons of reclaimed water each year statewide; and DEP Deputy Secretary Mimi Drew suggests that the state's exponential growth requires an even more aggressive stance on reuse.

"Increasing beneficial reuse is vital to ensuring Florida's water future. Florida leads the nation in reusing 667 million gallons of reclaimed water each day to conserve freshwater supplies and replenish our rivers, streams, lakes and aquifers. But we



"Increasing beneficial reuse is vital to ensuring Florida's water future."
Mimi Drew, DEP Deputy Secretary

have to do more,” said DEP Deputy Secretary Drew. “The Department will continue to work with local partners to ensure we balance environmental protection with future water supply needs.”

Water reuse is the beneficial use of reclaimed water (highly treated wastewater) for landscape and golf course irrigation, agricultural irrigation, industrial uses, toilet flushing, fire protection, decorative water features and ground water recharge. Among the many “net results” of reuse are that it augments Florida’s water resources and allows other sources of fresh water to be conserved or saved. In 2008, reuse saved Florida more than 125 billion gallons of fresh potable quality water and replenished our precious aquifers with more than 79 billion gallons of reclaimed water.

Florida has become the national leader in water reuse, which is a critical component of water management options in the state. Florida’s permitted reuse capacity exceeds 1.5 billion gallons per day, more than 62 percent of Florida’s total permitted capacity for all domestic wastewater treatment facilities.

The DEP, together with the state’s five water management districts, Florida Department of Health, Florida Public Service Commission, and other state agencies, recently implemented an award-winning Water Reuse Program. In 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency honored Florida’s Water Reuse Program with the prestigious Water Efficiency Leader Award in recognition of the water conservation achievements of the program. Florida currently uses reclaimed water to irrigate 260,456 residential lawns, 477 golf courses, 805 parks and 285 schools.

The Water Protection and Sustainability Program was established in 2005 to help water suppliers fund alternative water supply projects. About 66 percent of the projects funded in the first two years of the program involved reuse of reclaimed water. An additional 19 percent of the alternative water supply projects were for brackish groundwater projects. During the first two years of the program, the water management districts helped fund 238 projects.

In addition, DEP provides funding for reuse projects through the State Revolving Fund loan program and the Disadvantaged Small Community Grant Program. DEP established the State Revolving Fund in 1999 to provide low interest loans to plan, design and build wastewater and stormwater systems. Created in 2000, the Disadvantaged Small Community Grant Program provides grants to plan, design and build wastewater management facilities. During the last fiscal year, Florida invested more than \$43 million in projects that included reuse through the State Revolving Fund loan program and the Disadvantaged Small Community Grant Program.

- To view the proclamation, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/news/2010/05/files/water_reuse.pdf.
- To learn more about Florida’s reuse program, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/water/reuse.
- To learn more about the State Revolving Fund Loan Program and water facilities funding, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wff/index.htm.

Louisiana Deepwater Horizon Response

Emergency.louisiana.gov provides information on the efforts to mitigate the impact of the oil spill and protect coastal wildlife.

Creating a Cypress Habitat at Cypress Cove Elementary

May 6, 2010

In April 2010, first grade students at Cypress Cove Elementary in Slidell, LA planted Louisiana irises, bald cypress trees, and a sweet red maple tree in their newly created rain garden. “A schoolyard rain garden brings the wetlands to students and provides an outdoor classroom for wetland education,” says Mindy McCallum of LSU AgCenter’s 4H Youth Wetlands Program. Ms. McCallum, along with Carol Franze of the LSU AgCenter and Louisiana Sea Grant, worked with the school to choose a location for the rain garden. “A rain garden is best placed in an area that holds water and would otherwise be considered a problem area. The ecological function involves allowing runoff from buildings and parking lots to be filtered by the wetland plants prior to reaching nearby streams,” commented Mrs. Franze.

A local nursery, Cut N Edge Landscaping on North Military Road in Slidell, LA, donated the wetland plants used in the garden. “I especially like that we planted cypress since it is our school’s namesake,” says Jessica Stubbs, Resource Helping Teacher at Cypress Cove Elementary. Stubbs continued, “The LSU AgCenter has done so much for our school, such as helping plant our vegetable garden and offering several in-school programs.”

To enhance the use of the rain garden, Ms. McCallum is developing lessons plans and activities for teachers at Cypress Cove Elementary. “There is so much to learn from a rain garden, including hydrology, plant adaptations, and the natural filtration of pollutants. I hope that teachers, parents, and students can recognize the beauty and function of wetlands that are so prevalent in Louisiana and consider using them as a natural filtration system in their own backyards,” stated Ms. McCallum.

For more information contact Mindy McCallum, LSU AgCenter Extension Associate for 4H Youth Wetlands Program. mmccallum@agcenter.lsu.edu

New Website Promotes Storm Smart Action

Released just in time for storm season, the StormSmart Coasts website equips Gulf residents and decision makers with the latest and best information addressing severe weather. StormSmart Coasts (www.stormsmartcoasts.org) identifies what should be done before, during and after a storm. The website provides state-specific, in-depth information about potential hazards, how to minimize risks, how to improve emergency response and more. State and local emergency contacts lists are available. StormSmart Coasts also provides instruction on uniting communities to tackle the challenge of recovery after a storm.

Examples of resources users can find on the website include:

- Information on the National Flood Insurance Program, including how to read flood insurance rate maps and how to find additional information about the hazard risks associated with a particular property.
- A detailed overview of common legal issues in coastal areas.
- Information on how to build a resilient community master plan.
- Links to the NOAA Extreme Weather information sheets.

The site’s “Your Community” section can highlight the on-the-ground, local actions taken to address challenges like hurricanes, sea-level rise, climate change and flooding. A national network, StormSmart

Coasts includes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) partnership.

“The StormSmart Coasts Network provides Gulf communities with a way to connect, communicate and collaborate about storm preparedness,” said Tracie Sempier, outreach coordinator for the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Coastal Storms Program. “Working together and utilizing tools available on the site, we can all be better equipped for future storm events.”

A related site, StormSmart Connect (stormsmartconnect.org) provides a virtual community for coastal decision makers. This web-based collaboration of coastal managers moves beyond the application of guidance documents and prescribed information. Members of StormSmart Connect can quickly find people working in similar areas or on related topics, join or form discussion groups, share documents with others and participate in site-wide forums. Soon they will be able to create websites for their communities or groups.

As a result of a shared vision for a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico region, the Gulf States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas formalized the Gulf of Mexico Alliance in 2004. The Alliance recognizes the economy and quality of life for citizens of the Gulf are linked to its ecological health. Through the collaborative leadership of local, state and federal government partners, and the active participation of businesses and non-governmental organizations, the Alliance is addressing six priority issues facing the Gulf region. The Governors’ Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts, endorsed by all five governors, outlines specific actions needed to achieve the Alliance’s mission. To view the Action Plan and learn about the priority issues, visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

Mississippi Oil Spill Response Updates

For information about Mississippi Oil Spill Response, visit <http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm>.

MDEQ and DMR to Administer BP Deepwater Horizon Response \$25 Million Block Grant Program

May 6, 2010

(BILOXI, Miss.) – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) announced Thursday that they have been asked by Governor Haley Barbour to administer the \$25 million Mississippi British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon Response Block Grant Program on behalf of county and municipal governments in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson counties. This program will reimburse local governments for their expenses related to Deepwater Horizon Response activities.

“This program is good news for our coastal communities that have been stretched by these unusual circumstances. We will do our best to ensure these funds are distributed quickly to meet the needs of the cities and counties who will continue to expend significant resources,” said MDEQ Executive Director Trudy Fisher.

“BP has repeatedly stated that they will bring any and all resources to address the impacts of this unfortunate accident. This grant program is an example of that commitment. We appreciate BP’s action, and we at DMR will partner with MDEQ to provide these funds to our cities and counties in a timely fashion,” said Bill Walker, DMR Executive Director.

County or municipal governments located in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties are eligible for grant awards on a cost reimbursable basis. Potential activities to be considered for funding will be evaluated on the following:

- The delivery, preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts to affect substantial beneficial impacts on the coastal environment from this event.
- Effective response to protect the sensitive coastal environments of Mississippi threatened by the Deep Water Horizon spill.
- Work in coordination with the efforts of the responsible party, BP.
- Administrative and operational costs incurred in management and implementation of mitigation and response strategies to combat the spill.
- Mitigating impacts from Deep Water Horizon spill based on reasonable practical and technical principles.

Applications will be evaluated by the Technical Efficacy Committee (TEC) that will make recommendations to the Executive Directors of MDEQ and DMR. The Executive Directors will further evaluate all proposals and approve or deny applications after considering recommendations of the TEC, agency staffs, and consistency with the stated purpose of the grant program.

Eligible county or municipal governments should submit applications to: the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 39530. The sub-grants will initially run from the date a city or county declared a state of emergency through December 31, 2010. Sub-grants can be amended for additional time if necessary.

More information about the application process is available on the MDEQ and DMR websites at:

[BP MS Block Grant Program](#)

[SUB GRANT AGREEMENT](#)

<http://dmr.ms.gov/DMR/sub-grant-agreement.pdf>.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality safeguards the health, safety, and welfare of Mississippians by conserving and improving our environment and fostering wise economic growth through focused research and responsible regulation.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

Texas Wildlife Rescue Trailers Headed to Louisiana

May 3, 2010

AUSTIN — The Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program is sending two wildlife rescue trailers to assist in the expected cleanup effort on the Louisiana coast.

“This could be a serious environmental challenge for the Gulf Coast,” said Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson. “These highly-specialized trailers will be a tremendous help in the fight to protect birds and coastal wildlife.

“In a scenario like this, state boundaries disappear,” said Patterson. “There’s only one Gulf Coast and we’re duty bound as Americans to protect it.”

The two trailers — one specialized for cleaning oiled wildlife, the other for allowing the animals to recover after they are cleaned — will leave early Tuesday from the Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program’s La Porte field office. Two Land Office oil spill specialists will also be traveling to Louisiana to integrate into the unified response command.

“We know this could have happened off the Texas coast, and we want our neighbors along the Gulf Coast to know that Texas is eager to lend a hand,” Patterson said.

The Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program has also contributed 1,000 feet of fire boom to the Deepwater Horizon response effort, as well as other expertise called upon by industry, state and federal responders such as the Texas Automated Buoy System.

Other News

Is Invasion by an Introduced Species Always an Ecological Disaster? Perhaps Not, Says Alabama Study

For decades, introduction and spread of exotic species into aquatic systems has been considered ecological bad news. Scientists and policy makers have operated under the assumption that when exotic species take hold, dramatic changes will ensue, ranging from loss of native species to changes in ecosystem services. But a recent study in the Mobile-Tenslaw Delta, AL, provides evidence that perhaps not all introductions lead to such dire outcomes. Investigators evaluated the impacts of introduced Eurasian milfoil, a structurally complex aquatic plant, on food web structure by comparing faunal communities associated with this invasive species and two native plant species: structurally simple wild celery and more complex water stargrass.

Predator-prey interactions and habitat choice of shelter-seeking fish were also studied in the laboratory. Field survey results indicated that fauna seemed to choose habitat more on the basis of structural complexity than by differentiating between native and introduced plants. No significant differences were found in the communities occupying the milfoil and stargrass habitats, but there were significant differences between milfoil and wild celery. In the lab, rainwater killifish preferred milfoil over celery, but not over stargrass. These habitat choices held even when a predator was introduced.

One conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that impacts of invasive exotic species are site-specific. Based on research and monitoring in other systems, community-level impacts of Eurasian milfoil have been commonly considered to be detrimental throughout much of North America.

However, impacts in this system might be ameliorated by the presence of a native plant that serves much of the same sheltering function. Shelter-seeking fauna may simply not perceive a difference between the newcomer and the native.

Source: Martin, C. W. and J. F. Valentine. 2010. Impacts of a habitat-forming exotic species on estuarine structure and function: an experimental assessment of Eurasian milfoil. *Estuaries and Coasts* 33(April 2010). DOI:10.1007/s12237-010-9274-5

<http://springerlink.com/content/q745303r3l0760kg?p=530e84cb8e444389b249d9210209297e&pi=0>.

Industry, Environmentalists, State Leaders Discuss Impacts and Response to Gulf Oil Spill

America's Energy Coast Forum Paves Path Forward to Resiliency by Managing Risks, Vulnerabilities

GALVESTON, TX – Leaders from the oil industry, national environmental organizations, government and citizens' groups meet in Galveston Wednesday to discuss the BP rig incident's impact on the Gulf and community resiliency in America's Energy Coast (AEC) states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The meeting of the America's Energy Coast is the first such meeting of industry, environmentalists and other Gulf Coast stakeholders since the April 20 oil spill. Originally called to discuss community resiliency on an eroding coast, the agenda was expanded to open with a discussion of the oil spill.

“We have hosted the nation's domestic offshore energy production for more than five decades and, until the nation no longer demands it, we will be expected to continue to do so for years to come,” said R. King Milling, Chairman of the Board for the America's WETLAND Foundation. “A working coast requires a sound environment. An incident of this nature only adds to the urgency of restoring the deteriorating wetlands and coastal landscapes that have, for too long, left our communities vulnerable to both man-made and natural risks and vulnerabilities,” Milling said.

The AEC states collectively provide 90% of our domestic offshore energy supply - almost a third of the nation's total oil and gas supply that connects to 50% of our refining capacity - along with 30% of the seafood landed in the lower 48 states. Ongoing damage to the region could have a significant economic and environmental impact that will be felt by all Americans. The forum is hosted by the America's WETLAND Foundation, a non-profit, non-partisan NGO that is committed to a balanced approach to sustaining both the fragile coastal environment and economy in the Gulf of Mexico region.

“Already, the AEC has called for an end to conflicting federal regulations and agency missions that hinder the states, acceleration of the planned federal offshore oil revenues to be shared with the states that host that production, and a coordinated, regional approach to sustaining the internationally significant ecology of the region and the energy security of the nation,” said Commissioner Jerry Patterson of the Texas General Land Office and member of the Steering Committee for America's Energy Coast.

The agenda of the Galveston meeting, to be held 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Music Hall of the Galvez Hotel in Galveston, TX was adjusted to consider the impacts of the oil rig explosion more than a month ago.

“So far, an area of land equal to the state of Delaware has disappeared into the waters off the coast of Louisiana, and the land loss continues at the rate of a football field every 50 minutes,” said Karen Gautreaux of The Nature Conservancy, an AEC Task Force Leader. “We have one of the most fragile coasts in the country and it’s one that is critical to the 90 percent of Gulf species that depend on this area for part of their life cycle. Even before the spill, this area was threatened and needed a national restoration effort,” Gautreaux said.

Gary Serio, Vice president of Entergy and Chair of the AEC Industry Council, noted its membership includes leaders of industry, the national environmental and conservation community, academia, government, and diverse coastal interests throughout the energy-producing region of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

“The Gulf of Mexico oil spill tragedy serves as a reminder that we must understand what it means for energy and ecology to reside together along America’s Energy Coast and how we balance them,” Serio said.

The AEC, meeting in Washington, D.C. in November, issued a report, *Region at Risk: Preventing the Loss of Vital National Assets*, calling for a regional approach to coastal restoration, ending conflicting federal regulations and accelerating federal sharing of offshore oil revenues with impacted states.

“We’ve probably all been anxious during some of these discussions,” Serio said, noting the unique assembly of both environmental and industry interests. “We’re focusing on issues that, for the most part, have previously been avoided -- issues that have placed many of us on opposite sides of the fence for a very long time. However, we have all committed to work together to build a clear path forward for the resiliency of our economy, our environment and our communities.”

America’s WETLAND Foundation (www.americaswetland.org) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that has acted as a neutral arbiter for Louisiana’s coastal interests since its inception in 2002, elevating issues facing the Gulf Coast, specifically those of coastal land loss, to regional, national and international attention.

America’s Energy Coast (AEC) (americasenergycoast.org) is an initiative of the America’s WETLAND Foundation. AEC is a diverse group of major businesses and industries, national environmental and conservation organizations, scientists and researchers, and coastal interests from across the four energy-producing states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama – collectively known as America’s Energy Coast.

Gulf Oil Spill: NSF Awards Rapid Response Grant to Study Microbes' Natural Degradation of Oil

May 21, 2010

To understand how the use of dispersants impacts the degradation of oil in the Gulf of Mexico, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a rapid response grant to scientist David Valentine of the University of California at Santa Barbara and colleagues. The massive release of oil from the Deepwater Horizon incident on April 20, 2010, has led to an unprecedented use of oil dispersants, which include a mix of surfactant compounds designed to dissolve oil and to prevent slick formation.

"Dispersants are being sprayed aerially and added at the sea-floor, and the total usage is likely to exceed one million gallons before this is over," Valentine says.

Previous research has shown mixed effects, however, of these surfactants on degradation of oil. Little is known about the effects on the ability of microbes that live in the Gulf to naturally degrade the hydrocarbon compounds found in crude oil. Crude oil consists of thousands of different compounds, with different chemical structures. Some evaporate easily, some do not. Some dissolve in water and some do not. Some are easily degraded by microbes and some are not.

Do manufactured dispersants interfere with microbes' natural oil-dispersing ability?



Oil that has reached the Gulf's surface glints in mid-day sunlight.
[Credit and Larger Version](#)

According to Valentine, many different microbes eat oil, but each does so with a different preference for which compounds they attack, like people at a buffet. Many microbes also produce their own unique surfactants to help corral the oil into a preferred form. The team seeks to understand how the dispersants added to the spill will interact with natural compounds produced by microbes, and how this will impact the ability of different microbes to break down the oil.

"This research will use a combination of chemical and biological tools to track changes in the composition of the oil, changes in the microbes in the Gulf, and

changes in the amount of surfactant present, to determine the impact of these dispersants on oil biodegradation," says Don Rice, program director in NSF's Division of Ocean Sciences, which funded the rapid response award.

Valentine and colleagues are studying how the different dispersants impact the microbes, looking to the molecular patterns of hydrocarbon loss to find answers. The scientists are acquiring samples of fresh slick oil from near the Deepwater Horizon wellhead; weathered slicks from the offshore environment; and beach tar samples. Hydrocarbon-degrading bacteria differ in their substrate preferences, as well as in their response to surfactants, which will play an important role in determining the rate and extent of biodegradation of the oil spill.

"We're researching this real-world spill," Valentine says, "by simultaneously investigating oil composition, the microbes, and the dispersants. "We think the dispersants may impact the microbes through interference with the action of their natural dispersants."

The grant is one of many such Gulf oil spill-related rapid response awards NSF will make in the near future.

Media Contacts: Cheryl Dybas, NSF, cdybas@nsf.gov

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, its budget is about \$6.9 billion. NSF funds reach all 50 states through grants to nearly 2,000 universities and institutions. Each year, NSF receives over 45,000 competitive requests for funding, and makes over 11,500 new funding awards. NSF also awards over \$400 million in professional and service contracts yearly.

Instant Information about Water Conditions: Ask the River to Text You a WaterAlert

Sign up at <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert>.

Now you can receive instant, customized updates about water conditions by subscribing to [WaterAlert](#), a new service from the U.S. Geological Survey. Whether you are watching for floods, interested in recreational activities or concerned about the quality of water in your well, WaterAlert allows you to receive daily or hourly updates about current conditions in rivers, lakes and groundwater when they match conditions of concern to you.

“Real-time water data are essential to those making daily decisions about water-related activities, whether for resource management, business operations, flood response or recreation,” said Matt Larsen, USGS Associate Director for Water. “WaterAlert continues USGS efforts to make data immediately available and relevant to every user.”

WaterAlert allows users to receive updates about river flows, groundwater levels, water temperatures, rainfall and water quality at any of more than 9,500 sites where USGS collects real-time water information. This information is crucial for managing water resources, including during floods, droughts and chemical spills.

“This is fantastic,” said Jim Cantore, Weather Channel field meteorologist. “The new WaterAlert system from the USGS provides the latest river information to people in harm's way. This could be the first alert to a developing flood and can even help out during drought periods.”

WaterAlert also allows kayakers, rafters and boaters to better understand when conditions are optimal and safe for recreational activities.

“The WaterAlert service is a fantastic resource for boaters of all abilities and disciplines,” said Wade Blackwood, executive director of the American Canoe Association. “During rain events, water levels on some rivers can rise quickly. This service will be useful as a warning system and will keep paddlers aware of water conditions in order to paddle safely.”

WaterAlert users start at <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert> and select a specific site. Users then select the preferred delivery method (email or text), whether they want hourly or daily notifications, which data parameter they are interested in, and the threshold for those parameters. Users can set the system to alert them when conditions are above a value, below a value, and between or outside of a range. For example, emergency managers may be interested in setting up alerts when thresholds are exceeded, such as in the case of a flood. Water-supply managers could set an alert for times when groundwater well levels are low enough to require shutdown of supply pumps.

Recreational rafters may find it useful to set a threshold that lets them know when the water levels are high enough to pass over rocks but not so high as to be unsafe. There is no limit to the number of subscriptions per user at a single site or multiple sites.

The USGS operates an extensive, real-time water information network, involving 9,081 continuous and partial record [streamgages](#), as well as 369 lake, 1,278 well and 3,632 precipitation gages throughout the United States. [USGS Water Science Centers](#) in each state can provide more detailed information on water conditions and USGS response to local events.

Grant Opportunities

Rapid Response Research Grants Available for Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill Research

May 27, 2010

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has in place a mechanism to receive and review proposals having a severe urgency with regard to availability of, or access to data, facilities or specialized equipment, as well as quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and similar unanticipated events.

This Rapid Response Research (RAPID) mechanism has been regularly used to enable research on unanticipated events such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or any other event where a timely presence is required to enable the research. A number of RAPID awards were made to support research on the earthquakes earlier this year in Haiti and Chile, and awards are being made related to the oil spill.

RAPID is a special grant mechanism developed specifically to respond to unusual circumstances where a timely response is essential to achieving research results. To help determine whether the proposed research is appropriate for NSF's RAPID funding, potential investigators must contact the NSF program officer(s) most germane to the proposal topic before submitting a RAPID proposal. Complete guidance on submitting a RAPID proposal is located on NSF's web site at:

http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf10_1/gpg_2.jsp#IID1.

Mississippi Coastal Impact Assistance Program

Funds are available only to the State of Mississippi and eligible Coastal Political Subdivisions (Counties) within the State of Mississippi under this Program Announcement to mitigate the impacts of Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas activities (based upon allocation formulas prescribed by the Energy Policy Act). The purpose of the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) is to disburse funding (\$250 million for each of the fiscal years 2007 through 2010) to eligible producing states and coastal political subdivisions for the purpose of conservation, protection, or restoration of coastal areas including wetlands; mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, or natural resources; planning assistance and the administrative costs of complying with these objectives; implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plan; and, mitigation of the impact of Outer Continental Shelf activities through funding of onshore infrastructure projects and public service needs. States eligible to receive funding under the CIAP program are: Alabama, Alaska, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas and 67 coastal political subdivisions amongst the 6 states.

Link to Full Announcement

[Location for Program Announcement \(Instructions\) and Application Portal](#)

If you have difficulty accessing the full announcement electronically, please contact:

Kathleen Craig, Lead Contract Specialist

Phone 703-787-1332 [Point-of-Contact for Questions About Program Announcement](#)

Ocean Science & Leadership Expedition

Gulf Coast Scholarship Opportunity

With the oil spill in the Gulf raising awareness of the vulnerability of our coastal and marine environments, the Prince William Sound Science Center in Cordova, Alaska is offering a timely summer program for high school students focused on understanding ocean science and cultivating stewardship of ocean resources. The Ocean Science and Leadership Expedition (OSLE) is a 10-day summer intensive learning experience for high school students, taking place August 5-14, 2010 and based in Prince William Sound. Working with local marine scientists and educators, participants will learn about—and experience firsthand—oceanographic principles and issues such as oil spills, marine debris, and climate change.

The course includes a 4-day sea kayaking expedition to Columbia Glacier in Prince William Sound, where students will camp on remote beaches and learn Leave-No-Trace backcountry skills and ethics. Columbia Glacier is the largest single glacial contributor to sea level rise in North America, with 2 cubic miles of ice discharged annually—the perfect backdrop for learning about climate change and glacial-forced ocean circulation in Prince William Sound. During the sea kayak expedition, students will conduct a marine debris survey and cleanup, learning scientific sampling methods while directly improving the coastal environment. Afterwards they will design outreach projects to inform the public about marine and coastal issues.

In Valdez, Alaska, students will meet with experts at the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council to learn about the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and see what is being done to prevent future spills. To culminate the case study, students will engage in a simulated oil spill scenario where they will learn the decision-making process of responding to environmental emergencies and experience the challenges of cleaning up oil in the marine environment.

Students will emerge from this course with a greater knowledge of the significance of coastal and marine ecosystems, a personal connection to the ocean, and the skills to become future leaders and stewards of ocean resources. Students may also earn college credit for this course through University of Alaska - Prince William Sound Community College.

We invite students from the Gulf Coast to visit Alaska to share their experiences of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill with peers from Alaska and throughout the U.S. To assist families who may not otherwise afford such an opportunity, the Science Center is offering two full scholarships of up to \$1500 for high school students from Gulf States to attend the course. The scholarships will cover full tuition and up to \$400 in travel expenses. The scholarship application deadline is July 1, 2010.

The scholarships are open to students currently residing in the Gulf States (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, or Florida) who have completed 9th, 10th, or 11th grade by the start of the course. Completed applications (including Letter of Support) must be received by the Prince William Sound Science Center no later than July 1, 2010 in order to be considered. Scholarship recipients will be notified by July 16, 2010.

Scholarship recipients must meet all other requirements of the course, including being in good physical condition to undertake a rigorous wilderness sea kayaking expedition. Students will be responsible for arranging their own travel to/from Cordova, Alaska. Students must present receipts of travel expenses for reimbursement, up to the value of \$400.

To apply for a scholarship or receive more information, please contact: Alice Dou-Wang, Prince William Sound Science Center, Cordova, Alaska 99574; (907)-424-5800 x237 or adouwang@pwssc.org.

Conferences and Workshops

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Implementation and Integration Workshop

August 3-5, 2010

Beau Rivage Hotel
875 Beach Boulevard
Biloxi, MS 39531
<http://www.beaurivage.com>
[City of Biloxi](#)



Logistical Information

- [Cutoff Date/Time 5:00pm, Friday, July 2](#)
Beau Rivage reservation phone number has been changed!

Registration Form (No charge for registering)

- [Registration Form](#) - fill and submit
- [Registration Form \(PDF\)](#) - fill and print

Schedule of Events

- [Schedule of Events for August 3-5, 2010 - Final \(PDF\)](#)

Agendas

- [Plenary Sessions Draft Agenda \(PDF\)](#)
- Priority Issue Team Agendas Coming Soon!

Evening Reception (August 4)

Please contact [Ms. Terry Teague](#) or [Diane Altsman](#) for assistance.

Clean Gulf 2010

Tampa Bay Convention Center, Tampa, FL, USA
October 19-20, 2010
Early Registration Deadline: August 20, 2010
Home Page URL: <http://www.cleangulf.org/>
[Follow us on Twitter](#)

Companies from throughout the oil and chemical spill, maritime security industry and the marine salvage industry will be in attendance at the 20th Annual CLEAN GULF Training & Exhibition. Key professionals and decision makers from throughout the Gulf Coast will come together to view the latest products, services and technologies, as well as hear about the newest developments from the Deepwater Horizon response in the Gulf of Mexico. Key focus areas for this year's training will be blow-out

prevention, remote operated vehicles, deep offshore SONS/Spill of National Significance, oil spill containment, subsea technology, deep water oil spill response, in-situ burn, offshore dispersants and subsea dispersants on containment.

CLEAN GULF Training Event & Exhibition Announces New Deep Offshore Prevention & Response Co-Located Training Event & Exhibition

TAMPA. May 25, 2010 – CLEAN GULF, the largest oil spill training event and exhibition in North America, announced today that it is expanding its educational program with a new co-located event focusing exclusively on Deep Offshore Prevention & Response. Blow-out prevention, remote operated vehicles, Deep Offshore SONS/Spill of National Significance, oil spill containment, subsea technology, deepwater oil spill, response in-situ burn, offshore dispersants and subsea dispersants on containment will be among the key focus areas of this new event. The 20th Annual CLEAN GULF is scheduled for October 19 – 20, 2010 at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Florida,

“We firmly believe it is vital to the oil & gas industry to be adding to CLEAN GULF this timely, must-have information for drillers, subsea operators, pipelines, shipping companies and other service providers in the petroleum supply chain,” said Laura Couvillon, CLEAN GULF Show Director. “Deep Offshore Prevention & Response is a natural fit for CLEAN GULF, and further differentiates this annual event as the most comprehensive learning experience in North America for the oil spill industry.”

Owners, operators and regulators that attend CLEAN GULF 2010 will have the opportunity to choose from its most robust curriculum ever, including three separate training programs, the new Deep Offshore Prevention & Response program, the new co-located EPA Region 4 Conference on Chemical Emergencies and CLEAN GULF’s traditional world class oil spill keynotes and “hands-on” sessions and panels of the leading experts from throughout the oil spill prevention & response community. Attendees will also be able to see and demo the latest prevention and response technologies at the leading solutions exhibition in the oil spill market with our 200 exhibits.

For more info and to register, please visit www.cleangulf.org. For info on sponsorship and exhibiting opportunities, please contact Kristian Copeland at 713-343-1886 or kcopeland@tradefairgroup.com. For info on speaking and advisory board opportunities, please contact Kayla Appelt at 713-343-1869 or kappelt@tradefairgroup.com.

Organized by TradeFair Group, CLEAN GULF is the largest oil spill training event and exhibition in North America. Its training workshops and solutions exhibition are specifically designed for local, state and federal regulators and responders, companies involved in exploration, production, shipping, transportation or storage of petroleum, petrochemicals or hazardous materials in offshore, coastal or inland regions and the oil spill prevention and response community. Additional information is available at www.cleangulf.org.

About TradeFair Group

A leading energy industry information provider, with conferences, tradeshow, e-media and print publications for the oil, gas, chemical, petrochemical, power generation, renewable energy, and coal industries, TradeFair Group, an Access Intelligence Company, produces events throughout North America, and its publications and online properties serve a global marketplace. Additional information is available at www.TradeFairGroup.com.

5th National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration

November 13-17, 2010

The Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) national conference brings together the best and the brightest in the coastal habitat restoration community: diverse stakeholders from across the country, including top representatives from federal, state, and local governments; corporations and businesses; non-profits; grassroots organizations; tribal associations; and education, all united in the search for solutions to the needs of our coastal ecosystems.



© Restore America's Estuaries 2009

More than 1,000 attendees are expected, as well as 150 exhibitors, 160 poster presentations, and 400 presenters. There will be more than 80 high-level sessions dealing with the best and newest approaches to coastal habitat preservation and restoration.

The 2010 conference focus, "Preparing for Climate Change", while a concern for all coastal regions, has particular resonance for coastal Texas and Galveston, still recovering from the damage inflicted by Hurricane Ike in 2008.

RAE is committed to helping Galveston recover from the environmental and economic damage caused by Ike. Through this conference, we will: work to restore resiliency to Galveston's shoreline through sea- and marsh-grass planting projects; stimulate the local economy through the business generated during this five-day conference; push Galveston's ongoing restoration needs to national attention through press work and through the attendance of senior federal officials; and increase the direction and momentum of new resources to aid the Galveston area.

Location: Galveston, Texas, USA

Dates: November 13-17, 2010

Early Registration Deadline: September 30, 2010

Contact Information: ssimon@estuaries.org This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it. Ph: +1 772-776-1129.

Home Page URL: <https://www.estuaries.org/conference/>

Did you find this edition useful? Please send suggestions, comments, and new items for publication to



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