



GULF OF MEXICO NEWS

www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov

August 2010



NOAA Gulf of Mexico News

.....	4
NOAA Reopens More than 4,000 Square Miles of Closed Gulf Fishing Area.....	4
NASA/NOAA Study Finds El Niños Growing Stronger	5
Scientists Map Origin of Large, Underwater Hydrocarbon Plume in Gulf.....	7
Scientists Release the First Rescued, Rehabilitated Sea Turtles Back into the Gulf.....	10
NOAA Reopens More Than 5,000 Square Miles of Closed Gulf Fishing Area	11
NOAA-Supported Scientists Find Changes to Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone.....	12
NOAA Announces Funding to Model Effects of Sea Level Rise in Northern Gulf of Mexico	14
NOAA Still Expects Active Atlantic Hurricane Season; La Niña Develops	15
Federal Science Report Details Fate of Oil from BP Spill.....	16
Gulf of Mexico Alliance Assembles All Hands	17
Interagency Report Warns of Expanding Threat of Hypoxia in U. S. Coastal Waters.....	17

Other NOAA News

.....	18
Climate Change Planning Guide for State Coastal Managers Now Available.....	18
NOAA Launches Coastal Interviews from the States.....	18
U.S. Departments of Commerce and the Interior to Cooperate on Climate-Related Activities	18
NOAA's Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Website.....	19
Next Round of Nominations Begin for National System of MPAs.....	19

In the Gulf States

.....	20
Environmental Education Projects Awarded in Five U.S. Gulf States	20
Alabama Waters Opening for Crab Harvest	21
All Alabama Waters Now Open for Fishing	21
Free Turtle Excluder Devices Available for Skimmer Trawls	22
MASGC Director Named to Oil-spill Recovery Commission	22
Researchers Identify Three Tagged Manatees	23
Crucial Time for Manatee Sighting: Mobile Manatee Sighting Network Asking for Help from Boaters, Beachgoers, Public	24
Florida DEP Announces Pitch In-Pump Out Campaign Promoting the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program	25
Mississippi Oyster Tissue Samples Tested by NOAA and FDA Determined Safe for Human Consumption	26
MDMR and MDEQ Reopen All Mississippi Territorial Waters to Commercial and Recreational Blue Crab Fishing	27
MDEQ Begins Intensive Monitoring for Submersed Oil in the Mississippi Sound	27
MDMR and MDEQ Reopen All Mississippi Territorial Waters to Commercial and Recreational Finfish and Shrimp Fishing	29
Grand Bay NERR, Partners Studying Mercury in Atmosphere	30
Louisiana Ground Water Resources Commission Updated on Water Use	31
Louisiana DNR Coastal Zone boundary study recommends additional regulated areas, new approaches to management	33
17 th Annual U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum to Focus on Clean Energy	34
HRI International Governance Workshop	35

Other News

.....	36
Commerce Secretary Gary Locke Announces \$31.3 Million in Restoration and Recovery Grants for Louisiana Gulf	36
New USGS Phosphorus Map Report	37

Grant Opportunities

.....	37
ConocoPhillips SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program	37
Coastal Habitat Restoration Funding Opportunities	38
FY 2011 Funding Opportunity: Regional Ecosystem Prediction Program	39
Texas Coastal Management Program Call for Proposals	40
National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program	40

Conferences and Workshops

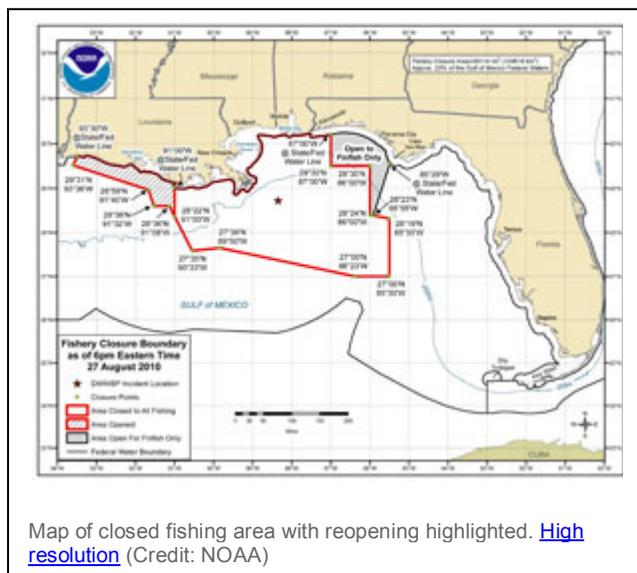
.....	41
29th International Submerged Lands Management Conference.....	41
Project Design and Evaluation Workshop.....	42
Gulf of Mexico Alliance Coastal Pathogens Risk Assessment Workshop	42
Get the Grant! Funding Your Community Resiliency, Green Infrastructure or Coastal Restoration Project.....	42
5th National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration.....	43
Alabama-Mississippi Bays & Bayous Symposium	43
Coastal Zone 2011.....	44

NOAA Gulf of Mexico News

For current information on Federal Fisheries Closure, please visit the following website:
[Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill: Federal Fisheries Closure and Other Information](#)

NOAA Reopens More than 4,000 Square Miles of Closed Gulf Fishing Area

August 27, 2010



Today NOAA reopened 4,281 square miles of Gulf waters off western Louisiana to commercial and recreational fishing. The reopening was announced after consultation with FDA and under a re-opening protocol agreed to by NOAA, the FDA, and the Gulf states.

On July 18, NOAA data showed no oil in the area. Light sheen was observed on July 29, but none since. Trajectory models show the area is at a low risk for future exposure to oil, and fish caught in the area and tested by NOAA experts have shown no signs of contamination.

"Scientists, food safety experts, members of the fishing industry and local, state, federal officials, are working together every day to ensure that seafood from the Gulf is safe to eat," said Jane

Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "We will remain vigilant and continue to monitor and test seafood in reopened waters."

Between July 26 and July 29, NOAA sampled the area for both shrimp and finfish, including mackerel and snapper. Sensory analyses of 41 samples and chemical analyses of 125 specimens that were composited into 14 samples followed the methodology and procedures in the re-opening protocol, with sensory analysis finding no detectable oil or dispersant odors or flavors, and results of chemical analysis well below the levels of concern.

At its closest point, the area to be reopened is about 185 miles west of the Deepwater/BP wellhead. The entire area is heavily fished by fishermen targeting reef fish, menhaden and shrimp.

"Because of our strict adherence to the reopening protocol agreed to by the states and the federal government we have confidence that seafood harvested from this area is free from harmful oil residues and can be enjoyed by consumers around the nation," said Margaret Hamburg, M.D., Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration.

NOAA will continue to take samples for testing from the newly re-opened area, and the agency has also implemented dockside sampling to test fish caught throughout the Gulf by commercial fishermen. To

view the fact sheet released today on the administration-wide effort to ensure Gulf seafood safety, click [here](#).

Fishing closures remain the first line of defense to prevent contaminated seafood from entering the marketplace. NOAA continues to work closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Gulf states to ensure seafood safety. NOAA and FDA are working together on broad-scale seafood sampling that includes sampling seafood from inside and outside the closure area, as well as dockside and market-based sampling.

The closed area now covers 48,114 square miles, or about 20 percent of the federal waters in the Gulf, which was 37 percent at its height. On July 22, NOAA reopened 26,388 square miles of Gulf waters off of the Florida Peninsula, and on August 10 opened 5,144 square miles off the Florida Panhandle. NOAA will continue to evaluate the need for fisheries closures and will re-open closed areas as appropriate.

NOAA has a number of methods for the public to obtain information or be notified when there is a change to the closed area:

- Sign up to receive Southeast Fishery Bulletins by e-mail at SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov.
- Call 1-800-627-NOAA (1-800-627-6622) to hear a recording of the current coordinates in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for messages about the closure.
- Receive text messages on your cell phone about changes to the closed area by texting fishing@gulf to 84469 (visit <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/558107> for more information).
- Follow us on Twitter: [@usnoagov](https://twitter.com/usnoagov) to get a tweet when the closed area changes.

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.

NASA/NOAA Study Finds El Niños Growing Stronger

August 25, 2010

A relatively new type of El Niño, which has its warmest waters in the central-equatorial Pacific Ocean, rather than in the eastern-equatorial Pacific, is becoming more common and progressively stronger, according to a new study by NASA and NOAA. The research may improve our understanding of the relationship between El Niños and climate change, and has potential significant implications for long-term weather forecasting.

Lead author Tong Lee of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif., and Michael McPhaden of NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle measured changes in El Niño intensity since 1982. They analyzed NOAA satellite observations of sea surface temperature, checked against and blended with directly-measured ocean temperature data. The strength of each El Niño was gauged by how much its sea surface temperatures deviated from the average. They found the intensity of El Niños in the central Pacific has nearly doubled over the study period, with the most intense event occurring in 2009-10.

The scientists say the stronger El Niños help explain a steady rise in central Pacific sea surface temperatures observed over the past few decades in previous studies — a trend attributed by some to the effects of global warming. While Lee and McPhaden observed a rise in sea surface temperatures during El Niño years, no significant temperature increases were seen in years when ocean conditions were neutral, or when El Niño’s cool water counterpart, La Niña, was present.

“Our study concludes the long-term warming trend seen in the central Pacific is primarily due to more intense El Niños, rather than a general rise of background temperatures,” said Lee.

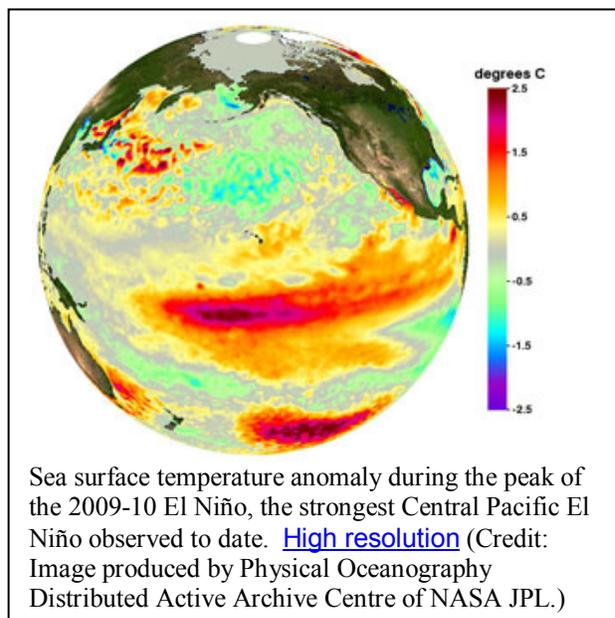
“These results suggest climate change may already be affecting El Niño by shifting the center of action from the eastern to the central Pacific,” said McPhaden. “El Niño’s impact on global weather patterns is different if ocean warming occurs primarily in the central Pacific, instead of the eastern Pacific.” “If the trend we observe continues,” McPhaden continued, “it could throw a monkey wrench into long-range weather forecasting, which is largely based on our understanding of El Niños from the latter half of the 20th century.”

El Niño (Spanish for “the little boy”) is the oceanic component of a climate pattern called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, which appears in the tropical Pacific Ocean on average every three to five years. The most dominant year-to-year fluctuating pattern in Earth’s climate system, El Niños have a powerful impact on the ocean and atmosphere, as well as important socioeconomic consequences. They can influence global weather patterns and the occurrence and frequency of hurricanes, droughts and floods; and can even raise or lower global temperatures by as much as 0.2 degrees Celsius (0.4 degrees Fahrenheit).

During a “classic” El Niño episode, the normally strong easterly trade winds in the tropical eastern Pacific weaken. That weakening suppresses the normal upward movement of cold subsurface waters and allows warm surface water from the central Pacific to shift toward the Americas. In these situations, unusually warm surface water occupies much of the tropical Pacific, with the maximum ocean warming remaining in the eastern-equatorial Pacific.

Since the early 1990s, however, scientists have noted a new type of El Niño that has been occurring with greater frequency. Known variously as “central-Pacific El Niño,” “warm-pool El Niño,” “dateline El Niño” or “El Niño Modoki” (Japanese for “similar but different”), the maximum ocean warming from such El Niños is found in the central-equatorial, rather than eastern, Pacific. Such central Pacific El Niño events were observed in 1991-92, 1994-95, 2002-03, 2004-05 and 2009-10. Studies have hypothesized that global warming due to human-produced greenhouse gases could shift the warming center of El Niños from the eastern to the central Pacific, further increasing the frequency of such events in the future.

Lee said further research is needed to evaluate the impacts of these increasingly intense El Niños and determine why these changes are occurring. “It is important to know if the increasing intensity and frequency of these central Pacific El Niños are due to natural variations in climate or to climate change caused by human-produced greenhouse gas emissions,” he said. Results of the study were published recently in *Geophysical Research Letters*.



Scientists Map Origin of Large, Underwater Hydrocarbon Plume in Gulf

Plume detected 22 miles long and more than 3,000 feet below surface

August 19, 2010



Scientists funded by the [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF) and affiliated with the [Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution](#) (WHOI) have detected a plume of hydrocarbons at least 22 miles long and more than 3,000 feet below the surface of the Gulf of Mexico, a residue of the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The 1.2-mile-wide, 650-foot-high plume of trapped hydrocarbons was detected during a ten day subsurface sampling effort from June 19-28, 2010 near the wellhead. The results provide a snapshot of where the oil has gone as surface slicks shrink and disappear.

"These results create a clearer picture of where the oil is in the Gulf," said Christopher Reddy, a WHOI marine geochemist and one of the authors of a paper on the results that appears in this week's issue of the journal *Science*.

The study--which was enabled by three rapid response grants from NSF's chemical oceanography program, with additional funding from the U.S. Coast Guard and NOAA through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Program--confirms once again that a continuous plume was found "at petroleum hydrocarbon levels that are noteworthy and detectable," Reddy said.

The researchers measured petroleum hydrocarbons in the plume and, using them as an investigative tool, determined that the source of the plume could not have been natural oil seeps but had to have come from the Deepwater Horizon blowout at the Macondo well. They reported that deep-sea microbes were degrading the plume relatively slowly, and that it was possible that the plume had and could persist for some time if the rate of microbial degradation or the dilution of the plume does not accelerate.

"These findings confirm what NOAA and our federal partners have reported about the presence and concentration of subsurface oil, and provide an additional piece of the puzzle as we continue to aggressively monitor the fate of the oil in the Gulf," said Steve Murawski, NOAA's chief scientist. "Our collaborations with Woods Hole and other academic and private research institutions are critical to the ongoing response and recovery efforts."

"This research illustrates the value of NSF's long-term investment in state-of-the-art technology like *Sentry* so that it can be deployed not only to advance basic knowledge but also in national emergencies," said David Conover, director of NSF's Division of Ocean Sciences. "Similarly, the NSF RAPID award program enables scientists to quickly arrive on the scene and begin rigorous study of episodic events like this oil spill."

NSF has so far issued a total of 90 RAPID grant awards to investigators; the grants to date are worth \$10.2 million for study of the spill. NSF has invested an additional \$3 million in ship-related operating costs.

"The payoff occurs when peer-reviewed results like these reported today are made public," said Conover. The research team based its findings on some 57,000 discrete chemical analyses measured in real time during a June 19-28, 2010, scientific cruise aboard the *R/V Endeavor*, which is owned by NSF and operated by the University of Rhode Island. WHOI President and Director Susan K. Avery praised the researchers for their "prudence and thoroughness, as they conducted an important, elegant study under difficult conditions in a timely manner."

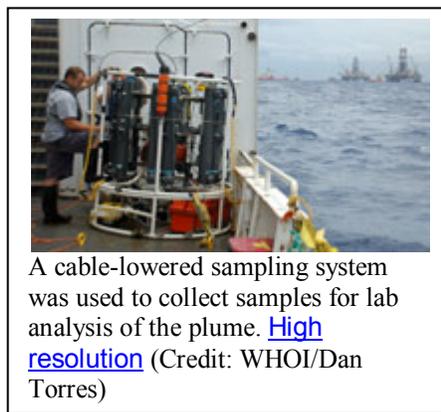
The scientists accomplished the feat using two advanced technologies: the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) *Sentry* and a type of underwater mass spectrometer known as *TETHYS* (Tethered Yearlong Spectrometer).

"We've shown conclusively not only that a plume developed, but also defined its origin and near-field structure," said Richard Camilli of WHOI's Applied Ocean Physics and Engineering Department, chief scientist of the cruise and lead author of the paper. "In June, we observed the plume migrating slowly [at about 0.17 miles per hour] southwest of the source of the blowout," said Camilli.

The researchers began tracking it about three miles from the well head and out to about 22 miles (35 kilometers)--until the approach of Hurricane Alex forced them away from the study area. The levels and distributions of the petroleum hydrocarbons show that "the plume is not caused by natural [oil] seeps" in the Gulf of Mexico, Camilli said. The plume has shown that the oil "was persisting for longer periods than we would have expected," Camilli said.

Whether the plume's existence poses a significant threat to the Gulf is not yet clear, the researchers say. "We don't know how toxic it is," said Reddy, "and we don't know how it formed, or why. But knowing the size, shape, depth, and heading of this plume will be vital for answering many of these questions."

The key to the discovery and mapping of the plume was the use of the mass spectrometer *TETHYS* integrated into the *Sentry* AUV. Camilli developed the mass spectrometer in close industrial partnership with Monitor Instruments Co. in Cheswick, Pa., through a grant from the National Ocean Partnership Program. The *TETHYS*--which is small enough to fit within a shoebox--is capable of identifying minute quantities of petroleum and other chemical compounds in seawater instantly. *Sentry*, funded by NSF and developed and operated by WHOI, is capable of exploring the ocean down to 14,764 feet (4,500 meters) depth. Equipped with its advanced analytical systems, it was able to criss-cross plume boundaries continuously 19 times to help determine the trapped plume's size, shape, and composition.



A cable-lowered sampling system was used to collect samples for lab analysis of the plume. [High resolution](#) (Credit: WHOI/Dan Torres)

This knowledge of the plume structure guided the team in collecting physical samples for further laboratory analyses using a traditional oceanographic tool, a cable-lowered water sampling system that measures conductivity, temperature, and depth (CTD). This CTD, however, was instrumented with a *TETHYS*. In each case, the mass spectrometer was used to positively identify areas containing petroleum hydrocarbons.

"We achieved our results because we had a unique combination of scientific and technological skills," said Dana Yoerger, a co-principal investigator and WHOI senior scientist. In previous research, Yoerger said, "investigators relied mostly on a conventional technique: vertical profiling." "We used *Sentry* and

TETHYS to scan large areas horizontally, which enabled us to target our vertical profiles more effectively. Our methods provide much better information about the size and shape of the plume."

The researchers detected a class of petroleum hydrocarbons at concentrations of more than 50 micrograms per liter. The water samples collected at these depths had no odor of oil and were clear. "But that's not to say it isn't harmful to the environment," said Reddy. The scientists benefited not only from new technology but older methods as well.

Contrary to previous predictions by other scientists, they found no "dead zones," regions of significant oxygen depletion within the plume where almost no fish or other marine animals could survive. They attributed the discrepancy to a potential problem with more modern measuring devices that can give artificially low oxygen readings when coated by oil. The team on Endeavor used an established chemical test developed in the 1880s to check the concentration of dissolved oxygen in water samples, called a Winkler titration. Of the dozens of samples analyzed for oxygen only a few from the plume layer were below expected levels, and even these samples were only slightly depleted.

WHOI geochemist Benjamin Van Mooy, also a principal investigator of the research team, said this finding could have significant implications. "If the oxygen data from the plume layer are telling us it isn't being rapidly consumed by microbes near the well," he said, "the hydrocarbons could persist for some time. So it is possible that oil could be transported considerable distances from the well before being degraded."

The NSF RAPID program, which provides grants for projects having a severe urgency and requiring quick-response research on natural disasters or other unanticipated events, significantly speeded up the acceptance of the WHOI scientific proposals.

"In contrast to the usual six-to-eighteen-month lead time for standard proposals, our plume study was funded two days after the concept was proposed to NSF, and went from notification of the proposal's acceptance to boarding the Endeavor in two-and-a-half weeks," Reddy said. "Very good science was done that will make a big difference," Avery said. "This cruise represents an excellent example of how non-federal research organizations can work with federal agencies and how federal agencies can work together to respond to national disasters." Reddy said the results from this study and more samples yet to be analyzed eventually could refine recent estimates about the amount of the spilled oil that remains in the Gulf. Camilli said he and his WHOI colleagues are considering a new research proposal to look for more plumes. Reddy said the WHOI team members know the chemical makeup of some of the plume, but not all of it. Gas chromatographic analyses of plume samples confirm the existence of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and total xylenes, together called BTEX, at concentrations in excess of 50 micrograms per liter.

"The plume is not pure oil," Camilli said. "But there are oil compounds in there." It may be "a few months of laboratory analysis and validation," Reddy said, before they know the entire inventory of chemicals in the plume.

Other WHOI members of study team included Assistant Scientist James C. Kinsey and Research Associates Cameron P. McIntyre and Sean P. Sylva. The research team also included Michael V. Jakuba of the University of Sydney, Australia, and a graduate of the MIT/WHOI joint program in Oceanographic Engineering, and James V. Maloney of Monitor Instruments Co.

Scientists Release the First Rescued, Rehabilitated Sea Turtles Back into the Gulf

August 18, 2010



Kemp's ridley sea turtle.
[High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

NOAA administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco and Adm. Thad Allen joined state, federal, and partner biologists today as they released 23 Kemp's ridley sea turtles back into the Gulf of Mexico near Cedar Key, Fla., after the turtles were successfully rescued and rehabilitated from the effects of the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill.

Scientists selected the area on Florida's Gulf coast for release because it is an important foraging area for the species, the water was never oiled, and the habitat provides everything these turtles need for survival.

"I'm pleased that Admiral Allen and I were able to assist with the release of these turtles. And we thank

all of our partners in this rescue and rehabilitation effort," said Dr. Lubchenco. "This is a wonderful day for all involved--but especially for the turtles."

"This area near Cedar Key provides excellent habitat for Kemp's ridley sea turtles and has long been known as an important habitat area for this species," said Barbara Schroeder, NOAA's national sea turtle coordinator. "Thanks to the efforts of our rescue teams and rehabilitation facility partners all of the turtles we released today have an excellent chance of surviving in the wild and contributing to the recovery of this species."

The turtles released today were rescued by teams from NOAA and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission working with partners from the Riverhead Foundation and the In-Water Research Group. The turtles received excellent treatment and care, including cleaning and de-oiling, at the Audubon Aquarium in New Orleans, and at Gulf World in Panama City, Fla. The turtles were then cared for by SeaWorld Orlando, Mote Marine Laboratory, and the Florida Aquarium. To date, approximately 500 live turtles have been rescued during the Gulf oil spill, and more than 450 stranded or captured turtles have had visible evidence of external oil. Approximately 350 turtles are still in rehabilitation facilities and will be released as they are given clean bills of health. In addition to the 23 turtles released today after onshore rehabilitation, another 114 turtles were captured, treated aboard the rescue boat, and immediately released while still at sea.

"It's wonderful news that sea turtles hurt by the Deepwater Horizon spill are now rehabilitated and ready to go home to the Gulf of Mexico," said Sen. Bill Nelson of Florida. "This is a testament to the hard work of fish and wildlife agencies and our wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centers."

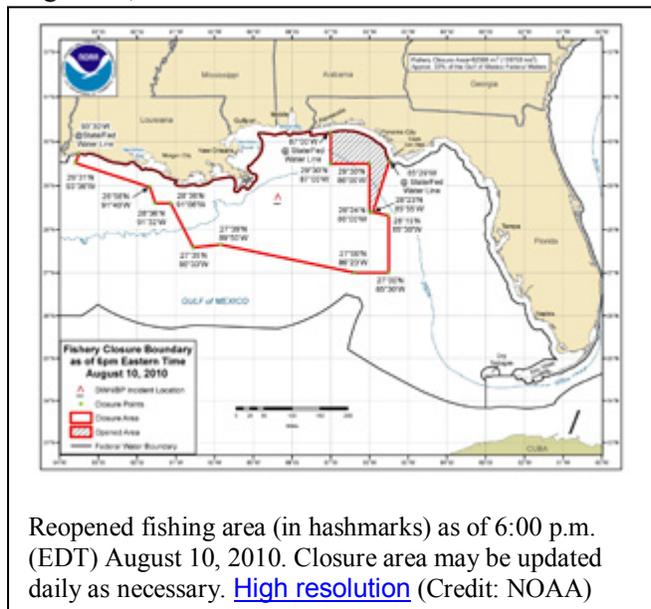
"This is a great day for our biologists since many of these turtles were originally rescued by our staff," said Gil McRae, director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. "Everyone involved has worked hard to ensure that these endangered turtles are returned to the wild so they can contribute to the overall population."

For more information on FWC sea turtle conservation, visit <http://www.MyFWC.com/SeaTurtle>.

NOAA Reopens More Than 5,000 Square Miles of Closed Gulf Fishing Area

No oil has been observed for 30 days in area to be re-opened for fishing

August 10, 2010



Today NOAA reopened 5,144 square miles of Gulf waters to commercial and recreational finfish fishing. The reopening was announced after consultation with FDA and under a [reopening protocol](#) agreed to by NOAA, the FDA, and the Gulf states.

Since July 3, NOAA data have shown no oil in the area, and United States Coast Guard observers flying over the area in the last 30 days have also not observed any oil. Trajectory models show the area is at a low risk for future exposure to oil and, most importantly, fish caught in the area and tested by NOAA experts have shown no signs of contamination.

“Consumer safety is NOAA’s primary concern, which is why we developed rigorous safety standards in conjunction with the FDA and the

Gulf states to ensure that seafood is safe in the reopened area,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “We are confident that Gulf fish from this area is safe to eat and pleased that recreational and commercial fisherman can fish these waters again.”

At its closest point, the area to be reopened is about 115 miles northeast of the Deepwater/BP wellhead. From June 27 through July 20, NOAA sampled 153 finfish, including grouper, snapper, tuna and mahi mahi, from the area. Sensory and chemical testing of these finfish followed the methodology and procedures in the re-opening protocol, with sensory analysis finding no detectable oil or dispersant odors or flavors, and results of chemical analysis well below the levels of concern.

”We know how important it is to the culture and economy of this region to get back out on the water and be able to once again harvest the seafood that the Gulf is famous for,” said Dr. Margaret A. Hamburg, commissioner of food and drugs. “But our top priority in the wake of this disaster must be the safety of the fish that makes it to market. We are confident that the proper processes have been followed, and that consumers can feel good once again serving their families seafood from these waters.”

NOAA will continue to take samples for testing from the newly re-opened area, and the agency has also implemented dockside sampling to test fish caught throughout the Gulf by commercial fishermen. Fishing closures remain the first line of defense to prevent contaminated seafood from entering the marketplace. NOAA continues to work closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Gulf states to ensure seafood safety. NOAA and FDA are working together on broad-scale seafood sampling that includes sampling seafood from inside and outside the closure area, as well as dockside and market-

based sampling.

The closed area now covers 52,395 miles, or 22 percent of the federal waters in the Gulf, down from 37 percent at its height. On July 22, NOAA reopened 26,388 square miles of Gulf waters off of the Florida Peninsula.

NOAA has a number of methods for the public to obtain information or be notified when there is a change to the closed area:

Sign up to receive Southeast Fishery Bulletins by email at SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov

Call 1-800-627-NOAA (1-800-627-6622) to hear a recording of the current coordinates in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish

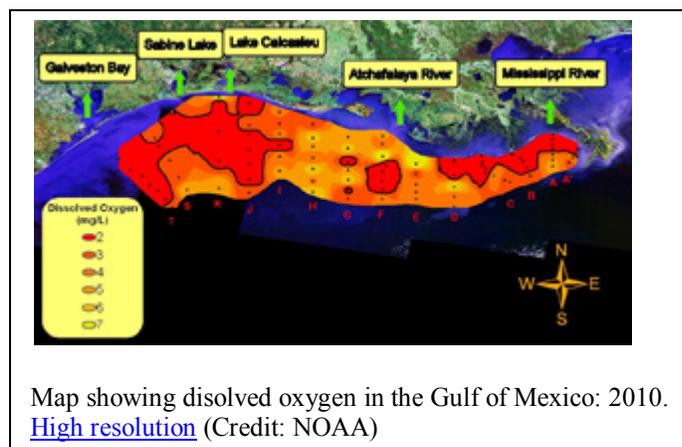
Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for messages about the closure

Receive text messages on your cell phone about changes to the closed area by texting **fishing@gulf** to 84469 (visit <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/558107> for more information)

Follow us on Twitter: @usnoaagov to get a tweet when the closed area changes

NOAA-Supported Scientists Find Changes to Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone

August 9, 2010



NOAA-supported scientists have found this year's Gulf of Mexico dead zone to be the fifth largest on record at 7,722 square miles - an area the size of New Jersey and near the upper limit of their projections. However, tropical storm activity in the Gulf of Mexico caused the zone to be a patchwork rather than a continuous band.

This year's dead zone is nearly double that of 2009s, which was smaller than average. A series of storms and high wind and wave conditions in the shallower waters to the west of the Atchafalaya River delta mixed oxygen

into the traditional dead zone area before last year's survey cruise. Last year's dead zone measured approximately 3,000 square miles.

The research cruise, led by Nancy Rabalais, Ph.D., director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, conducted a survey that extended from the Mississippi River delta west to Galveston Bay. In the western portion of the dead zone scientists found the largest area of low oxygen off the upper Texas coast since surveys began in 1985. The eastern portion of the dead zone does overlap with the region

significantly impacted by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill, however, scientists conducting the cruise think that it is unlikely that the oil spill had a significant impact on the size of the zone.

“Large algal blooms seen in surface waters to the west of the river were not unusual considering the prediction of size for 2010 and the continued input of fresh water and nutrients from the river,” said Rabalais. “It may be difficult to link conditions seen this summer with oil from the BP spill.”

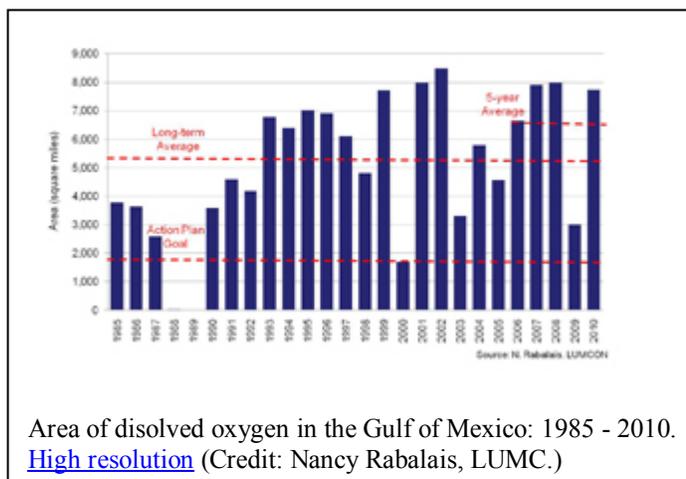
The dead, or hypoxic, zone is fueled by nutrient runoff from agricultural and other human activities in the Mississippi River watershed, which stimulates an overgrowth of algae that sinks, decomposes and consumes most of the life-giving oxygen supply in bottom waters. The Gulf of Mexico dead zone is of particular concern because it threatens valuable commercial and recreational Gulf fisheries that generate about \$2.8 billion annually.

The average size of the dead zone over the past five years has been 6,653 square miles, much larger than 1,900 square miles which is the target goal set by the Gulf of Mexico/Mississippi River Watershed Nutrient Task Force.

“Despite fluctuations in the size of the dead zone due to short-term weather events, the fact remains that we have a large and persistent area of severely degraded habitat that is caused by excessive nutrient pollution draining into the Gulf,” said Robert Magnien, Ph.D., director of [NOAA’s Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research](#). “Additional threats to the Gulf’s economically important living resources, such as the recent oil spill, only increase the urgency to implement nutrient reduction efforts that will help to restore critically needed habitat.”

The models used to forecast the area of the dead zone allow scientists to understand the area’s important underlying causes, so they can give accurate data for long-term management decisions. The models do not currently look at short-term variability due to weather patterns, or the potential effects of the oil spill. This summer’s dead zone may have been even larger, but Rabalais was unable to fully document the western extent of zone due to time constraints.

Earlier this summer, NOAA-sponsored forecast models developed by R. Eugene Turner, Ph.D., Louisiana State University and Donald Scavia, Ph.D., University of Michigan, predicted that the hypoxic zone would be larger than average. Despite the presence of tropical storms, which cause water mixing and can temporarily provide oxygen to bottom waters, continued high discharge from the Mississippi River set conditions for a large dead zone, as predicted.



NOAA Announces Funding to Model Effects of Sea Level Rise in Northern Gulf of Mexico

Study will identify impacts of rising water and erosion to coastal habitats and communities

August 5, 2010

NOAA has awarded \$750,000 for the first year of an anticipated \$3 million research investment to develop the information and tools critically needed to plan for sea level rise and other consequences of climate change along more than 300 miles of the northern Gulf of Mexico's shoreline.

The study team, led by Scott Hagen, Ph.D., of the University of Central Florida, will develop sea level rise computer models to predict the impacts storms and rising water pose to the northern Gulf's coastline, including shoreline and barrier island erosion. The results of the study will be incorporated into coastal ecosystem planning for restoration efforts and other natural resource management decisions in the region. It may also help oil spill responders better understand oil that may reside in the subsided ecosystems.

"We intend to build upon our individual and collective experiences to develop an integrated modeling approach for assessing the ecological impacts of sea level rise," said Hagen. "Our modeling effort will be improved by close coordination between NOAA-funded scientists and local coastal resource managers."

Sea level rise occurs along most of America's coastline and poses danger to nurseries, feeding grounds and permanent habitat sites for commercially and ecologically important fisheries and wildlife. Coastal wetlands and lowlands, beaches and barrier islands, and ocean islands and atolls are especially at risk to rising seas, as they are vulnerable to being submerged or significantly flooded.

The study area ranges from coastal Mississippi to the Florida Panhandle, encompassing three sites in NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserve System. These locations are ideally suited to monitor the long-term impacts from sea level rise because of the relatively pristine nature of their ecosystems and the extensive monitoring and research capacity already in place. A national effort is afoot to establish the area as a network of sentinel sites for climate change impacts on coastal habitats.

Key to the successful application of the study results is the open communication between researchers and local authorities. To this effect, partners in the study will also include representatives from the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

"This advanced warning tool is just one example of NOAA's growing portfolio of climate services so that local authorities can take steps to protect valuable resources and coastal economies in a proactive manner," says Russell Callender, acting director of NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, the office that is providing this competitive funding.

NOAA Still Expects Active Atlantic Hurricane Season; La Niña Develops

August 5, 2010



Hurricane Alex, the first named storm of the 2010 Atlantic hurricane season, hits northeast Mexico on June 30. [High resolution](#) (Credit: NOAA)

The Atlantic Basin remains on track for an active hurricane season, according to the scheduled seasonal outlook update issued today by [NOAA's Climate Prediction Center](#), a division of the [National Weather Service](#). With the season's peak just around the corner – late August through October – the need for preparedness plans is essential.

NOAA also announced today that, as predicted last spring, [La Niña](#) has formed in the tropical Pacific Ocean. This favors lower wind shear over the Atlantic Basin, allowing storm clouds to grow and organize. Other climate factors pointing to an active hurricane season are warmer-than-average water in the tropical Atlantic and Caribbean, and the tropical multi-decadal signal, which since 1995 has brought favorable ocean and atmospheric conditions in unison, leading to more active seasons.

“August heralds the start of the most active phase of the Atlantic hurricane season and with the meteorological factors in place, now is the time for everyone living in hurricane prone areas to be prepared,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator.

Across the entire Atlantic Basin for the whole season – June 1 to November 30 – NOAA's updated outlook is projecting, with a 70 percent probability, a total of (including Alex, Bonnie and Colin):

- 14 to 20 Named Storms (top winds of 39 mph or higher), including:
- 8 to 12 Hurricanes (top winds of 74 mph or higher), of which:
- 4 to 6 could be Major Hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of at least 111 mph)

These ranges are still indicative of an active season, compared to the average of 11 named storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes; however, the upper bounds of the ranges have been lowered from the [initial outlook](#) in late May, which reflected the possibility of even more early season activity. “All indications are for considerable activity during the next several months,” said Gerry Bell, Ph.D., lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. “As we've seen in past years, storms can come on quickly during the peak months of the season. There remains a high likelihood that the season could be very active, with the potential of being one of the more active on record.”

Be prepared for the hurricane season with important information available online at hurricanes.gov/prepare and at FEMA's ready.gov.

Federal Science Report Details Fate of Oil from BP Spill

August 4, 2010

The vast majority of the oil from the BP oil spill has either evaporated or been burned, skimmed, recovered from the wellhead or dispersed much of which is in the process of being degraded. A significant amount of this is the direct result of the robust federal response efforts.

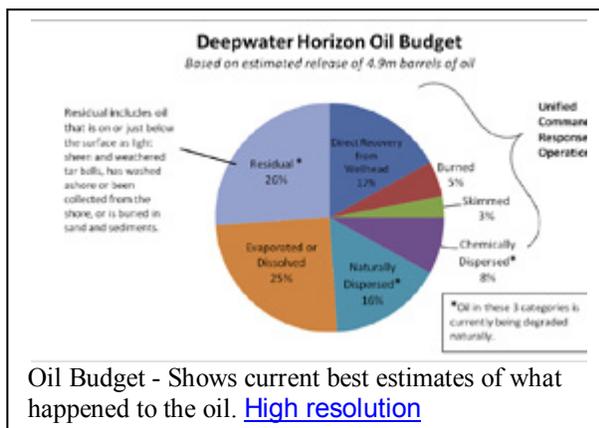
A third (33 percent) of the total amount of oil released in the Deepwater Horizon/BP spill was captured or mitigated by the Unified Command recovery operations, including burning, skimming, chemical dispersion and direct recovery from the wellhead, according to a [federal science report](#) released today.

An additional 25 percent of the total oil naturally evaporated or dissolved, and 16 percent was dispersed naturally into microscopic droplets. The residual amount, just over one quarter (26 percent), is either on or just below the surface as residue and weathered tarballs, has washed ashore or been collected from the shore, or is buried in sand and sediments. Dispersed and residual oil remain in the system until they degrade through a number of natural processes. Early indications are that the oil is degrading quickly.

These estimates were derived by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Department of the Interior (DOI), who jointly developed what is known as an Oil Budget Calculator, to provide measurements and best estimates of what happened to the spilled oil. The calculator is based on 4.9 million barrels of oil released into the Gulf, the governments Flow Rate Technical Group estimate from Monday.

More than 25 of the best government and independent scientists contributed to or reviewed the calculator and its calculation methods.

Deepwater Horizon Oil Budget



"Teams of scientists and experts have been carefully tracking the oil since day one of this spill, and based on the data from those efforts and their collective expertise, they have been able to provide these useful and educated estimates about the fate of the oil," says Jane Lubchenco, under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "Less oil on the surface does not mean that there isn't oil still in the water column or that our beaches and marshes aren't still at risk. Knowing generally what happened to the oil helps us better understand areas of risk and likely impacts."

The estimates do not make conclusions about the long-term impacts of oil on the Gulf. Fully understanding the damages and impacts of the spill on the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem is something that will take time and continued monitoring and research.

Dispersion increases the likelihood that the oil will be biodegraded, both in the water column and at the surface. While there is more analysis to be done to quantify the rate of biodegradation in the Gulf, early observations and preliminary research results from a number of scientists show that the oil from the BP

Deepwater Horizon spill is biodegrading quickly. Scientists from NOAA, EPA, DOE, and academic scientists are working to calculate more precise estimates of this rate.

It is well known that bacteria that break down the dispersed and weathered surface oil are abundant in the Gulf of Mexico in large part because of the warm water, the favorable nutrient and oxygen levels, and the fact that oil enters the Gulf of Mexico through natural seeps regularly.

Residual oil is also degraded and weathered by a number of physical and biological processes. Microbes consume the oil, and wave action, sun, currents and continued evaporation and dissolution continue to break down the residual oil in the water and on shorelines.

The oil budget calculations are based on direct measurements wherever possible and the best available scientific estimates where measurements were not possible. The numbers for direct recovery and burns were measured directly and reported in daily operational reports. The skimming numbers were also based on daily reported estimates. The rest of the numbers were based on previous scientific analyses, best available information and a broad range of scientific expertise. These estimates will continue to be refined as additional information becomes available.

Full [Inter-Agency Report Describing the Oil Budget Calculator](#). Further information on the calculation methods is available in the [Deepwater Horizon Gulf Incident Budget Tool Report from Aug 1, 2010](#).

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Assembles All Hands

Regional ocean governance is being accomplished through the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. Participants from five states and Mexico convened in Biloxi, MS, in early August to focus on implementing the Governors' Action Plan II and to determine priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. All NOS Program Offices were represented; topics included national ocean policy, coastal and marine spatial planning, and the Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill. An important contribution this year was the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and NOAA sponsored program, Coastal Environmental Justice Community Ambassadors, which provided a voice for the Alliance's under-represented constituents and provided information translation and distribution to the priority issue teams. For more information, contact [Marian Hanisko](#).

Interagency Report Warns of Expanding Threat of Hypoxia in U. S. Coastal Waters

According to a new report submitted to Congress by NOAA and other agencies, incidents of hypoxia, during which oxygen levels in the water drop so low that fish and other animals may not survive, have increased nearly thirtyfold in U.S. waters since 1960. The report notes that federal research programs are addressing many aspects of the problem, such as working to restore the Gulf of Mexico and Chesapeake Bay. It concludes, however, that overall management efforts to stem the tide of hypoxia have not made significant headway.

The report provides a comprehensive list of more than 300 U.S. coastal water bodies affected by hypoxia, describes federal investments in research and monitoring, and identifies future research priorities. This is the final report mandated by Congress in the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2004. Contact: Rob.Magnien@noaa.gov.

Link: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/nstc/oceans>

Other NOAA News

Climate Change Planning Guide for State Coastal Managers Now Available

NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management has developed a new on-line guide to help coastal managers reduce the risks associated with climate change impacts that may affect their coasts. "Adapting to Climate Change: A Planning Guide for State Coastal Managers" was written in response to your requests for NOAA guidance on adaptation planning. You can download a pdf version of the guide at <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/climate/adaptation.html>.

Created specifically for state-level coastal management programs, "Adapting to Climate Change: A Planning Guide for State Coastal Managers" is intended to be an aid, not a prescriptive directive, for adaptation planning and implementation. States may choose to use individual steps or chapters or the entire guide, depending on their needs.

The guide provides science-based information on climate change to set the context for adaptation planning and includes steps for setting up a planning process, assessing vulnerability, devising a strategy, and implementing the plan. It compiles information from a number of sources and includes techniques currently being used successfully by coastal managers to address other coastal management issues such as coastal hazards, habitat loss, and secondary and cumulative impacts. For more information, contact Josh.Lott@noaa.gov.

NOAA Launches Coastal Interviews from the States

NOAA's National Ocean Service Website has launched a series of interviews the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) did with several Coastal Zone and National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) Managers entitled America's Coasts...A View from the States. In the series, these managers share their perspectives on the value of and challenges facing our nation's coasts. The second interview, Climate Change Perspectives, features John Watkins, Ohio; Rebecca Ellin, North Carolina; Ted Diers, New Hampshire; Deerin Babb-Brott, Massachusetts; Paul Dest, Maine; and Gary Lytton, Florida. To watch, visit: <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/news/features/aug10/climatechange.html>

U.S. Departments of Commerce and the Interior to Cooperate on Climate-Related Activities

August 03, 2010

U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar formalized an agreement between the two departments to coordinate and cooperate on climate related activities involving science, services, mitigation, adaptation, education and communication. "The impacts of climate change are already being felt in many sectors of our economy, society, and the natural environment," Locke said. "Understanding the effects of ocean acidification and climate variability is critical to developing proactive responses that keep American businesses and communities competitive and resilient. It is imperative that the federal government works cohesively to better understand and anticipate how a changing climate affects people, places and natural resources."

“The strengths, missions and responsibilities of our two agencies are clearly differentiated, but we share mutual management and science challenges, including threatened and endangered species, sea level rise, and the impacts on water availability and quality, and the impacts of ocean acidification, among others,” Salazar said. “We also share an interest in sustaining the economic, social and environmental benefits of natural, historic and cultural resources in a changing climate.”

The two secretaries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides a framework to build upon existing partnerships that bring together the departments’ best available climate science and services to inform adaptation strategies and response decisions to manage America’s oceans, coasts, Great Lakes and public lands. This joint effort aims to leverage each department’s unique capabilities and stewardship mandates to most efficiently and effectively manage the nation’s waters and lands and safeguard the communities and economies that depend on them.

This agreement will also draw on national and regional programs and partnerships of each department, including The Department of the Interior’s emerging Climate Science Centers and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives and the Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s climate science and services, Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments program and Regional Climate Centers. The MOU will also support the ongoing broader interagency coordination efforts through the U.S. Global Change Research Program.

For more information:

The MOU is available online: <http://www.noaa.gov/climate>

NOAA’s Climate Portal: <http://www.climate.gov>

DOI’s Climate Change Portal: <http://www.doi.gov/whatwedo/climate>

NOAA’s Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Website

On July 19, 2010, President Obama signed an executive order establishing a National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes, which identifies coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) as one of nine priority implementation objectives. As the National Ocean Policy is being implemented, news on developments in coastal and marine spatial planning can be found at www.cmsp.noaa.gov. Users can sign up to receive e-mail notifications when updates are posted to the “Latest News” section, which includes links to information on both domestic and international activities in coastal and marine spatial planning.

Next Round of Nominations Begin for National System of MPAs

The Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Center has opened the nomination process to add existing sites to the national system of MPAs. The national system provides coordination, technical assistance, training and grants to existing MPAs to enhance collaborative stewardship of marine resources. Eligible Federal, State, territorial, and tribal MPA programs are invited to nominate some or all of their sites by **November 19**. Currently, 254 Federal, State, and territorial sites are members of the national system. All nominated sites will be announced in the *Federal Register* and be available for public comment on <http://www.mpa.gov>. After final review by the managing agency and the MPA Center, mutually agreed upon MPAs will be accepted into the national system. Nomination packages, the list of eligible sites, and information on the nomination process are available at <http://www.mpa.gov>. For more information, contact [Katy Wowk](#).

In the Gulf States

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.

Alabama Waters Opening for Crab Harvest

August 20, 2010

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Marine Resources Division (MRD) announces the re-opening to the harvest of crabs from all areas previously closed as a precautionary response to the presence of oil from the Deepwater Horizon Incident. These areas include all Alabama Gulf of Mexico waters out to three miles, Pelican Bay, Mississippi Sound and the waters of Mobile Bay that are just north of the Fort Morgan Peninsula. These waters will reopen at 6 a.m., Saturday, August 21. This includes both commercial and recreational crabbing.

ADCNR has worked closely with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to ensure the health and safety of the public during the events following the Deepwater Horizon incident. In correspondence addressing the results of recent testing of crabs from the remaining closed areas, the FDA states that, "The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has concluded that the conditions for reopening specified in our agreed upon reopening protocol have been met for crab in the areas and that such seafood should pose no food safety risk associated with contamination from the Deepwater Horizon explosion, fire and oil spill."

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through five divisions: Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

All Alabama Waters Now Open for Fishing

August 16, 2010

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Marine Resources Division (MRD) announces the re-opening to the harvest of fish from all areas previously closed as a precautionary response to the presence of oil from the Deepwater Horizon Incident. These areas include all Alabama Gulf of Mexico waters out to three miles and the remaining closed waters of Mobile Bay that are just north of the Fort Morgan Peninsula. These waters reopened at 6 a.m., Monday, August 16. This includes both commercial and recreational fishing. In addition to finfish, the area north of Fort Morgan is also open to shrimping.

ADCNR has worked closely with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to ensure the health and safety of the public during the events following the Deepwater Horizon incident. In correspondence addressing the results of recent testing of seafood from the remaining closed areas, the FDA states that, "Sensory evaluation of 50 finfish and 16 shrimp samples for odors indicative of contamination was conducted on August 11-12, 2010. No samples demonstrated odors indicative of oil or dispersant contamination. After sensory evaluation, the samples were forwarded to a chemistry laboratory for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) analysis. Compositing of like species from like sample locations resulted in 10 separate finfish and three separate shrimp samples for PAH analysis. All samples were analyzed using the LC-Fluorescence method. The chemical analyses were completed on August 13, 2010. PAH levels in all samples are significantly below the levels of concern established in the reopening protocol, which was agreed upon by Alabama officials, NOAA and FDA."

Harvest of crabs is still prohibited in all areas that were closed including the Gulf of Mexico, Mississippi Sound, Pelican Bay and the area in Mobile Bay north of Fort Morgan. Analyses are currently being conducted on blue crabs from affected areas. The results will be made public as soon as they are received.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through five divisions: Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

Free Turtle Excluder Devices Available for Skimmer Trawls

August 6, 2010

The Alabama Marine Resources Division (AMRD) announces that a program created by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), through the BP Recovered Oil for Wildlife Fund, will allow skimmer trawl vessels to voluntarily receive free turtle excluder devices (TEDs). This device allows turtles to escape when caught in a trawl net. There is no deadline for requests, but a prompt response is requested.

Currently TEDs are not required of skimmer trawls, but the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has indicated that TED gear for Gulf of Mexico shrimpers using skimmer trawls may be required in the near future. This gear update would relieve skimmer trawl shrimpers from tow-time restrictions. If you are interested in receiving free TED gear and installation instructions for your commercial skimmer trawl, please contact AMRD at 251-861-2882.

For questions about the potential federal TED gear requirement for skimmer trawls, please contact the NMFS Regional Office at 727-824-5312.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through five divisions: Marine Police, Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

MASGC Director Named to Oil-spill Recovery Commission



Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Director LaDon Swann is one of 34 scientists and business leaders named to the Mississippi Gulf of Mexico Commission, a broad-based panel that will report on the impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and aid in the development of a long-term vision to enhance the Gulf of Mexico for the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

“In the wake of the oil spill, we have an opportunity to address any number of issues in a comprehensive way, not just for right now, but into the future,” Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour said in an Aug. 16 Governor’s Office press release. “This commission will have a wide charge, from preliminarily determining the impact of the oil spill on Gulf ecosystems to addressing concerns about seafood safety to improving hurricane protection and habitat restoration. The Gulf of Mexico is the driving force of the Gulf Coast economy, so effective long-term planning and action to improve this asset will result in long-term economic growth for the Mississippi Gulf Coast.”

The commission will work closely with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and various state agencies to develop a plan to submit to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, the former Mississippi governor tapped to lead the long-term restoration of the Gulf of Mexico, the release said. The commission's first meeting is scheduled for 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 17, on the 7th floor of the Hancock Bank, 2510 14th St., Gulfport.

Other commission members include Co-Chairs Bill Walker, director of the Department of Marine Resources, and Trudy Fisher, director of the Department of Environmental Quality; Richard Gollott representing seafood processors; Tom Becker representing the Mississippi Gulf Coast Charter Boats Association; Vernon Asper, marine science professor at the University of Southern Mississippi; Ray Highsmith, director of the National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology at Ole Miss; David Shaw, vice president for Research and Economic Development at Mississippi State University; Jay Grimes, professor of marine microbial ecology at USM; Ron Peresich, chairman of the Gulf Coast Business Council; John Hairston with Hancock Bank; Jerry St. Pe, Jackson County businessman; Chuck Benvenuti, Hancock County businessman; Robert Khayat, former Ole Miss chancellor; Frances Turnage with the State Port Commission; Hank Bounds, Institutes of Higher Learning commissioner; Steve Renfroe with Chevron; Tish Williams, director of the Hancock County Chamber of Commerce; Sen. Tommy Moffatt; Rep. Frances Fredericks; 11 mayors; and the presidents of the Jackson, Harrison, and Hancock county boards of supervisors.

Representatives of state and local governments will act as ex-officio members.

Researchers Identify Three Tagged Manatees

August 23, 2010

Dauphin Island, Alabama

Researchers now know the specific identity and travel history of three manatees captured and tagged in Mobile Bay, Alabama earlier this month. Over the course of two days, August 11-12, researchers with the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Mobile Manatees Sighting Network (MMSN) tagged three male manatees, each weighing between 1,000-1,500 lbs. Photographs of the manatees' distinct features were submitted to the Manatee Individual Photoidentification System (MIPS), which is operated by the United States Geological Survey in Florida.

Unique scar patterns, typically from past encounters with boats, allowed researchers to confirm that all three manatees tagged this year are from the Florida subpopulation and at least one is a previous visitor to Mobile Bay. Two of the manatees are previously known from Crystal River and one is known from Homosassa River in Florida. One of the Crystal River manatees, known as "Zewie," has a sighting history dating back to November 1987 when he was first spotted as a calf! He was spotted again as part of a mating herd in Mobile Bay in June 2009, and dubbed "Zewie" after local radio personalities at 92ZEW began taking an interest in him on air.

Researchers are keeping a close eye on the movement patterns of Zewie and the other two manatees tagged in Alabama this year as part of their ongoing study of manatee habitat and population status in the northern Gulf. This year, however, researchers are also interested in how manatee movements may be affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Bama and Bumpy, MMSN's first two tagged manatees, continue to be tracked in the waters between Alabama and Florida. Bama slipped off her satellite tracking float in mid-July. "That's exactly what it's supposed to do," said MMSN Director Dr. Ruth Carmichael. "These devices are designed to track the animal without inhibiting natural behavior, meaning they can pull them off if needed."

“Since Bama has been tagged for nearly a year, we will not re-tag her. Instead, we will track her opportunistically using a special acoustic monitor in her belt and let her enjoy relative retirement from science,” added Dr. Carmichael. Meanwhile, Bumpy, who retains his tag, finally left Apalachicola Bay and headed toward Alabama, but stopped at Port St. Joseph and returned to Apalachicola Bay.

Researchers are dependent on public sightings to help in their quest to track the behaviors of these gentle mammals. Please report your sightings to the MMSN at 866-493-5803 or e-mail manatee@disl.org. For more information on MMSN, visit manatee.disl.org.

Crucial Time for Manatee Sighting: Mobile Manatee Sighting Network Asking for Help from Boaters, Beachgoers, Public

For the second time in history, manatee researchers from the eastern Gulf of Mexico will converge on Mobile Bay to intensively study this endangered animal in Alabama waters. This week (August 10-13) manatee experts from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Daphne, AL); Sea 2 Shore Alliance (FL); and Sea World Florida will be assisting the Mobile Manatees Sighting Network (MMSN) to locate and observe manatees in our local waters.

Data from the last three years indicate that this is a key time for manatees in Alabama waters. Researchers will track manatee movements, compare vegetation in the rivers and delta compared to past years, and take data on the condition of manatees in local waters. Last year at this time, this same group of researchers tagged two manatees, Bama and Bumpy, to expand understanding of manatee feeding habits and movement patterns in the northern Gulf.

“We are extremely fortunate to have another opportunity to work with manatee researchers who are among the best in the field, said Dr. Ruth Carmichael, Senior Marine Scientist, Dauphin Island Sea Lab. “Understanding where manatees go and what they do locally is particularly important given the presence of oil in our waters. In a few weeks these manatees will be migrating back to their wintering grounds and maybe exposed to oil during their migration. It is important that we keep a close watch on them during this critical time.”

“Sighting calls from the public are absolutely crucial to this process,” she stressed. “We hope that while folks are out on the water during the week, they will be particularly vigilant for manatees, and call our hotline as soon as they spot them. While these collaborators are here, we will have heavy ground, air and water presence to respond to sighting calls.”

The toll-free MMSN Hotline is 1-866-493-5803. The e-mail is manatee@disl.org.

“We’re interested in ALL sightings,” stated Dr. Carmichael. “Even old sightings that you may not have previously called in to us or e-mailed us. “But, of course, immediate reports are the most effective. That way, we can get to the location as soon as possible, and hopefully still be able to observe the manatees.”

Federal law prohibits interfering with the manatee’s behavior, or harassing them in any way. The best rule is to stay at least 100 feet away from them and report the sighting to authorities at MMSN as soon as possible. For more information on MMSN, visit <http://manatee.disl.org>.

Florida DEP Announces Pitch In-Pump Out Campaign Promoting the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program

~New campaign educates marinas and boaters on protecting Florida's waterways~

TALLAHASSEE – This week the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Clean Vessel Act (CVA) grant program launched a new awareness campaign, Pitch In-Pump Out, to inform marinas and boaters about keeping Florida's waterways clean through proper disposal of boater sewage. Boaters should use pumpout stations at marinas and boat ramps or have their boats serviced by a pumpout boat. Marinas can do their part by installing pumpouts for boaters to use and by operating pumpout boats.

Captain Rick Murphy, the official spokesperson for Pitch In-Pump Out, is a well-known Florida sportsman and host of Sportman's Adventures with Captain Rick Murphy on SunSports. He will be featured on television and radio ads airing statewide spreading the message to pitch in and pump out.

“We are very excited to begin this campaign with Captain Rick Murphy and encourage boaters and marinas to be active in protecting Florida's waterways,” said DEP Interim Secretary Mimi Drew. “It is important that boaters know how to properly dispose of sewage, and that marinas know about the grant money available right now to help them purchase and operate pumpout equipment.”

Marine facilities can take advantage of CVA grants that reimburse 75 percent of the total costs of approved pumpout projects, leaving the marina responsible for only 25 percent of the total in matching funds. To offset out of pocket expense, the program also allows facilities to count in-house labor costs and pumpout boat trade-in values toward meeting the required match. With an average cost of \$12,000 – \$75,000, pumpout projects allow sewage to be removed from a boat and then disposed of through established treatment procedures.

The remodeled Pitch In-Pump Out website, www.PitchIn-Pumpout.com, provides easy access to all grant application forms and clear, easy-to-follow steps through the application process as well as an online application for marinas. The site also provides tips for boaters on proper pumpout techniques and a listing of pumpout stations in Florida.

With more than 2,000 marinas, Florida has the largest number of marine facilities in the country. Drawing millions of visitors each year, Florida's clear waters, world-class beaches and coral reefs support a \$60.8 billion tourism industry, an \$18.9 billion boating industry and a fishing industry that injects more than \$7.5 billion a year into Florida's communities.

When sewage is sent overboard, it can negatively impact both the environment and human health. Sewage contains disease-causing microorganisms and can reduce oxygen levels in water that fish and other aquatic species need to survive. To date, more than 10.5 million gallons of raw sewage from boats has been prevented from being discharged into Florida waters because one of the state's 411 pumpout facilities were used.

About the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program

The Clean Vessel Act of 1992 was signed into law to reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges, prohibiting the discharge of raw sewage into fresh water or within coastal salt-water limits. The act established a federal grant program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which to date has awarded more than \$172 million for states to install thousands of sewage pumpout facilities. Grants are available for construction and installation of sewage pumpout facilities at marinas or the purchase of pumpout boats.

Mississippi Oyster Tissue Samples Tested by NOAA and FDA Determined Safe for Human Consumption

August 25, 2010

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), announce that Mississippi oysters are safe for human consumption. Mississippi oyster season is closed during the summer months and typically opens in September or October.

The procedures for reopening a fishery or proving seafood tissue samples are safe for consumption involve a comprehensive and concerted effort based on extensive sampling and testing conducted by the MDMR, MDEQ, NOAA and FDA. The steps involved in the process of reopening of a fishery that was closed as a precaution due to oil in the area are as follows:

1. There must be a low threat of oil exposure; the threat of exposure will be based on past observations and the status of the spill and conditions.
2. Evaluation of oil movement based on confirmation that the closure area is free of visible oil on the surface by visual observation and/or aerial reconnaissance or water testing.
3. Assessment of seafood contamination by sensory testing – Determine if the seafood is contaminated by tissue collection and sensory testing. The acceptable condition is that all specimens must pass sensory testing conducted by a NOAA-FDA expert sensory panel or a NOAA-FDA trained panel of state assessors.
4. Assessment of seafood contamination by chemical analyses – Chemical analyses are performed on samples that pass sensory assessment to confirm that PAH concentrations are below the applicable FDA levels of concern for human health. Tissue samples will continue to be tested every other week to insure seafood quality.

“We are pleased with the results that have come back from FDA and NOAA which show that our Mississippi oysters are safe to eat,” said MDMR Fisheries Director Dale Diaz. “Like all the seafood samples collected and tested from Mississippi territorial waters since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, our Mississippi oyster tissue samples have undergone rigorous testing and have been proven to be well below levels of concern for hydrocarbons.”

“In the testing for the reopening of federal waters, we are finding similar results to what has been found in Mississippi state waters. Of the more than 1,700 federal samples tested, the levels of contaminants detected are 100 to 1,000 times lower than the threshold for what the FDA has identified as potentially harmful to humans,” said Dr. John Stein of NOAA’s Seafood Safety Program responding to the Gulf oil spill.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public 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. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality safeguards the health, safety, and welfare of Mississippians by conserving and improving our environment and wise economic growth through focused research and responsible regulation.

MDMR and MDEQ Reopen All Mississippi Territorial Waters to Commercial and Recreational Blue Crab Fishing

August 21, 2010

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), have ordered the reopening of all Mississippi territorial waters, including those south of the barrier islands, to all commercial and recreational blue crab fishing activities that were part of the precautionary oil spill closures. This order takes effect at 12:01 p.m. today. All commercial and recreational oyster fishing will remain closed in the affected areas; sample results are pending.

The reopening is being implemented after the completion of extensive sampling and testing conducted by the MDMR, MDEQ, NOAA and FDA. The FDA has advised that, following extensive sensory testing and chemical analysis, tissue samples tested indicate that crabs from these previously closed areas south of the barrier islands are safe for consumption. Testing for crab tissues includes specimens of special interest, such as those with dark gills, brought to DMR's attention by concerned fishermen and the public; all of these samples have been determined to be safe for consumption as well.

All other regulations specific to each particular fishery will remain in full force and effect.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public 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.

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

A map of areas of Mississippi territorial waters that reopen at 12:01 p.m. Aug. 21 to blue crab fishing activities is available [online](#). Waters north of the barrier islands were reopened Aug. 20 to those activities.

MDEQ Begins Intensive Monitoring for Submersed Oil in the Mississippi Sound

August 17, 2010

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), in coordination with the Unified Incident Command in Mobile, announced that it is launching an initiative this week to systematically sample for submersed oil in the Mississippi Sound. This intensive effort will extend from Mobile Bay to the Louisiana stateline, and the initial phase is expected to be completed in approximately fourteen days with weather permitting.

“Fish, shrimp, and crabs in Mississippi waters are safe to eat based on the extensive water and seafood sampling conducted by multiple federal and state agencies. We are implementing this monitoring effort to provide a more complete picture of whether any oil remains in our waters and to address the questions we

all have about potential underwater oil. A three-pronged sampling effort should provide a good picture of what is or is not in the Mississippi Sound. If there is oil in water column, we want to know about it and deal with it. If it is not, then we want to put an end to the underwater oil assertions which is only damaging the marketability of our seafood,” said Trudy Fisher, MDEQ Executive Director.

This plan, employing Vessels of Opportunity and six of the state-owned skimmers, includes three separate and unique tactics to investigate the existence of submerged oil in the Mississippi Sound:

- *Sorbent Probes Deployment and Water Sampling*

The first method uses about 30 private vessels from the Vessels of Opportunity Program using sorbent probes and depth finders to find and delineate areas of suspected oil below the water's surface. The Mississippi Sound will be divided into a grid, made up of areas that are approximately 2 miles on each side, an area of approximately four square miles. This grid formation will create approximately 180 distinct areas of approximately equal size that will be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of submerged oil.

The six sampling boats, staffed by MDEQ, will collect samples from any areas of suspected oil identified by the surveying vessels. The surveying vessel will deploy sorbent probes at regular intervals along the survey route, and also when depth finder readings indicate something suspicious below the surface. If the probe indicates that potential submerged oil is present, the survey team will contact the MDEQ sampling team to initiate sample collection activities. Samples will be analyzed for petroleum compounds, dispersants, and phytoplankton or algae.

- *Fluorometer Readings and Water Sampling*

The second sampling technique will involve the continuous measurement of oil in the water column as a vessel will tow a submersible fluorometer along a specified course from Mobile Bay to the mouth of the Pearl River on the western side of Hancock County. This instrument will continuously monitor for oil plumes, and this real time data will be coupled with GPS locational data and other routine water quality data including oxygen, temperature and salinity. Sampling technicians aboard the vessel will collect additional samples when the fluorometer detects the presence of oil in the water column. This technique has been used successfully in deepwater studies aboard oceanographic research vessels, but this will be the first time this has been used in Mississippi Sound.

- *Sediment Grabs*

The third part of this sampling effort will focus on oil in or on the bottom sediments of the Sound. A separate vessel and crew will be dedicated to this task. The crew will collect sediment samples along a specified course throughout the Sound. The samples will be inspected visually and by smell for the presence of oil, and if oil material is suspected, samples will be collected for further analysis.

More information and links about MDEQ's and DMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm. Water sampling information: <http://opcgis.deq.state.ms.us/oilspillmap>, air monitoring data: <http://gulfoast.airnowtech.org>, and beach monitoring information: <http://www.usm.edu/gcrl/msbeach/index.cgi>.

MDMR and MDEQ Reopen All Mississippi Territorial Waters to Commercial and Recreational Finfish and Shrimp Fishing

August 6, 2010

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), have ordered the reopening of all Mississippi territorial waters, including those south of the barrier islands, to all commercial and recreational finfish and shrimp fishing activities that were part of the precautionary oil spill closures. This order takes effect at 5:00 p.m. today. All commercial and recreational crab and oyster fishing will remain closed in the affected areas.

The reopening is being implemented after the completion of extensive sampling and testing conducted by the MDMR, MDEQ, NOAA and the FDA. The FDA has advised that, following extensive sensory testing and chemical analysis, tissue samples tested indicate that seafood from these previously closed areas north of the barrier islands remains safe for consumption.

Due to a more complex testing process for crab and oyster, these fisheries will remain prohibited in the closed areas. Crab and oyster tissue samples are currently being tested, and as soon as data indicates they are safe for consumption, additional areas will be opened for these fisheries.

All waters north of the barrier islands that are normally open to shrimping will be open. However, MDMR reminds shrimp fishermen who use skimmer trawls that a 30-minute tow time is in effect, unless they have a properly installed turtle excluder device.

All other regulations specific to each particular fishery will remain in full force and effect. Anglers are asked to avoid disturbing boom and oil spill-related activities.

More information and links about MDEQ's and MDMR's roles in oil spill response are available at www.deq.state.ms.us/oilspill and www.dmr.state.ms.us/DMR/oil-spill.htm. Water sampling information available at: <http://opcgis.deq.state.ms.us/oilspillmap> and air monitoring data at: <http://gulfc coast.airnowtech.org>.

Join MDEQ on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/MDEQ/118172664880239?v=wall>. Follow MDEQ on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MDEQ>.

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

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public 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.

A map showing areas of Mississippi territorial waters that reopen at 5 p.m. Aug. 6 to finfish and shrimp fishing activities is available [online](#). Waters north of the barrier islands were reopened July 30 to those activities.

Grand Bay NERR, Partners Studying Mercury in Atmosphere



NOAA scientists Paul Kelley, left, and Winston Luke, right, prepare a weather balloon for launch at the Grand Bay NERR. Instruments on board will monitor mercury levels in the atmosphere from the ground to over 100,000 feet. Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

MOSS POINT, Miss. – Scientists and staff at the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) are participating in an intensive field study to investigate chemistry, transport and deposition of mercury compounds in the atmosphere along the Mississippi coast. The study is ongoing from July 31 to Aug. 15, 2010.

Other partners engaged in this project include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Air Resources Laboratory (NOAA/ARL), the Georgia Institute of Technology, Florida State University, the University of Miami, the University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI), the Canaan Valley Institute, Florida A&M University, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality and NOAA’s National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS).

For this study, scientists will take advantage of an existing mercury measurement facility located at Grand Bay NERR. Additional mercury measurements will be made using instrumentation in aircraft and weather balloons. Among scheduled balloon launches is one set for early the week of Aug. 9.

“This study is one of the most comprehensive of its kind ever initiated, making use of existing onsite monitoring

equipment and the added aerial reconnaissance,” said Grand Bay Reserve Manager David Ruple.

The scientists will measure the mercury in the atmosphere, after specific rainfall events and in dew, to determine the origin of the measured compounds. The role played by halogen species (bromine and chlorine) in the marine environment as well as in the upper atmosphere will also be investigated using a variety of techniques.

The UTSI Piper Navajo aircraft will be based at Trent Lott International Airport and will be used to measure mercury and other pollutants at altitudes ranging from the surface to 15,000 feet, in partnership with NOAA/ARL and the University of Miami. To support the aircraft measurements, NOAA/ARL scientists will also launch weather balloons from the NERR to measure the profiles of temperature, humidity, pressure, winds, and ozone concentrations from the surface to altitudes as high as 100,000 feet. Grand Bay NERR, Florida A&M University and NCCOS scientists will measure mercury concentrations in biota and in water and sediment samples at various locations within the reserve.

Lead NOAA scientist Winston Luke said: “The study is intended to address key issues in atmospheric mercury research including the importance of transport from the lower atmosphere to the surface; the role of halogen compounds in mercury transformations; the specific chemical identities of individual mercury species; the relative contributions of natural and anthropogenic (man-made) emissions sources; and the relationship between mercury concentrations in the air and in rainfall to the prevalence of mercury in the Grand Bay NERR ecosystem, including fish and other wildlife.”

In most locations, mercury in aquatic ecosystems results from deposition from the atmosphere, but the mercury in the atmosphere arises from both natural and man-made sources. Data show that the Gulf of Mexico region is plagued by persistently high total mercury in precipitation. Once in the watershed, this mercury can enter the local food chain. Human exposure to mercury is primarily from the consumption of contaminated fish and other aquatic organisms. Fish consumption in coastal areas is typically much higher than the national average.

This study will allow the scientists to better understand what is unique about the mercury in the region and to address key questions, such as: Are mercury concentrations high because of halogens in the marine boundary layer? Are mercury concentrations high because frequent and widespread convective activity and rainfall continually scrub the middle and upper troposphere of reactive gaseous mercury, which may arise from halogen chemistry in the troposphere and the stratosphere? What role is played by local and regional anthropogenic mercury sources?

For more information on the study, please contact Reserve Manager David Ruple at 228-475-7047.

The Reserve is located near the community of Pecan in southeast Jackson County and includes wetlands and waterways from Bang's Lake to the Alabama state line. A major goal of the Reserve is to provide for research coordination and dissemination of scientific data to the community and local decision-makers to provide sound information on which to base management decisions.

The 18,000-acre reserve is home to several rare plant and animal species and serves as an essential nursery habitat for numerous important commercial and recreational fish species. Reserve is managed through state-federal partnership between the DMR and NOAA.

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.

Louisiana Ground Water Resources Commission Updated on Water Use

August 19, 2010

The Louisiana Ground Water Resources Program staffers reported to the state Ground Water Resources Commission this week that nearly 80 percent of water used for drilling operations in the Haynesville Shale now comes from surface water sources.

A Ground Water Program study of the operations of more than 420 wells drilled from October 2009 through mid-July shows 1.5 billion gallons of surface water has been used in drilling operations in the Haynesville Shale natural gas formation in northwest Louisiana – making up nearly 80 percent of the total water used in those operations.

Ground Water Commission members heard that the efforts of the state Office of Conservation and its Ground Water Resources Program in guiding the industry to alternative water sources and in tracking the water sources used have helped protect the ground water resources in the area.

“We can observe that these companies are cooperating with the state as we seek the balance of meeting the needs of energy production and our environment,” said Lt. Governor Scott Angelle, chairman of the Commission. “We can find a way in Louisiana to develop energy resources without compromising our stewardship responsibilities in protecting our environment.”

The August meeting marks the ninth meeting held by the Commission in the 22 months since Gov. Bobby Jindal appointed Angelle as chairman – state law requires the body to meet twice a year. The Commission has also met in six different venues throughout the state in that time to allow greater access to citizens.

The Commission was updated on the continued progress of the comprehensive statewide water management plan. The contractors working on development of the plan are still on schedule to present a draft report to the Commission in late 2010.

Ground Water Resources staffers also reported to the Commission that the merging of DNR and state Department of Transportation and Development databases on ground water well use, construction and installation has been completed.

The merger of the electronic databases will allow for much greater speed and efficiency in evaluating and managing current use and evaluation of proposed new wells and usage rates for ground water, said Office of Conservation Environmental Division Director Gary Snellgrove.

For the public and those involved in the water supply industry, the new database will mean well locations and other information can be gathered directly through the DNR SONRIS website, cutting time and extra steps for those who need the data.

Gary Hanson, director of LSU-Shreveport’s Red River Watershed Management Institute, said the newly merged database provides not only state-of-the-art technology, but also as system that is easy to learn and use.

“Although the previous DOTD water well database was a vital repository for water well and water data, the new DNR interactive special database is a tremendous tool for water managers, the general public, ground water researchers and educators,” Hanson said. “This will be a great tool for management in the Haynesville Shale play.”

Following legislative action in 2009, DNR’s Office of Conservation worked with DOTD to transfer management of the DOTD Water Well Drillers Licensing and Regulations Program, the Water Well Registration Program and its enforcement program to the Office of Conservation, as part of its environmental division and Ground Water Resources Program. Though much of the ground water responsibility has been centralized to the Office of Conservation as part of a streamlining effort, DOTD continues to provide well inspectors and funding for the program.

“Our colleagues at DOTD did an excellent job of managing their portion of the ground water program before the transfer, and throughout this streamlining effort, have been able and cooperative in making sure we had a smooth transition,” Angelle said.

Louisiana DNR Coastal Zone Boundary Study

Study recommends additional regulated areas, new approaches to management

August 18, 2010

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Office of Coastal Management on Wednesday delivered the results of a science-based study on the inland boundary of the state's coastal zone, with recommendations on changes to the boundary set more than 30 years ago to ensure it meets the coastal zone management needs of the state and its people.

Key recommendations in the study include –

- Supplementing the Coastal Use Permit method of managing the Coastal Management Zone, with an “Intergovernmental Coordination Zone” that requires governmental projects or actions involving major changes to water flow or management to obtain a determination that they are consistent with the Louisiana Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast
- The addition of a portion of Ascension Parish to the Coastal Management Zone, bringing the total number of parishes within the zone from 19 to 20
- A net increase in the area covered by the zone of almost 2,000 square miles – nine parishes would see increases of Coastal Zone area of 52 to 570 square miles (Ascension, Assumption, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Terrebonne); two would see decreases of 144 to 50 square miles (Livingston and Tangipahoa); and the rest would see no changes

The state Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), acting upon the direction of the state Legislature, authorized the comprehensive study and evaluation of the coastal zone boundary by DNR's Office of Coastal Management in 2009. DNR delivered that evaluation report at the Wednesday meeting of the CPRA. The report was conducted over the course of approximately one year – with the state providing \$100,000 in funding, and federal funds providing up to \$342,000.

The Coastal Zone Management Program, enacted by the federal government in 1972, creates state and federal partnerships with the goal of protecting, restoring and responsibly developing coastal communities and resources. Louisiana created its coastal management program within the federal guidelines in 1978.

The program gives DNR the authority to regulate development activities and manage resources within the defined coastal zone.

“In the three decades since the coastal zone boundary was originally set, we have seen changes in the landforms and waters of our coast; erosion has advanced and hurricanes have brought sudden, drastic changes to coastal areas. We have also continued to make use of the best science to find new processes, new programs and better understanding of the factors that impact our coastal zone,” said Louis Buatt, assistant secretary with DNR's Office of Coastal Management.

The recommended changes in the primary Coastal Management Zone boundary more accurately reflect the most up-to-date scientific understanding of the functioning of the complex systems that shape Louisiana's coast, Buatt said.

The introduction of the Intergovernmental Coordination Zone is intended to more appropriately recognize and manage the impacts on coastal areas and wetlands of projects or actions involving major hydrologic modifications by governmental entities – such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' management of the Old River Control Structure on the Mississippi River.

The health of Louisiana's coast is crucial to both the entire state and the nation:

- Nearly half the state's population lives in coastal parishes
- More than half of the state's annual revenues are generated in the coastal zone
- Five of the top 15 tonnage ports in the U.S. depend on the coastal zone
- About 26 percent of the oil and 26 percent of the natural gas used by the nation flow through Louisiana
- Louisiana has been the top producer in the lower 48 states in fisheries, and the top producer in the nation of oysters, blue crabs and crawfish.

The coastal zone designation can be important to parishes because they can be eligible for funding, loans and participation in coastal programs, but also take on new funding and regulatory responsibilities.

The CPRA's directive called for the coastal zone study to be science-based, to consider existing legal issues and other state coastal programs, to take economic concerns such as energy, fisheries, maritime transport and tourism into account, and to consider archaeological and cultural concerns.

The Office of Coastal Management depended primarily on its experienced staff of coastal scientists in conducting the study, but also drew from the expertise of Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure, Comite Resources and the Louisiana Sea Grant Law and Policy Program to assist in some portions.

"With the unprecedented levels of support and attention this issue has gained at the state and national level, we must ensure that our approach to managing the coast is not only based in science and takes into account the critical social, cultural and economic aspects of the coastal area, but that we are targeting the right areas of the state in the most appropriate way," Buatt said.

More information on the coastal zone study can be found at <http://dnr.louisiana.gov/crm>.

Related documents:

- **Report:** [Defining Louisiana's Coastal Zone: A Science Based Evaluation of the Louisiana Coastal Zone Inland Boundary](#)
- [Appendices A-D](#)
- **Presentation:** [Defining Louisiana's Coastal Zone](#)

17th Annual U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum to Focus on Clean Energy

AUSTIN — Texas' leadership in clean energy — wind, solar, geothermal, other renewables and natural gas — will be showcased at the 17th annual United States-Mexico Border Energy Forum on September 30 and October 1 in Chihuahua, capital of the Mexican state of Chihuahua. Energy has emerged as a mutually-recognized theme critically needed to drive future growth in the ten U.S. and Mexican border states, which have a combined population of more than 70 million and share many challenges as well as opportunities for cooperation. "This Forum is all about maximizing our energy dollars while minimizing our environmental impacts and in the process, sharing our knowledge and expertise with our friends and neighbors," said Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson.

More than 200 leaders from the U.S. and Mexico representing industry, government, education and environmental organizations are expected to attend the Forum to discuss and develop cutting-edge strategies and common-sense solutions for clean energy which are well grounded in economic reality.

Key issues on the agenda include the future of energy policy; new opportunities to develop renewable resources; regional electricity supply and the potential for cross-border trade; innovation in financing energy projects and infrastructure; developments affecting natural gas markets; energy efficiency and water systems; alternative transportation fuels; and workforce training and energy education.

The Forum will begin with an opening reception on the evening of September 29, and a special tour will be offered after the conference on October 1 to a bio-methane production facility that includes the largest digester in Mexico. The General Land Office is working with a wide variety of partners to stage the Forum, including the Chihuahua state government, the North American Development Bank, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Energy, Mexico's Ministry of Energy, the University of Texas at El Paso, Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua and the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey. For more information on the Border Energy Forum, please visit www.borderenergyforum.org.

HRI International Governance Workshop

Harte Research Institute held the first international Summer Workshop on Governance for the Gulf of Mexico on June 21-25. The week-long workshop examined obstacles to creating marine protected areas in the Gulf of Mexico. [Click here to download the Extended Report](#)

Participants of the first "Summer Workshop on Governance for the Gulf of Mexico: Overcoming International Obstacles to Create Marine Protected Areas in the Gulf of Mexico" included U.S. and Mexican graduate students and representatives from international agencies, academic institutions, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations from Mexico, the United States and Cuba.

Three scientists from Cuba, among others from across the nation and Mexico, visited HRI and participated in the workshop. The Cuban scientists included:

- Dr. Guillermo García Montero, director of the National Aquarium of Cuba and the president of the National Committee on Oceanography, who is an expert in coastal zone science and management and serves on the HRI Advisory Board.
- Dr. Maritza García García, director for the National Center for Protected Areas (CNAP) in Cuba, who is leading efforts to expand the network of marine protected areas along Cuba's southern coast with funding from the Global Environmental Facility.
- Dr. Roberto Perez de los Reyes, a former director of the Institute of Oceanology in Cuba and current scientist for the Agency for the Environment, who is a highly-respected expert on ocean frontal zones, coastal zone rehabilitation, design and implementation of environmental observing and monitoring systems

The workshop represents collaboration through a cooperative agreement between Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the University of Veracruz in Mexico. In addition, the workshop is a landmark effort to provide training for future environmental and community leaders who work internationally in the integration of science and policy in the Gulf of Mexico region. Presentations are now available to download at: <http://harteresearchinstitute.org/international-governance-workshop>.

Other News

Commerce Secretary Gary Locke Announces \$31.3 Million in Restoration and Recovery Grants for Louisiana Gulf

August 16, 2010

U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke visited Louisiana today to hear from local business owners and community members who have been directly affected by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill. At an economic roundtable in Metairie, La., Locke announced \$31.3 million in coastal restoration and economic development grants for Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. “These grants are another sign of this administration’s commitment to help the Gulf Coast’s economy and environment recover in the wake of the BP oil spill,” Locke said.

A \$30.7 million restoration grant, awarded to the Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration by Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will fund the restoration of a critical barrier headland near Port Fourchon, La. The headland, which experiences some of the highest shoreline retreat rates in the nation, protects vital bay and wetland habitat and property from storm surge and erosion. Louisiana’s coastal habitat is the state’s first line of defense during storms, reducing the devastating effects of wind, waves, and flooding.

In addition, Locke announced a \$600,000 effort by Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) to fund the deployment of 21 Assessment and Evaluation teams to communities affected by the BP oil spill in the Gulf

The 21 teams are comprised of economic development practitioners, industry experts, and government officials that will conduct in-depth analyses of critical issues faced by the impacted communities, provide recommendations, and suggest potential solutions to issues of industry migration, workforce skills, small business needs, and infrastructure access and management. Two teams were deployed today to two counties in Florida. Two teams earlier were deployed in pilot assessments in two coastal Louisiana parishes.

Earlier in the day, Locke toured a Gulf seafood processing plant in Lafitte, and had lunch with members of the local seafood and restaurant industry at Drago’s in Metairie. This was Locke's third visit to Louisiana since June. Last month, Locke traveled to New Orleans to review the work being done by the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and discuss supporting the industry in areas impacted by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill.

The funding for the NOAA restoration grant is provided as part of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA), a state-federal partnership managed by the state of Louisiana, NOAA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

U.S.G.S. Releases New Phosphorus Map for the Southeastern U.S.

A new USGS map report identifies watersheds in the southeastern United States with naturally occurring geologic sources of phosphorus. Understanding the spatial variation in potential watershed contributions of total phosphorus from geologic materials can assist water resource managers in developing nutrient criteria that accounts for natural variability in phosphorus contributions from weathering and erosion of surficial geologic materials.

The report characterizes potential contributions of phosphorus to streams from naturally occurring geologic materials based on the spatial distribution of phosphorus levels in streambed sediment from 5,560 sampling sites in small, relatively undisturbed basins throughout the southeastern United States. Additionally, phosphate mined-area contributions of phosphorus to streams are characterized by mapping boundaries of mined land from both active and inactive mine operations and associating streambed-sediment phosphorus levels from nearby sites.

Potential contribution of total phosphorus from natural sources and also from active and inactive mines are characterized in U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Map 3102, "Mapping Watershed Potential to Contribute Phosphorus from Geologic Materials to Receiving Streams, Southeastern United States".

For more information on the potential contributions of phosphorus from natural sources and active and inactive mines, contact Silvia Terziotti, seterzio@usgs.gov.

Grant Opportunities

ConocoPhillips SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program

[Request for Proposals](#)

The SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program is a partnership between ConocoPhillips (www.ConocoPhillips.com) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (www.nfwf.org). The purpose of this partnership is to provide grants for bird conservation projects in areas where ConocoPhillips has an operating presence.

Funding Availability: \$600,000 annually

Applicant Eligibility: Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, educational institutions, and local and State units of governments.

Project Eligibility and Funding Priorities: To be eligible for funding, a project must benefit migratory birds and their habitats. The SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program supports projects that:

- Protect, restore or manage habitats for migratory birds
- Benefit declining, threatened or endangered species
- Generate measurable outcomes
- Provide opportunities for employee participation and volunteerism

- Special consideration will be given to projects that focus on American Oystercatcher, Red Knot, Gunnison Sage-grouse, and waterfowl and shorebirds in the following areas where ConocoPhillips has an operating presence.

American Oystercatcher: coastal areas in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Texas, Louisiana and Alabama; Please consult the American Oystercatcher Business Plan and other information on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation website (www.nfwf.org) for guidance with regard to these priorities.

Typical grant awards range from \$25,000 to \$200,000. Awards from the ConocoPhillips SPIRIT of Conservation Migratory Bird Program will typically be a mixture of private funds from ConocoPhillips and Federal funds.

Matching Contributions: All grant awards require a minimum 1:1 match of cash or contributed goods and services, of which at least 50% should be from non-Federal sources. The ratio of matching funds offered by the applicant is one criterion considered during the review process.

Deadlines and Application Procedures: **Pre-proposals are due on October 1, 2010** prior to midnight. Following a review of pre-proposals, selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals. Invited full proposals will be due on December 3, 2010 prior to midnight.

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Easygrants system. Hard-copy applications will not be considered for funding. To start an application, please click on the following link: <http://www.nfwf.org/easygrants>. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting their application. Once you have started an application, you may save it and return at a later time to complete and submit it, up until the application deadline. Please be sure to disable the pop-up blocker on your Internet browser prior to beginning the application process. Also, please use the following link to access other useful information for applicants, including videos that demonstrate the Easygrants online system: <http://www.nfwf.org/applicantinfo>. Prospective applicants are strongly urged to contact Todd Hogrefe (todd.hogrefe@nfwf.org; 612-713-5185) before submitting a pre-proposal.

Coastal Habitat Restoration Funding Opportunities

The NOAA Restoration Center has two new funding opportunities available for coastal habitat restoration projects:

Open Rivers Initiative

Through this program, the NOAA Restoration Center provides technical expertise and financial assistance to remove dams and barriers and restore habitat for the many species that migrate between the ocean and the nation's freshwater rivers and streams. Proposed projects should directly benefit migratory species such as salmon, sturgeon, shad, river herring, striped bass, and American eel. They should also improve community vitality and public safety and encourage economic growth. The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **November 17, 2010**. To learn more, click [here](#).



Marine Debris Program

With funding from NOAA's Marine Debris Program, the NOAA Restoration Center administers the Community-based Marine Debris Removal Grants competition. This funding supports locally driven, community-based marine debris removal projects that benefit coastal habitat, waterways, and wildlife including migratory fish. Proposed projects should have strong on-the-ground habitat components involving the removal of marine debris and derelict fishing gear, as well as activities that provide social benefits for people and their communities and long-term ecological habitat improvements. The deadline to apply for this opportunity is **November 1, 2010**. To learn more, click [here](#).



FY 2011 Funding Opportunity: Regional Ecosystem Prediction Program

Understanding Coral Ecosystem Connectivity in the Gulf of Mexico – Pulley Ridge to the Florida Keys

Due Date: Full proposals are due October 21, 2010 at 3 p.m. Eastern Time.

NOAA's Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research (NOAA/CSCOR), in partnership with the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (NOAA/OER), National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office, and Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team, is soliciting proposals for a project under the Regional Ecosystem Prediction Program of up to 5 years in duration to conduct research to improve the understanding of population connectivity of key species between the southernmost portion of Pulley Ridge on the West Florida continental shelf and downstream to the coral ecosystems of the Florida Keys. Coral ecosystems upstream of Pulley Ridge can be considered if directly relevant to population connectivity or to provide context to the overall study.

This information will be used to improve the ability of Gulf of Mexico resource managers to proactively develop strategies to manage and protect poorly understood mesophotic coral ecosystems, including coastal and marine spatial planning and the siting of marine protected areas and marine protected area networks for shallow and mesophotic coral ecosystems.

One project is expected to be supported for up to 5 years, with an annual budget up to \$1,000,000. At no additional cost, up to 15 days per year for two years of time using the MolaMola AUV will be provided by the NOAA/OER National Institute for Undersea Science and Technology.

Additionally, NOAA/CSCOR has partnered once again with NOAA/OER to provide their expertise in administering appropriate technologies for field-based research to support your proposal such as advanced technical diving, autonomous underwater vehicles and remotely operated vehicles. Operational costs for conducting the research must be included in the proposal.

The full funding opportunity and information on how to apply can be found on grants.gov by clicking on this [link](#) or by searching for CFDA #11.478. For more information, please contact Kimberly Puglise, NOAA/CSCOR, 301-713-3338 x140 or kimberly.puglise@noaa.gov.

Texas Coastal Management Program Call for Proposals

As in the previous grant cycles, the [Coastal Coordination Council](#) (CCC) expects to award approximately \$1.8 million for planning, acquisition, construction, education, and research projects in Grant Cycle 16.

The deadline for pre-proposals was June 23, 2010 by 5:00 p.m.; however, submission of the pre-proposal is optional and is only necessary if written comments are desired. The full application is due **October 13, 2010** by 5:00 p.m. Visit <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/coastal/grants/cycle16.html> for more information.

National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program

Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Environmental Information (OEI)

Funding Opportunity Title: [FY 2011 National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program](#)

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OEI-11-01

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.608

Dates: **November 5, 2010** – Deadline for submitting proposals to EPA; July 31, 2011 – Expected Award of FY 2011 Exchange Network Grants

EPA, states, territories, and tribes are working together to develop the Exchange Network (EN), a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. EN Partners exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the Exchange Network and the Agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information on the Exchange Network is available at www.exchangenetwork.net.

The Exchange Network Grant Program provides funding to states, territories, tribes, and inter-tribal consortia to develop the information technology and information management capabilities they need to actively participate in the Exchange Network. This grant program supports the exchange of environmental data and collaborative work within the Exchange Network and may also be used to fund the standardization, exchange and integration of geospatial information to address environmental, natural resource, and human health challenges.

Conferences and Workshops

29th International Submerged Lands Management Conference

Purpose: Increase awareness of the management issues surrounding submerged lands within the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean, and provide a forum for discussion about submerged lands issues.

Upcoming Webinar Series: September - December 2010

Thursday, September 23, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Submerged Resources in the Face of a Changing Climate
- How management strategies are evolving to accommodate climate change and sea level rise.

Thursday, October 7, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Mapping, Modeling and the Use of GIS in the Management of Submerged Lands Resources
- How GIS can be used to facilitate the development of further knowledge and improve decision making.

Thursday, October 21, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Submerged Lands Restoration and Nurseries
- Discussions of successful coral nursery, oyster restoration and seagrass restoration projects.

Thursday, November 4, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Managing the Balancing Act: Recreational Boating Use and Protecting Submerged Land Resources
- How managers are establishing a sustainable balance between public use and coastal resource protection.

Thursday, November 18, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Managing Cultural Resources on Submerged Lands
- Methods of documenting and evaluating impacts to submerged cultural resources.

Thursday, December 2, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Conservation and Management of Submerged Lands and Related Resources
- Different strategies used by various governmental and private entities to protect submerged lands and related resources.

Thursday, December 16, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. EST

- Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

For more information, visit www.submergedlandsconference.com.

Project Design and Evaluation Workshop

October 5-6, 2010

Grand Bay NERR

NOAA Coastal Services Center, Mississippi Coastal Plain RC&D, Grand Bay NERR and Weeks Bay NERR announce a training opportunity for coastal resource, program and project managers. On October 5 & 6, 2010 at Grand Bay NERR, plan to attend the Program Design and Evaluation Workshop. This course provides participants with the knowledge, skills, and tools to design and implement projects that have measurable impacts on the intended audience. The interactive curriculum can help increase the effectiveness of projects by applying instructional design theory including logic modeling. The course includes an introduction to evaluation elements.

Registration is due by September 22, 2010. Fee for the workshop is \$15.00. Space is limited, so early registration is recommended. The use of credit cards is permitted. Please call the Mississippi Coastal Plain RC&D, Inc. at 601-528-5133 for credit card details. For questions about registration, please contact Amanda Gaskin (601-528-5133). For questions about workshop content, please contact Avia Huisman (228-475-7047 & avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov) or Michael Shelton (251-928-9792 & michael.shelton@dcnr.alabama.gov).

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Coastal Pathogens Risk Assessment Workshop

October 13-15, 2010

Improving how we assess risk to human health from pathogens in our coastal waters.

**Keating Center, Mote Marine Laboratory
Sarasota, FL**

Hotel Information

Lido Beach Resort 700 Ben Franklin Drive Sarasota, FL 34236

<http://lidobeachresort.com/>

\$109 - Standard Room \$159 - Upgraded Room Reservation cut-off date is September 23, 2010 Attendees can call hotel (800) 441-2113 to make reservations (Referring to GOMA or Gulf of Mexico Alliance)

Contact: Cristin Phillips, 850-245-2105 or Cristin.m.phillips@dep.state.fl.us

Get the Grant! Funding Your Community Resiliency, Green Infrastructure or Coastal Restoration Project

Topic(s): Grant Writing

Host Partner(s): Grand Bay Reserve , Weeks Bay Reserve

Location: Coastal Research and Extension Center, Biloxi, MS

Date/Time: 10/21/2010

Price: \$0.00

Max Applicants: 60

"Get the Grant! Funding Your Community Resiliency, Green Infrastructure or Coastal Restoration Project" is free of charge and will be held from 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM followed by lunch and a grant fair. This is the first workshop in a series to help decision-makers in city and county governments, natural resource agencies and conservation NGOs maximize funding for community resiliency, green infrastructure and coastal restoration projects. If you are unable to attend, this workshop will also be offered in Spanish Fort, Alabama on November 4th. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Amy Gohres or Avia Huisman. Amy: amy@weeksbay.org, (251) 990-5004 Avia: avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov, (228) 475-7047. Register online at <http://gulfalliancetraining.com/detail.aspx?Id=29>.

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. 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.



© Restore America's Estuaries 2009

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

Early Registration Deadline: September 30, 2010

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

Alabama-Mississippi Bays & Bayous Symposium

Registration now open.

MOBILE, Ala. – Registration is now open for the Alabama-Mississippi Bays and Bayous Symposium, to be held **Dec. 1-2, 2010** at the Mobile Convention Center in Mobile, Ala. The Symposium is a bi-annual event held alternately in Mississippi and Alabama to provide an opportunity for the community to learn about the state of our coastal environment. For registration information, visit www.mobilebaynep.com/baysandbayous.

The two-day symposium, hosted by the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) and Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, will include oral and poster presentations, keynote speakers

and networking opportunities with the goal of bringing scientists together with local industry and community groups to better educate about the status of knowledge about the Northern Gulf coastal ecosystem and processes that alter it; what local industry is implementing to sustain coastal resources; and how citizens groups are participating in sustaining coastal resources. The theme of this year's symposium is "Science, Industry, Community: Building Bridges to Coastal Health."

Presentation topics will focus on assessing and improving water quality; living resources of coastal ecosystems; conservation and restoration for sustainable ecosystems; and advancing economic viability and hazard resiliency.

Coastal Zone 2011

Winds of Change: Great Lakes, Great Oceans, Great Communities

Chicago, Illinois, Hyatt Regency

July 17 to 21, 2011

Many factors are influencing change in our coastal, marine, estuarine, and Great Lakes communities. Problems such as the impacts of coastal development, conflicting use of resources, altered watersheds, and new threats such as those related to global climate change call for new approaches to ocean and coastal resource management. Coastal Zone 2011 (CZ11) will focus on exploring challenges, discussing ways to cooperate on collective issues and resources, sharing tools and information, and learning from the experiences of leaders from across the nation and around the world.

Attendees will have the opportunity to help shape strategies for the future with a range of coastal professionals, scientists, managers, policy makers, students, and tribal representatives. Opportunities are available to organize a special panel session with three to four papers, host a concurrent meeting, submit a presentation or a poster, display an exhibit, provide training and workshops, or become a conference partner.

Please check the website for more information. <http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/CZ11/index.htm>. If you have any questions, please email cz11@noaa.gov.

Coastal Zone 2011 Call for Abstracts

Abstracts for panel, poster, special sessions, cafe conversations, and training workshops are due on **October 8, 2010**, and must be submitted online. Conference partners include NOAA, the Department of Interior, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. For more information on submitting abstracts, visit:

<http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/CZ11/abstracts.htm>.

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



Laurie Rounds

Coastal Management Specialist

NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management

Laurie.Rounds@noaa.gov

<http://www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/>