



# GULF OF MEXICO NEWS

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September 2010



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## NOAA Gulf of Mexico News

### *No Dead Zones Observed or Expected as Part of BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Report Finds Decreased, but Stabilized Levels of Dissolved Oxygen in Gulf Areas with Subsurface Oil*

September 7, 2010

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) released a report today that showed dissolved oxygen levels have dropped by about 20 percent from their long-term average in the Gulf of Mexico in areas where federal and independent scientists previously reported the presence of subsurface oil. Scientists from agencies involved in the report attribute the lower dissolved oxygen levels to microbes using oxygen to consume the oil from the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

These dissolved oxygen levels, measured within 60 miles of the wellhead, have stabilized and are not low enough to become “dead zones.” A dead zone is an area of very low dissolved oxygen that cannot support most life. Dead zones are commonly observed in the nearshore waters of the western and northern Gulf of Mexico in summer, but not normally in the deep water layer (3,300 – 4,300 feet) where the lowered oxygen areas in this study occurred. Dead zones, also known as hypoxic areas, are defined in marine waters as areas in which dissolved oxygen concentrations are below 2 mg/L (1.4 ml/L).

“All the scientists working in the Gulf have been carefully watching dissolved oxygen levels because excess carbon in the system might lead to a dead zone. While we saw a decrease in oxygen, we are not seeing a continued downward trend over time,” said Steve Murawski, Ph.D., NOAA’s Chief Scientist for Fisheries and the head of the Joint Analysis Group. “None of the dissolved oxygen readings have approached the levels associated with a dead zone and as the oil continues to diffuse and degrade, hypoxia becomes less of a threat.”

Since the Deepwater Horizon incident began, EPA and NOAA have systematically monitored dissolved oxygen levels along with other parameters from the sea surface to about 5,000 feet deep near the spill site. Data from 419 locations sampled on multiple expeditions by nine ships - NOAA Ships Gordon Gunter, Henry Bigelow, Nancy Foster and Thomas Jefferson and the research vessels Brooks McCall, Ferrel, Jack Fitz, Ocean Veritas and Walton Smith - over a three-month period, were analyzed for this report.

The JAG report does not specifically address the question of the rate of biodegradation of oil, which cannot be determined looking only at dissolved oxygen data. But it references a recently published peer reviewed study conducted by researchers at the Department of Energy’s Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. Using field sampling and laboratory experiments, the scientists found that half-lives of some components of the oil were in the range of 1.2 to 6.1 days. Their results suggest that the light components of the oil are being rapidly degraded by microbes. This report also did not find hypoxic oxygen levels.

The report released today documenting moderately low dissolved oxygen levels is also consistent with a study recently published by academic researchers led by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and supported by the National Science Foundation and NOAA, who also reported they did not find dead zones where they found subsurface oil.

“It is good news that dissolved oxygen has not reached hypoxic levels in these deepwater environs,” said Shere Abbott, Associate Director for Environment at the Office of Science and Technology Policy. “This work testifies to the nation’s commitment to applying the best science and technology — directly through

federal agencies and indirectly through the support of cutting-edge academic research — to understand environmental impacts in the Gulf and in all our treasured ocean ecosystems.”

Dissolved oxygen levels reported by the JAG were measured using a range of different instruments and methods including dissolved oxygen sensors and Winkler titrations. The dissolved oxygen data underwent preliminary quality control (QC) and quality assurance (QA) described in Appendix 4 of the report.

Dissolved oxygen levels are continuously monitored as part of the EPA monitoring protocols required for the use of subsea dispersants. If concentrations had fallen below 2 mg/L (1.4 mL/L) – hypoxic levels – the Unified Command would have considered discontinuing the use of subsurface dispersants. Based on evidence to date, dissolved oxygen did not decrease to these levels. The lowest dissolved oxygen measured was 3.5 mg/L (2.5 mL/L), which is above hypoxic levels. However, this report does not discuss the broad ecosystem consequences of hydrocarbons released into the environment.

This report is the third analytical report from the federal Joint Analysis Group (JAG) about ongoing Deepwater Horizon / BP research and monitoring. The JAG comprises scientists from NOAA, EPA and OSTP and was established to facilitate cooperation and coordination among the best scientific minds across the government and provide a coordinated analysis of information related to subsea monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico.

## ***NOAA Sea Grant Initiates \$1.2 Million Community Climate Change Adaptation Initiative***

September 9, 2010



NOAA’s [National Sea Grant College Program](#) has launched a one-time \$1.2 million effort to help coastal communities prepare for the impacts of climate change. The initiative is supporting rapid response, community-based, climate adaptation demonstration projects in coastal and Great Lakes states. NOAA is providing \$990,000, and universities and community partners are contributing \$247,000 for this effort.

The Community Climate Change Adaptation Initiative represents a new approach, both in the scope and the number of communities it will address, to helping communities prepare for the effects of climate change. The demonstration projects will help communities develop strategies to address coastal inundation, sea-level

rise, drought, more frequent and intense coastal storms, and other impacts associated with climate change.

Each university Sea Grant program has received \$30,000 to conduct demonstration projects addressing coastal environmental changes anticipated as a result of climate change. The projects provide communities with credible, science-based information to help them consider alternatives, make informed decisions, and ultimately develop and implement customized solutions for local climate change impacts. "Climate scientists, including many supported by Sea Grant, are finding increasing evidence of environmental changes induced by global climate change," said Leon Cammen, director of the National

Sea Grant College Program. “These changes threaten the economic and social well-being of coastal communities. Our aim is to enable communities to make well-informed decisions and adaptation plans.”

Extension and outreach specialists from Sea Grant universities are working with approximately 200 coastal communities through the demonstration projects. Most of the projects, which were proposed by local Sea Grant programs in partnership with the communities, are providing information and training in local hazard resiliency, and hazard mitigation tools, techniques, and best practices. They are expected to be complete by October 2010.

Sea Grant specialists will then continue working with a subset of the communities beyond October to adopt and implement sustainable economic and environmental development practices and policies relating to climate change adaptation.

“The scope of these projects covers communities ranging from small Pacific island fishing villages to major metropolitan areas such as Chicago and Los Angeles,” said Joshua Brown, manager of the initiative for the National Sea Grant College Program. “No one has really worked on climate adaptation in the United States on this fine a scale with this breadth of coverage. This represents a tangible commitment to provide climate adaptation resources on a local level.”

#### **Demonstration Projects in the Gulf of Mexico**

- Florida Sea Grant – Develop a visualization tool that will identify potential fiscal impacts of erosion and sea level rise in Wakulla County; Have follow-up discussions with local decision-makers and stakeholders to discuss potential impacts, and management options.
- Louisiana Sea Grant – Workshops to teach local officials about the science behind climate change, expected impacts and planning; explore best options for delivering information on climate change.
- Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant –Facilitate six-month planning process for climate adaption plans for Orange Beach, Ala., and Ocean Springs, Miss.
- Texas Sea Grant – Develop and implement customized solutions to climate change challenges in five demonstration communities: LaPorte, Dickinson, League City, Texas City, and LaMarque.

### ***Secretary Locke Announces Six New NOAA Regional Climate Services Directors to Meet Growing Demand for Climate Products and Information***

September 14, 2010

Climate variability and change are impacting our society and the environment. Commerce, public health, natural resources and major economic sectors, such as water utilities, energy, transportation, agriculture, forestry and fisheries are highly sensitive to climate influences. To more effectively meet the rising public and private demand for climate products and services, Secretary Locke today announced the selection of six new NOAA regional climate services directors.

The new directors will work to build and strengthen regional partnerships to better assess and deliver regionally-focused climate science and information products and services to help people make informed decisions in their lives, businesses and communities. The new directors are:

[Ellen Mccray](#), Eastern Region, Bohemia, N.Y.

[Doug Kluck](#), Central Region, Kansas City, Mo..

[David Brown](#), Southern Region, Fort Worth, Texas

[DeWayne Cecil](#), Western Region, Salt Lake City, Utah

[John Marra](#), Pacific Region, Honolulu

[James Partain](#), Alaska Region, Anchorage, Alaska

“More and more, Americans are witnessing the impacts of climate change in their own backyards,” said Commerce Secretary Gary Locke. “NOAA’s Regional Climate Directors will provide critical planning information and services that our businesses and our communities need to tackle head-on the challenges of climate change.”

“NOAA’s new regional directors are liaisons to state and regional users and providers of climate science and information; they will also bring information from the regions back into NOAA,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “They will work with our many partners to identify new and emerging regional climate issues and help NOAA develop products or services to address issues like local climate forecasts, drought plans or flood risk mapping.”

The new directors will be employed by NOAA’s National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C. Each will be based at NOAA’s six National Weather Service regional headquarters offices. This co-location ensures close coordination between NOAA’s weather and climate services. The directors will work and collaborate with regional partners from other federal agencies, state, local and tribal governments, universities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

The regional climate services directors will integrate the work of various NOAA partners engaged in developing and delivering climate science and services at the regional level, including the Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment programs, Regional Climate Centers, state climatologists and many partners across the private and public sector. Integrating the work of these assets increase value to users and support more efficient, cost-effective delivery of services.

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](#). For more information about NOAA’s climate services, visit: <http://www.climate.gov>

Profiles of the Six New NOAA Regional Climate Services Directors

Bios and photos are also listed online: <http://www.climate.gov/#understandingClimate>

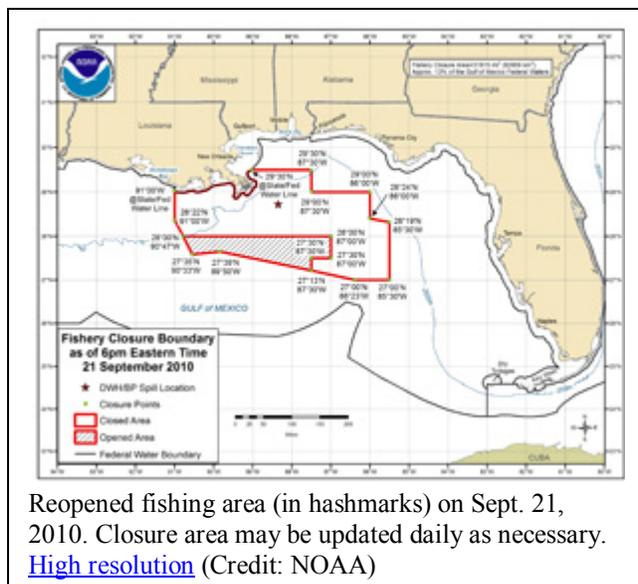
#### **SOUTHERN REGION: David Brown**

Prior to joining NOAA, Brown served as assistant professor of geography at Louisiana State University, and as assistant professor of geography and New Hampshire state climatologist at the University of New Hampshire. He holds doctorate and master’s degrees in geography from the University of Arizona and a bachelor’s degree in meteorology from Penn State University. For over a decade, he has been active in the climate services community as a researcher, state climatologist and member of three NOAA Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) projects. Most recently he was an investigator with the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program, the first RISA to co-locate and formalize research, operations and outreach linkages to both a NOAA regional climate center and a state climatologist office. His research interests include synoptic and applied climatology, human-environment interactions, and global climate change, and his work has been published in a number of scientific journals including the *International Journal of Climatology*, *Climate Research*, *Journal of Geophysical Research*, *Geophysical Research Letters* and the *Professional Geographer*. He is also an accomplished educator, having taught introductory, advanced and graduate courses in climatology, meteorology and physical geography at three universities.

## NOAA Reopens Nearly 8,000 Square Miles in the Gulf of Mexico to Fishing

### 87 percent of federal waters now open

September 21, 2010



NOAA today reopened to commercial and recreational fishing 7,970 square miles of Gulf waters along the southern boundary of the federal closed area. This area is about 60 nautical miles off of central Louisiana and about 140 nautical miles off Mississippi, Alabama, and the western edge of the Florida panhandle. This is the sixth reopening in federal waters since July 22.

This reopening was announced after consultation with U.S. Food and Drug Administration and under a [re-opening protocol](#) agreed to by NOAA, the FDA, and the Gulf states.

“This area is significant to commercial and recreational fishermen who target tunas and billfish that migrate far and wide and provide an important source of income and sport,” said Jane

Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “We’ll continue to work with our partners at FDA and the Gulf states to ensure our Gulf seafood is safe, so we can reopen more areas to fishing.”

The total area reopened today is about three percent of federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico and 20 percent of the current closed area, as last modified on September 3. No oil or sheen has been documented in the area since July 21. At its closest point, the area to be reopened is about 50 statute miles south of the Deepwater/BP wellhead.

Between July 31 and August 10, NOAA sampled the area for pelagic finfish, including tuna and billfish. Sensory analyses of 93 samples and chemical analyses of 92 samples in 18 composites 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.

NOAA will continue to take samples for testing from the newly re-opened area. The agency will also continue 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 FDA 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 remaining closed area now covers 31,915 square miles, or about 13 percent of the federal waters in the Gulf. The boundary of the fishery closure has changed 27 times after it was first instituted on May 2, at which time it covered about 3 percent (6,817 square miles) of Gulf waters around the wellhead. As oil continued to spill from the wellhead, the area grew in size, peaking at 37 percent (88,522 square miles) of Gulf waters on June 2. To date, NOAA has re-opened over 44,000 square miles of oil-impacted federal waters under this protocol and sampling regime.

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 email at [SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov](mailto: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

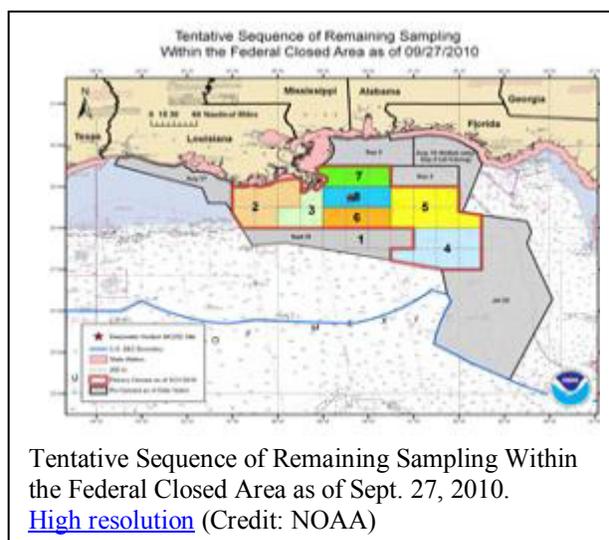
## *NOAA Strategy for Future Reopenings*

### *NOAA seafood sampling and testing priorities for federal closed area*

September 27, 2010

NOAA's Fisheries Service first prohibited commercial and recreational fishing in federal waters impacted by the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill as a seafood safety measure in early May. The closed area was 88,522 square miles or 37 percent of the Gulf of Mexico federal waters at its largest and now after six reopenings is 31,915 square miles or 13 percent of the Gulf of Mexico federal waters.

Since July 22, NOAA has reopened about 52,000 square miles of oil-impacted federal waters in accordance with the [reopening protocol](#) agreed to by NOAA, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and Gulf states. These areas are illustrated in gray on the embedded map.



Prior to reopening an area, the protocol requires NOAA to demonstrate the area is oil free, the area has little risk of being re-exposed to oil, and seafood tissue samples collected from within the area have passed both sensory and chemical analysis for hydrocarbons. This protocol involves sensory testing for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) components of the oil and dispersant along with chemical based testing for PAH as a confirmatory measure.

After areas are reopened NOAA Fisheries Service will maintain a seafood safety monitoring program continuing the collection and testing of seafood to ensure that Gulf seafood remains safe for consumers.

“While testing confirms seafood in these reopened areas is safe to consume, NOAA understands our job is not over and additional monitoring will be done in each reopened area,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D.,

undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “It is critical that we continue with this process to ensure safe seafood for fishermen and consumers, especially as we approach areas closest to the well head.”

NOAA’s Fisheries Service’s sampling strategy in general has been to work from the lesser oiled outer boundaries of the federal closure in toward the more heavily oiled areas immediately surrounding the Deepwater Horizon/BP wellhead. Area-specific sampling plans focus on species fishermen generally target in those areas, and require more samples to be collected in heavily oiled areas, compared to lightly oiled areas.

The tentative sequence of remaining sampling within the federal closed area is illustrated on the embedded map. In summary, the closed area has been divided into eight sub-areas, which are labeled in priority from 1-8.

Priority Area 1 was reopened on September 21, and included a 7,970-square mile area located along the southern boundary of the closed area, offshore of central Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the western edge of the Florida panhandle.

The next federal reopening priorities include a 5,628-square mile area (Priority Area 2) and a 2,927-square mile area (Priority Area 3) located off eastern Louisiana, just west and south of the Mississippi River delta. NOAA is currently processing samples collected in these two areas, which could reopen within the next few weeks pending test results.

NOAA is actively sampling Priority Area 4, and expects to begin sampling Priority Areas 5-8 within the coming weeks.

Updates on the reopenings and sampling schedules, as well as supporting information and data on previous reopening are available at: [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater\\_horizon\\_oil\\_spill.htm](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater_horizon_oil_spill.htm)  
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 at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaagov>.

### ***NOAA Coast Survey Assists with USDA Project to Restore Louisiana Barrier Islands***

Data obtained from one of NOAA Coast Survey’s hydrographic surveys is supporting a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) marsh creation project in Louisiana. USDA’s National Resource Conservation Service requested the bathymetric survey data, collected in 2008, and the project manager indicates that the data will help in the initial selection of a pipe corridor for the Raccoon Island Marsh Creation project. The project archaeologist can also use the data for a final cultural resources assessment. In addition to locating the data, stored at NOAA’s National Geophysical Data Center, Office of Coast Survey (OCS) navigation managers helped project staff with directions on accessing the data in a format usable with geographic information systems. At USDA’s request, OCS remains available to provide answers about the details of hydrographic technology and data collection methods. For more information, contact [Patrick Fink](#).

## *Resource Restoration Planning Process Begins for BP/Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill*

September 29, 2010

The Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the co-trustees for natural resources affected by the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill announced today they have started the injury assessment and restoration planning phase of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment, a legal process to determine the type and amount of restoration needed to compensate the public for harm to natural resources and their human uses as a result of the spill.

This is the second phase of the NRDA process. Much of the initial “preassessment” phase has already occurred — and trustees have already received \$45 million in payments from responsible parties to conduct important preassessment activities including the collection of time-critical data in the field. During that phase, trustees collected time-sensitive data, reviewed scientific literature about the oil and its impact on coastal resources, and made initial determinations that resources have been injured and that those injuries can be addressed by appropriate restoration actions. During the injury assessment and restoration planning phase, trustees will assess the nature and amount of injuries and develop a restoration plan. Consistent with OPA, the trustees’ goals are to recover from responsible parties damages equal to what is necessary to return the environment to the conditions that would have existed if the oil spill had not occurred (known as “baseline conditions”) and to recover compensation on behalf of the public for the diminished value of the injured resources from the time of the injury until restoration is achieved. By regulation, these two phases will be followed by a “restoration” phase, during which the trustees will work with the public to implement, and monitor restoration projects.

The second phase of NRDA began with a Notice of Intent to Conduct Restoration Planning indicates that the trustees, representing three federal Departments and the five affected states, have begun to formally identify and document impacts to the gulf’s natural resources, and the public’s loss of use and enjoyment of these resources, as the first stage under the regulations for developing a restoration strategy. Pre-assessment data collected, analyzed and quality-checked, are available to the public on the NOAA oil spill science missions and data website and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service oil spill response website.

“Our early analysis has documented clear detrimental effects to animals and habitats in the Gulf ecosystem,” said Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “While we will continue collecting and analyzing samples, the trustees also will begin crafting an equally comprehensive restoration strategy. Our goal is to forge a restoration plan that is steeped in science, sharpened by public input and strongly rooted in the public good. The citizens of the Gulf Coast deserve nothing less.”

“The restoration of the Gulf of Mexico is a high priority for the entire Obama administration and we will be diligent and vigilant to ensure that the damages are fully assessed and a full and scientifically sound restoration strategy is both developed and implemented,” said Tom Strickland, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

Under the Natural Resource Damage Assessment process outlined by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the trustees have authority to identify potential restoration projects and will solicit public comment on these projects before finalizing the restoration plan. The public may also have opportunities to provide hands-on assistance in selected restoration projects.

Federal regulations, under the Oil Pollution Act, require that the responsible parties be invited to participate in the NRDA process. The trustees will seek damages to implement the final restoration plan from the parties identified as being responsible for the spill.

According to the trustees, the full extent of potential injuries is currently unknown and may not be known for some time. However, according to the Notice of Intent, as of August 19, the trustees had documented oil on more than 950 miles of shoreline, including salt marshes, sandy beaches, mudflats and mangroves. As of June 29, the trustees had captured more than 1,900 live oiled birds and 400 live oiled sea turtles. They had also collected more than 1,850 visibly oiled dead birds, 17 visibly oiled dead sea turtles and five visibly oiled dead marine mammals. These numbers represent only a portion of the wildlife that have been impacted by the spill and the restoration planning process will further refine the total impact of this spill on the habitats and animals in the gulf.

The three federal trustees are the Department of the Interior (acting on behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management), NOAA (on behalf of the Department of Commerce) and the Department of Defense. State trustees for Alabama are the Geological Survey of Alabama and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Florida state trustee is the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Louisiana State trustees are the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. The State trustee for Mississippi is the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. Lastly, the Texas State trustees are the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the Texas General Land Office.

## Other NOAA News

### *U.S. Seafood Consumption Declines Slightly in 2009*

September 9, 2010

The average American ate 15.8 pounds of fish and shellfish in 2009, a slight decline from the 2008 consumption figure of 16.0 pounds, according to a NOAA Fisheries Service report out today. The U.S. continues as the third-ranked country for consuming fish and shellfish, behind China and Japan. In total, Americans consumed a total of 4.833 billion pounds of seafood in 2009, slightly less than the 4.858 billion pounds in 2008. Shrimp remained the top seafood item of choice for the United States at 4.1 pounds per person, a level unchanged since 2007.

The average 15.8 pounds consumed per person in 2009 was composed of 11.8 pounds of fresh and frozen finfish and shellfish, 3.7 pounds of canned seafood, primarily canned tuna, and 0.3 pounds of cured seafood, such as smoked salmon and dried cod. The overall decline in average consumption per American was due to a decrease in canned seafood consumed.

“With one of the highest consumption rates in the world, the U.S. has the ability to affect the world fish trade,” said Eric Schwaab, NOAA assistant administrator for NOAA’s Fisheries Service. “NOAA supports rebuilding and sustaining wild fisheries populations and building a strong aquaculture program that can help the U.S. fishing industry gain a larger share of the U.S. market. Americans should know that

buying American seafood supports our economy, as well as the high environmental and safety standards our fishermen meet.”

Most of the seafood consumed in the U.S. was not caught in U.S. waters. About 84 percent of the seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported, a dramatic increase from the 66 percent just a decade ago. Farmed seafood, or aquaculture, comprises almost half of the imported seafood. Aquaculture production outside the U.S. has expanded dramatically in the last three decades and now supplies half of the world’s seafood demand, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

America’s aquaculture industry, though vibrant and diverse, currently meets less than ten percent of U.S. demand for seafood. Most of the U.S. aquaculture industry is catfish, with marine aquaculture products like oysters, clams, mussels and salmon supplying less than two percent of American seafood demand.

“This report demonstrates there is room for the U.S. aquaculture industry to grow,” said Schwaab. “NOAA is working to develop a new national policy for sustainable marine aquaculture that will help us narrow the trade gap and strengthen the entire fishing industry in this country.”

NOAA’s Fisheries Service has been calculating the nation’s seafood consumption rates since 1910 to keep consumers and the industry informed about trends in seafood consumption and trade. The information is published every year in NOAA’s Fisheries Service annual report, Fisheries of the United States, which is now available online.

### ***CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Available***

A [new edition](#) of the CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Update is now available. The Coastal Programs Division of NOAA’s Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management distributes the CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Update to keep state and territory coastal program managers and climate change/coastal hazards staff informed about climate change (as it pertains to coastal hazards) and coastal hazards activities.

### ***Statement of Dr. Jane Lubchenco on the National Academy of Public Administration Study on NOAA Climate Service***

September 14, 2010

Today, NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco issued the following statement about the National Academy of Public Administration’s study on a NOAA Climate Service:

Last fall, the U.S. Congress asked the National Academy of Public Administration, or NAPA, to assist NOAA with “a study and analysis of the organizational options for a National Climate Service within NOAA, emphasizing maximum effectiveness and efficiency.”

Today, I am pleased to report that the expert panel commissioned by NAPA has completed its study and released its final report to NOAA and Congress. The panel stated that it “strongly supports the creation of a NOAA Climate Service to be established as a line office in NOAA.” Among its more than two dozen recommendations, the report calls on NOAA to play a leadership role in the coordination and delivery of climate science and services across the federal family. It also provides guidance on internal reorganization options and specific strategies to ensure successful implementation.

This study provides the final recommendations of the ten-member panel who, over the course of six months, drew upon a wealth of supporting information about NOAA's existing climate science and services and extensive input from interviews, roundtables, and on-line dialogues with NOAA staff, local, state and federal agencies, congressional staff, the academic community and other key climate stakeholders. NOAA greatly appreciates the significant amount of time and thoughtful input provided by everyone who contributed to the study. NOAA looks forward to working with all of them in the future as the NOAA climate science and service portfolio continues to evolve.

On behalf of everyone at NOAA, I offer heartfelt thanks to the NAPA panel members and staff for their careful and thorough review of the organizational options for establishing a Climate Service within NOAA.

NOAA will closely review and consider all of the recommendations and observations contained in the report in the coming weeks. They will be of great value as the Department of Commerce and NOAA continue to develop and refine the proposal to establish a new Climate Service within NOAA. This new line office will combine the agency's world-class climate science and technical capabilities with an evolving capacity for sustained engagement with decision makers to develop, deliver and communicate climate services. I look forward to working with all of NOAA's partners to advance the process to establish the new NOAA Climate Service.

Dr. Jane Lubchenco

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator

## *Scientists Find 20 Years of Deep Water Warming Leading to Sea Level Rise*

September 20, 2010

Scientists analyzing measurements taken in the deep ocean around the globe over the past two decades find a warming trend that contributes to sea level rise, especially around Antarctica.

Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, cause heating of the Earth. Over the past few decades, at least 80 percent of this heat energy has gone into the ocean, warming it in the process. "Previous studies have shown that the upper ocean is warming, but our analysis determines how much additional heat the deep ocean is storing from warming observed all the way to the ocean floor," said Sarah Purkey, an oceanographer at the University of Washington and lead author of the study.

This study shows that the deep ocean – below about 3,300 feet – is taking up about 16 percent of what the upper ocean is absorbing. The authors note that there are several possible causes for this deep warming: a shift in Southern Ocean winds, a change in the density of what is called Antarctic Bottom Water, or how quickly that bottom water is formed near the Antarctic, where it sinks to fill the deepest, coldest portions of the ocean around much of the globe.

The scientists found the strongest deep warming around Antarctica, weakening with distance from its source as it spreads around the globe. While the temperature increases are small (about 0.03°C per decade in the deep Southern Ocean, less elsewhere), the large volume of the ocean over which they are found and the high capacity of water to absorb heat means that this warming accounts for a huge amount of energy storage. If this deep ocean heating were going into the atmosphere instead – a physical impossibility – it would be warming at a rate of about 3°C (over 5°F) per decade.

“A warming Earth causes sea level rise in two ways,” said Gregory Johnson, a NOAA oceanographer at the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle, and the study’s co-author. “The warming heats the ocean, causing it to expand, and melts continental ice, adding water to the ocean. The expansion and added water both cause the sea to encroach on the land.”

Sea level has been rising at around 3 mm (1/8 of an inch) per year on average since 1993, with about half of that caused by ocean thermal expansion and the other half because of additional water added to the ocean, mostly from melting continental ice. Purkey and Johnson note that deep warming of the Southern Ocean accounts for about 1.2 mm (about 1/20th of an inch) per year of the sea level rise around Antarctica in the past few decades.

The highly accurate deep-ocean temperature observations used in this study come from ship-based instruments that measure conductivity through salinity, temperature and depth. These measurements were taken on a series of hydrographic surveys of the global ocean in the 1990s through the World Ocean Circulation Experiment and in the 2000s in support of the Climate Variability program. These surveys are now coordinated by the international Global Ship-based Hydrographic Investigations Program.

The study, “Warming of Global Abyssal and Deep Southern Ocean Waters between the 1990s and 2000s: Contributions to Global Heat and Sea Level Rise Budgets,” authored by Sarah G. Purkey and Gregory C. Johnson, will be published in an upcoming edition of the *Journal of Climate*.

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. Find us on [Facebook](#).

### ***CELCP FY11 Ranked List Approved***

NOS Assistant Administrator David Kennedy has approved a competitively-ranked [list of projects](#) eligible for Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) funding in FY2011. NOAA will use this list as a guide in selecting projects for funding under both CELCP and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative amounts available for project grants. The list identifies, in ranked order, the 42 projects from 24 coastal states and territories considered to be ready and eligible for funding in FY 2011.

Once Congress assigns CELCP an appropriation for FY11, NOS will announce the final selection of projects. This list has been transmitted to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the offices of other interested members of Congress, as well as states and partners. For more information, see [http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp\\_fundingop.html](http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp_fundingop.html). Contact: Roxanne.Thomas@noaa.gov

### ***National Estuarine Research Reserve System Recruiting Graduate Fellows***

NOAA’s Estuarine Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, is recruiting graduate students to fill up to 27 Graduate Research Fellowships in 20 reserves for the 2011 school year. The deadline for applications is November 1, 2010.

Master’s degree students and Ph.D. candidates will have an opportunity to conduct their research at National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs), which are living laboratories used to study coastal habitats and processes. Qualified master’s and doctoral students can address natural or social science research questions at local, regional, or national scales.

Proposals may be submitted for projects lasting from one to three years, based on the student's interest, the Reserve's local needs, and the Reserve System's national priorities. Interested students should contact the Research Coordinators at the National Estuarine Research Reserves where they propose to study. Applicants should apply through [grants.gov](http://grants.gov).

For more information about the program, current and past projects, and Reserve site contact information, see <http://www.nerrs.noaa.gov/Fellowship.aspx>.

More than 200 students have completed their master's and doctoral research in the "living laboratories" of the National Estuarine Research Reserves. Many have then gone on to careers in coastal management in academia, state agencies and NOAA, as well as other federal agencies. Contact: [Alison.Krepp@noaa.gov](mailto:Alison.Krepp@noaa.gov).

### ***Commerce Secretary Locke Announces Awards to Six New Regional Climate Science Collaborations***

September 22, 2010

Commerce Secretary Gary Locke today announced six new Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments (RISA) awards totaling \$23.6 million over five years to research institutions, from Honolulu, Hawaii to Boston, Mass., to improve the nation's ability to anticipate and adapt to climate variability and change.

The six regional teams will work closely with natural resource managers and land planners, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector within each region to advance new research on how climate variability and change will impact the environment, economy, and society, and develop innovative ways to integrate climate information into decision-making.

"Climate change affects water supply and demand, coastal communities and ecosystems, energy, agriculture, infrastructure, human health and transportation," said Mary Glackin, deputy under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere. "The strength of these teams lies in their ability to address regional scale climate impacts and provide timely and relevant information to decision-makers dealing with multiple climate-impact issues and planning decisions."

The six new RISA awards include:

- Consortium on Climate Risk in the Urban Northeast — Columbia University: Focus on climate issues in the urban corridor between Boston, New York and Philadelphia
- Pacific Northwest Climate Decision Support Consortium — Oregon State University: Focus on climate, water, energy and land issues in Ore., Wash., and Idaho
- Great Lakes Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments Center — University of Michigan and Michigan State University: Focus on watersheds of Lakes Erie and Huron
- Pacific RISA: Climate Adaptation Partnership for the Pacific — East-West Center in Hawaii: Focus on various climate and water issues in Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Islands
- Southeast Climate Consortium — University of Florida: Focus on various climate, water, coastal and agricultural issues in Ala., Fla. and Ga.
- Western Water Assessment — University of Colorado: Focus on climate, water, energy and ecosystems in Colo., Utah and Wyo.

All six awards have multiple institutions involved; only lead institutions are listed.

These awards were chosen competitively by an independent, expert review panel. NOAA has supported RISA teams for more than 15 years. RISAs represent an effective method to co-design and co-develop climate services and science through partnerships among scientists and decision makers. They will also contribute to research and assessment activities in direct support of the U.S. National Climate Assessment being undertaken by a range of federal entities. The RISA program will be a core component of the emerging Climate Service at NOAA.

In February, the Secretary of Commerce and the NOAA Administrator first announced the intent to establish a new NOAA Climate Service. This new line office will combine the agency's world-class climate science and technical capabilities, and leverage its partnerships, such as those with RISAs to evolve the capacity for sustained engagement with decision-makers to develop, deliver and communicate climate services. The concept of creating a NOAA Climate Service was strongly endorsed by the National Academy of Public Administration, which recently released a report for which Dr. Lubchenco issued a statement of thanks.

RISA teams work closely with NOAA's federal, state and local partners, and many will have strong connections with emerging federal initiatives such as the Department of Interior's Climate Science Centers and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

The new RISA partnerships join five ongoing RISAs including:

- Alaska Center for Climate Assessments and Policy: University of Alaska
- Carolinas Integrated Sciences and Assessments: University of South Carolina
- Climate Assessment for the Southwest: University of Arizona and New Mexico State University
- California-Nevada Applications Project: Scripps Institution of Oceanography
- Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program: University of Oklahoma and Louisiana State University

### ***Dr. Jane Lubchenco Responds to Inspector General's Final Report on Fisheries Enforcement***

September 24, 2010

Shortly after arriving in office 17 months ago, I heard troubling complaints about NOAA's enforcement programs nationwide, and I decided that an investigation was warranted. I requested that the IG conduct a thorough investigation to identify the problems, so that we could take appropriate action. I am fully committed to addressing any and all problems identified. Fair and effective enforcement is essential to our ability to rebuild and protect the public's fisheries and other natural resources.

Complementing steps NOAA has already taken, Secretary Locke today announced additional strong actions, including the appointment of a Special Master to review complaints identified by the IG. I join Secretary Locke in wanting to get to the bottom of the questions surrounding these enforcement actions. NOAA will take corrective actions if the Special Master and the Secretary determine they are warranted. And we will continue to reform NOAA's enforcement program.

## Background

NOAA has acted quickly and aggressively to implement changes in response to the issues identified in the first three IG reports, and we will do the same with the most recent findings. As the IG states in today's report, "some issues implicated by particular complaints may be resolved or mitigated by measures taken by NOAA to date in key areas, such as leadership and management; policy, process, and regulations; workforce structure; and communications and outreach."

Since problems were first identified by the IG, NOAA has listened to concerns and ideas from the fishing community and other partners. NOAA's recent National Enforcement Summit provided helpful additional suggestions for improving compliance and enforcement, while building confidence among our stakeholders.

NOAA has also systematically addressed the IG's recommendations from earlier reports, including:

- Transferring oversight of the Asset Forfeiture Fund, which holds fines imposed by NOAA, from NOAA Fisheries to the NOAA Comptroller.
- Requiring justification and approval from the NOAA comptroller for any expenditure from the Asset Forfeiture Fund over \$1,000.
- Reassigning Alan Risenhoover, director of NOAA's Office of Sustainable Fisheries, to serve as acting director of NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement.
- Hiring Benjamin Friedman as the new Assistant General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation.
- Freezing the hiring of criminal investigators until a work force analysis is completed to determine the appropriate mix of criminal investigators and civil enforcement officers.
- Implementing a new rule to place the burden of justifying a particular civil penalty or permit sanction on NOAA rather than the respondent in cases before administrative law judges.
- Developing a process to set enforcement priorities at the national and regional level.
- Requiring high level legal review of all charging and settlement decisions.
- Providing enforcement charging information to the public.
- NOAA continues to work towards other improvements, including:
  - Developing a new penalty policy that will be more specific and have narrower penalty ranges and will be made available for public comment.
  - Reviewing and revising NOAA law enforcement and general counsel operations manuals.
  - Developing a communications plan to provide greater outreach to fishermen and fishing communities, and other fisheries stakeholders.

## In the Gulf States

### *Survey to Identify Oil-spill and Coastal Research Priorities*

The Gulf of Mexico Research Plan is being updated to account for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and identify new priorities or shifts in priorities. The Gulf of Mexico Research Plan was released in September 2009 and has been used in initiatives that have funded millions of dollars of research in the region.

A survey is being used to identify potential changes in the plan. The survey is available online until **Oct. 8** at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/researchoilspill>. People who conduct and administer research or use research results related to the coastal and marine issues in the Gulf of Mexico or the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill are encouraged to complete the survey, which should take less than 15 minutes to complete.

The plan is coordinated by the four Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant College programs, which are Texas Sea Grant, Louisiana Sea Grant, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and Florida Sea Grant. The Gulf of Mexico Research Plan is guided by the Planning and Review Council, which is made up of representatives from federal and state agencies, academia, nongovernmental organizations and others.

For more information, contact Steve Sempier, Sea Grant Gulf of Mexico regional research planning coordinator, at [Stephen.sempier@usm.edu](mailto:Stephen.sempier@usm.edu).

### *Governor Riley Signs Executive Order Creating Coastal Recovery Commission*

*Commission will recommend plan to protect and enhance state's coastal region after Deepwater Horizon disaster*

MONTGOMERY - Governor Bob Riley on Monday signed an executive order creating a Coastal Recovery Commission that will examine the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster and recommend proposals that protect and enhance Alabama's coastal region that is important to the well-being of the entire state.

"We must do everything we can to restore what's been lost because of this disaster, but we should also use this moment to strengthen the resilience of our state and coastal communities. The commission will recommend ways that improve our ability to respond to future challenges and examine strategies that will mean far less suffering the next time a catastrophe threatens us," said Governor Riley.

The commission will be made up of civic, business and community leaders and chaired by Ricky Mathews, publisher of the Mobile Press-Register. Mathews served as vice chairman of a similar commission created by Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour following Hurricane Katrina.

The Coastal Recovery Commission will present a final report to the Governor and Governor-elect by December 15.

Note: Executive Order available [online](#).

## ***23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup***

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Alabama Coastal Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, September 18, 2010, from 8:00 a.m. until noon. Marine debris, which is trash and litter discarded into the water or along the shoreline, is not only an eyesore but also poses a real threat to both marine wildlife and humans. Your support and participation in the Alabama Coastal Cleanup provides a unique opportunity to be a part of the State's largest volunteer effort focused on the removal of marine debris from the water's edge.

The Alabama Coastal Cleanup involves local citizens in the removal of trash and debris from the Gulf Coast beaches and waterways, the identification of the sources of debris, and the changing of the behaviors that cause pollution. Over the past 22 years, 58,000 volunteers have participated in the Alabama Coastal Cleanup and removed 1,120,000 pounds of marine debris from Alabama's valued coastline.

"The Alabama Coastal Cleanup is a great way to actively be involved with the care of our water. By removing trash and litter from the shoreline, it improves water quality and removes potential dangers to our safety and to wildlife," says Amy King, State Coordinator of the Alabama Coastal Cleanup.

This event is also part of the International Coastal Cleanup that is sponsored by The Ocean Conservancy. Last year during the International Coastal Cleanup, 498,818 volunteers removed 7.4 million pounds of marine debris. This effort included 108 countries and 45 U.S. States and the District of Columbia. The International Cleanup is a great way to cleanup the world's ocean but also an educational tool to inform the public about the dangers of marine debris.

This year because of the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill, the Alabama Coastal Cleanup will focus on land-based debris. Areas such as parks, roads, streams, ponds and lakes will also be included. This is needed, because all of this inland debris eventually will be washed into coastal waters and beaches.

The Alabama Coastal Cleanup will not be an "oil cleanup." The mission of the Alabama Coastal Cleanup is to provide an educational experience through the removal of marine debris from the shoreline of Alabama. Therefore, the Cleanup will only focus on the removal of non-oiled marine debris and litter. Although there is extra concern for the safety of our volunteers this year due to the oil spill, the coordinators and sponsors believe this is an important time for volunteers to feel they are doing their part. There will be contingency plans in place for those cleanup zones that may have oil on the day of the event, such as re-routing volunteers to non-oiled areas, which includes inland sites such as parks, streets and other non-shoreline areas, or cancelling the zone, if needed.

There are over 20 cleanup zones across Mobile and Baldwin County. For more information about how to get involved with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup, please visit [www.AlabamaCoastalCleanup.com](http://www.AlabamaCoastalCleanup.com) or call (251) 621-1216.

## ***Turtles Rescued from Spill Released at Rookery Bay Reserve***

Staff from the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve joined other Florida and NOAA officials to release 42 highly endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles in the Ten Thousand Islands region within the Rookery Bay Reserve last week.

The event was the largest release of a group of turtles rescued from the Gulf of Mexico after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that flowed into the Gulf from April to August. Thirty seven of the turtles

released last week had been oiled; the rest were rescued from Mississippi beaches with no oil on them. All the turtles were juveniles, about the size of dinner plates. The oiled turtles had been cleaned and rehabilitated at a variety of facilities around Florida, including Sea World, Disney, Audubon, Mote Marine Lab and Clearwater Aquarium.

Officials chose Rookery Bay for the release because it is within the normal range of the turtles and is in pristine condition, said Reserve Manager Gary Lytton, adding that the release event is the result of a number of public and private partnerships that coordinated the effort from recovery to rehabilitation to coastal management.

Kemp's ridleys are the smallest sea turtles, once plentiful in the Gulf of Mexico and along the Atlantic Coast. Their numbers were severely reduced by egg harvesting, which is now illegal, but they continue to be threatened by habitat loss and entanglement in shrimping and fishing nets.

Local media outlets covered the release event. Read an account in the Naples Daily News.

Gulf Coast National Estuarine Reserves have been an integral partner in responding to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Rookery Bay Reserve's stewardship mission in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has helped maintain the Thousand Islands in a pristine condition that will help the turtles to survive and eventually breed.

### ***DEP's Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Celebrates National Estuaries Day***

~"Where Rivers Meet the Sea" is the theme for Reserve activities~

NAPLES - The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (RB NERR) today celebrated National Estuaries Day. The event focused on the special places where rivers meet the sea. Celebrating this day presents an opportunity to learn more about these magical ecosystems and how Florida's citizens can help to protect them. Estuaries are also important economic engines that pump millions of dollars to coastal communities through tourism, recreational sport fishing and boating. Governor Charlie Crist issued a proclamation declaring September 25, 2010 as National Estuaries Day.

"Estuaries are one of the most productive ecosystems on earth, serving as nurseries for fish and shellfish and providing vital nesting and feeding grounds for coastal birds, sea turtles and marine mammals," RB NERR Director Gary Litton. "It is important for Florida's residents and visitors alike to understand the vital role estuaries play in our environment and economy."

For more than 20 years, RB NERR has hosted National Estuaries Day the third weekend in September to raise public awareness about the coast. National Estuaries Day 2010 events included free boat tours through the estuary, guided kayak tours, marine touch tank experiences and fiddler crab explorations. RB NERR also hosted the local premier of the new IMAX film "Wild Ocean," as well as films about conservation efforts, boating safety information and demonstrations, and lectures on RB NERR research, local fisheries and seafood and restoring the Everglades.

Designed to engage the general public and increase understanding and awareness of DEP's Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) Program, RB NERR unveiled one of four new exhibits that highlight the four million acres managed by CAMA. The four exhibits feature interactive maps and videos, and will travel around the state of Florida.

In partnership with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, RB NERR presented the updated Gulf of Mexico exhibit, which includes a large map of the Gulf, and brief video clips highlighting the environmental and economic health of Gulf communities.

In partnership with the United Arts Council, RB NERR also unveiled the Gulf of Mexico Art Exhibit that highlights the positive aspects of the Gulf of Mexico have on local communities. The theme of the Exhibit was “What does the Gulf mean to me?” and the work of local artists was displayed in the art gallery at RB NERR Education Center.

DEP’s Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) manages three National Estuarine Research Reserves in the state, 41 aquatic preserves, the Coral Reef Conservation Program and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. CAMA’s programs and activities are designed to help Floridians better understand and conserve the state’s resources through research, education and preservation. For more information on CAMA, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal>.

Designated over 30 years ago, RB NERR is located in Naples on the Southwest coast of Florida. CAMA manages 110,000 acres at RB NERR with a staff of 30 professionals engaged in education, research, training, and stewardship. The Environmental Learning Center serves as a regional education, research and training center with a 150-seat auditorium, classrooms, research labs and state-of-the-art visitor center with aquaria and interactive exhibits. For more information on RB NERR, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/rookery/>.

### ***Gov. Barbour Declares Oct. 16 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Day***

Volunteers in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties are needed for the 22nd annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup to be held from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 16, in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup—the world’s largest volunteer cleanup effort on behalf of the marine environment. Gov. Haley Barbour recently signed a proclamation in support of the annual event organized by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force.

“This summer, we endured a very strong reminder of how valuable our coast is to all of us,” Governor Haley Barbour said. “A clean, litter-free coastline is vital to the marine wildlife and coastal wetlands, and it’s crucial to the enjoyment of residents and visitors.”

“The 2010 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup will not include the beaches and barrier islands,” Lauren Thompson, state coordinator for the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, said. “Volunteers will focus instead on removing marine debris and litter in areas off the immediate shoreline. Trash travels. Litter tossed upstream makes its way into the Sound and onto our beaches.”

This year the cleanup will focus on inland areas and waters in an effort to avoid disturbing oil spill recovery efforts on the beaches and barrier islands. In addition, the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup has joined forces with Renew Our Rivers to expand the cleanup’s inland efforts. The four-day Renew Our Rivers cleanup event will begin Wednesday, Oct. 13, and will culminate in conjunction with the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, Oct. 16.

“Like Coastal Cleanup, our efforts depend on the sheer force of volunteers, which includes our employees, as well as other corporate, community and agency partners,” said Tracy Heggins, a Renew Our Rivers coordinator with Mississippi Power. “Our partnership with Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and others is a

natural fit. We all have a common goal to clean more waterways and to better our communities—together we can do that.”

Registration deadline for the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup is Oct. 4. Register online at [www.mscoastalcleanup.org](http://www.mscoastalcleanup.org), or to obtain a registration form and sign up to volunteer call: 467-9048 in Hancock County; 214-1405 in Harrison County; and 938-6612 in Jackson County.

On cleanup day, zone captains will be stationed at each cleanup site in bright yellow T-shirts to direct volunteers and give them supplies such as trash bags, data cards to record the debris collected, as well as bottled water compliments of the Beverage Association of Mississippi, and a free eco-friendly tote provided by Chevron Pascagoula Refinery (while supplies last). Following the cleanup, volunteers must present their meal ticket at Courthouse Road Pier parking area on Highway 90 in Gulfport where they will enjoy a free lunch courtesy of the High Cotton Grill from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. only on event day.

During the 2009 International Coastal Cleanup, more than 498,818 volunteers in 108 countries removed more than 7.4 million pounds of debris from the ocean, rivers, lakes and waterways.

“Last year, Mississippi ranked in the Top 10 in the country in number of volunteers.” Thompson said. “In Mississippi, 3,205 volunteers pitched in and removed 23 tons of trash from 66 sites along the shoreline and coastal waterways as part of the 2009 International Coastal Cleanup.”

For more information visit the official Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Web site at [www.mscoastalcleanup.org](http://www.mscoastalcleanup.org) or call the info line at 1-877-BEACH 05 (1-877-232-2405). Volunteers will pick up marine debris in all three counties and the barrier islands at 57 designated Coastal Cleanup sites, which include some private sites (private sites not listed).

### ***Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program, Celebrity Chef Emeril Lagasse to Promote Gulf Safe Mississippi Seafood at 2010 Viking Classic***

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources’ Seafood Marketing Program will provide Gulf Safe Wild-caught Mississippi shrimp to be used in culinary demonstrations by celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse and other professional chefs at the 2010 Viking Classic Culinary tent. The annual golf tournament will be Sept. 27 – Oct. 3 at Annandale Golf Club in Madison, Miss. The Viking Classic will be the first event of the PGA Tour Fall Series. In addition to providing Gulf Safe shrimp for culinary demonstrations, the Seafood Marketing team will have a table in the culinary tent where they will hand out recipe books and will be available to answer questions.

“We are very excited to be a part of this event that is so important to the State of Mississippi,” said Irvin Jackson, director of the Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program. “We’re confident in this opportunity for us to showcase Mississippi Gulf seafood and prove it’s not only safe to eat, it’s also a high-quality product.”

Participation in the tournament is another step in what Jackson calls a “show-and-tell” campaign to reverse negative perceptions about Gulf seafood. The message of the “Gulf Safe Seafood” campaign is that Gulf seafood is only harvested from open, regulated waters and is tested extensively to ensure consumers’ safety.

For more information on the 2010 Viking Classic or Emeril’s culinary demonstrations, visit [www.vikingclassic.com](http://www.vikingclassic.com).

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](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

### ***DMR, Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport and others Partner to Promote Gulf Safe Mississippi Seafood in Branson, Missouri***

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources will partner with Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport, Mississippi Gulf Coast Tourism, Bass Pro and Branson AirExpress to host a Mississippi Gulf Coast Seafood Cookout and press conference to be held at Branson Airport, Thursday, Sept. 23, 2010.

The DMR team will prepare shrimp for over 300 guests at Branson Airport in an effort to educate the region on the quality and safety of Gulf Safe Wild-caught Mississippi seafood.

This event is one of several planned as a part of the DMR-led campaign to reverse negative perceptions about Gulf seafood. The message of the “Gulf Safe Seafood” campaign is that Gulf seafood is only harvested from open, regulated waters and is tested extensively.

“Our mission is to demonstrate and update everyone on the continued safety and quality of Gulf seafood,” said Irvin Jackson, director of the Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program.

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](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

### ***Grand Bay NERR to Celebrate National Estuaries Day***

Saturday, Sept. 25: Trail Dedication, Popcorn Pull and More

BILOXI, Miss. – The last Saturday in September is National Estuaries Day—a celebration of the magical places where rivers meet the sea—and National Public Lands Day—the nation’s largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands American’s enjoy. This year, these two special celebrations occur on Sept. 25.

In celebration of National Estuaries Day, the Department of Marine Resources’ (DMR) Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) and the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge are partnering to host a special day of events for the public—including the dedication of the newly lengthened Oak Grove Birding Trail, a Popcorn Pull (a volunteer effort to help clear the trail area of invasive popcorn trees), tours of our newly designated GOLD LEED Certified, sustainable interpretive Coastal Resources Center, kayak tours of Bayou Heron, presentations including an interactive, live Web broadcast between the Reserve and the South Slough NERR in Oregon.

For more information regarding the day's events, please contact Jennifer Buchanan, Education Coordinator at 228.475.7047 or [jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov).

National Estuaries Day began in 1988 as part of Coast Weeks to educate the public on the importance of estuaries and the need to protect them. The annual event has matured into a national campaign with festivities across the country. To learn more about National Estuaries Day or estuaries in general, visit the Web site [www.estuaries.gov](http://www.estuaries.gov).

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research 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. The Reserve is managed through state-federal partnership between the DMR and its local partners: Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mississippi State University, The Nature Conservancy, The University of Southern Mississippi and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The Reserve's new Coastal Resources Center, located at 6005 Bayou Heron Road near Moss Point, Miss., is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Please call 228-475-7047 for more information and detailed travel directions, or check out our Web site at [www.grandbaynerr.org](http://www.grandbaynerr.org).

### ***Gov. Barbour Announces Participation in National Disaster Recovery Fund***

Gov. Haley Barbour and the nonprofit Volunteer USA Foundation announced today the establishment of the National Disaster Recovery Fund to benefit states and communities who suffer long-term losses from a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood or tornado.

Governors from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi are supporting the work of the Fund, as a way to supplement state and local relief efforts when a disaster strikes. The National Disaster Recovery Fund will operate specifically for the purpose of providing resources for long-term recovery – it will not take the place of immediate relief efforts already provided by existing organizations.

“Whether it’s a tornado or a hurricane – and we’ve had a lot of experience with both – each one presents unique challenges,” Gov. Barbour said. “There’s a lot more flexibility in working with nonprofit organizations than going through government bureaucracies, and in many cases, these nonprofit groups are in the affected community already, so they know the people and know the situation.”

Chairing the Fund is Bill Simon, president of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush serves as honorary chair. “As a resident of Florida, I know all too well the destruction and turmoil that follows major disasters,” Bush said. “The chaos on lives and communities often lasts months and even years – long after insurance, government and immediate relief resources have been exhausted. That is the principle behind the National Disaster Recovery Fund – through national fundraising efforts we will work to rebuild lives in the challenging times that lie ahead.”

The National Fund will provide long-standing support by working with state leaders and contracting with trusted nonprofits in local communities. These nonprofits will determine how and where long-term

recovery dollars are needed most and engage volunteer and faith-based organizations skilled in the areas of rebuilding and recovery.

Key attributes of the Fund include:

- Stretch Resources & Fill Gaps – Provide funding for long-term recovery to communities and across states when needed after immediate relief efforts have taken place. Funds will be expended where government and insurance funds don't cover the total, or where they don't help at all.
- Rebuild Lives – Funds will be used to help rebuild communities by providing needs identified by local organizations including nonprofits like childcare centers and community centers. Quality volunteer labor will be used when possible in rebuilding efforts.
- Operate with Transparency – All donations over \$5,000 will be listed on our website. The Fund will be audited regularly by an independent third-party.
- Operate with Honesty – Funding will be distributed through nonprofits that the community trusts – never directly to individuals. Donations will be used to help repair things such as roofs, destroyed fishing nets, and damaged nonprofit properties.
- Provide Refunds – Funds donated to respond to a particular storm will be used to assist those impacted by a specific storm or disaster or donations will be returned to the contributor.

The National Disaster Fund advisory board will provide oversight of the Fund and managed by a professional staff experienced in long-term recovery efforts. Current members include:

Jeb Bush, honorary chair , former Governor of Florida  
William S. Simon, chair, president, Wal-Mart Stores Inc.  
Rolfe H. McCollister, Jr., president & founder, Louisiana Business, Inc.  
Jack Norris, president, Gulf Coast Business Council

To learn more or contribute to the national Disaster Recovery Fund please visit [www.nationaldisasterrecoveryfund.org](http://www.nationaldisasterrecoveryfund.org) or call 850.562.5300. Donations to the Fund and Foundation are tax-deductible.

### ***Protect Your Ground Water Day in Louisiana***

The state Department of Natural Resources' Office of Conservation is spreading the word today on water conservation. Joining the National Ground Water Association (NGWA), the American Farm Bureau Federation, and many other national groups that promote the importance of protecting water supplies. Today is being celebrated as ***Protect Your Ground Water Day – September 14th***. According to NGWA, the two fundamental ways to protect ground water is to keep it safe from contamination and to consume and use it wisely, not waste it.

DNR's Office of Conservation has an informative [website](#) that encourages Louisiana citizens to practice water and energy conservation at home and everywhere. In support of ***Protect Your Ground Water Day 2010***— additional information and interactive tools for teachers and students are being featured on the website. DNR officials have pledged through the Ground Water Resources Program to format its online information to serve as a main outlet for a variety of educational materials for school teachers and students all across the state.

Protect Your Groundwater Day: [View all educational pages](#) .

## *Sea Grant Continues Oil Spill Response and Recovery Efforts*

September 20, 2010

In response, Louisiana Sea Grant's disaster-hardened personnel – who handled the likes of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike – stepped up to ameliorate the situation to the extent possible. As part of that effort, LSG has and continues to organize informational meetings; provide expertise to various state and federal panels, boards and other groups; produce fact sheets in English and Vietnamese on pertinent topics; broker visits from state and federal officials; and provide one-on-one assistance to its stakeholders.

“Part of Sea Grant's Deepwater Horizon mission was and will continue to be recruiting the state's best available talent in addressing oil spill-related issues and solutions,” said LSG Executive Director Chuck Wilson. “Also, at least 80 percent of our Extension agents' time has been reallocated to help our constituents deal with the oil spill aftermath and recovery.”

Seven parishes were directly impacted by the spill, and the remaining coastal parishes have suffered indirect impacts, particularly in the recreational and commercial fishing and offshore drilling industries. The immediate impacts are related to loss of access to fishing grounds and reduced national demand for seafood due to safety concerns. The longer-term impacts will be associated with the ecological damage and the perceived safety of Louisiana seafood.

To help address short-term seafood safety concerns, Sea Grant Extension agents and specialists have spoken with regional, national and international media about the spill's impact on Gulf seafood, participated in contamination detection workshops, and conducted contamination screening training for processors. LSG Extension and Communications also worked together to develop a short public awareness video on seafood safety ([www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaSeaGrant](http://www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaSeaGrant)). That video along with other seafood safety materials were distributed nationally across the Sea Grant network, with other programs sharing those resources with their respective constituents.

Louisiana Sea Grant's Law and Policy Program produced several spill-related publications. Topics range from loss recovery by individuals to recovery for natural resource damages by state and federal governments. LSG Legal also has researched issues such as criminalization of the disaster, possible legal actions a non-English speaker may have against federal agencies for not releasing fishing closures in multiple languages, the requirements for bringing a securities fraud suit either as an individual or a class action against BP, and damages to oyster leases, among others. The Law and Policy Program also is involved in the planning of a one-day seminar to be held at Tulane University on Sept. 28, covering issues related to the natural resource damage assessment process.

Louisiana Sea Grant's Education program is coordinating and collaborating with the LSU Department of Education and numerous other partners to develop and disseminate oil spill educational materials, including a dozen or more lesson plans that can be incorporated into kindergarten through 12 th grade math, science, social studies and language arts coursework. Several workshops will be held in the fall to train teachers on how to use the materials.

Less than two weeks after the well blowout, Louisiana Sea Grant issued a request for proposals for short-term, rapid response projects to monitor the effects of the spill on coastal marshes and important fishery species. More than 50 proposals were received. And by combining a variety of funds, Louisiana Sea Grant was able to underwrite five research projects. An additional five projects were funded with monies provided by the National Sea Grant office.

### Louisiana Sea Grant-Funded Projects

Principal Investigator	Institution	Title
Caroline Taylor	Tulane	Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Effects on Blue Crab Recruitment
Laurie Anderson	LSU	Changes in Coastal Food Webs Caused by the Deepwater Horizon Crude Oil Spill: Responses by and Effects on Oysters and Other Primary Consumers
Ralph Portier	LSU	Microbial Species and Community Structure as Indicators of Oil Spill Recovery and Restoration: Initial Investigations
Martin O'Connell	UNO	Assessing Oil Spill Impacts on Juvenile Fishes, Crabs, and Shrimp at the Chandeleur Islands: A Comparison to Baseline Data
Kim de Mutsert	LSU	Effects of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on Growth and Mortality of <i>Farfantepenaeus aztecus</i> and <i>Callinectes sapidus</i> in an Affected Louisiana Estuary.

### National Sea Grant-Funded Projects

Principal Investigator	Institution	Title
Kenneth Brown	LSU	Rapid Assessment of the Impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on Louisiana Oyster Reefs
Qianxin Lin	LSU	Evaluation of Potential Impacts of Oil Spill from the Accident of the BP Deepwater Horizon Rig on the Vegetation of Louisiana Coastal Wetlands
Sophie Warny	LSU	Quantifying the Effects of Crude Oil on the Base of the Food Web by Analyzing the Evolution of Phytoplankton Population Pre- and Post-Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Event
Jerome La Peyre	LSU	Acute Responses of Oyster Populations to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill across Coastal Louisiana: Examining Hydrocarbon Bio-accumulation and Oyster Health
Christopher Green	LSU	Acute Toxicity of a Major Oil Dispersant Component to Eggs, Larvae, and Juvenile Gulf Killifish ( <i>Fundulus grandis</i> ) at Varying Salinities

## ***Louisiana Creates Oyster Advisory Committee***

BATON ROUGE, La - Today Garret Graves, Chairman of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and chief coastal advisor to Governor Bobby Jindal, announced the creation of the Governor's Oyster Advisory Committee.

The committee will be tasked with ensuring that the oyster industry is fairly represented and adequately compensated for the devastation that occurred as a result of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. "The oyster industry was severely impacted by the spill, and it is crucial for the state to look at how we can provide assistance and aid in preserving such an important industry to our state." Graves said.

One of the goals of the committee will be to devise and develop recommendations that will allow for Louisiana's coast to be restored and protected while defending the interests of the Louisiana oyster industry. "We feel it is critical to move forward with restoring and protecting coastal Louisiana, but we must also consider how our efforts impact industries in the coastal zone of the state." Graves said. The gulf coast produces 70 % of the oysters harvested in the U.S, and of that Louisiana produces more oysters than the other Gulf States combined. In 2009 Louisiana oystermen harvested in excess of \$34 million worth of oysters.

Representation on the committee will include representatives from the oyster industry, the Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, as well as representation from maritime, oil and gas, and landowners. House and Senate Natural Resources Committee chairmen Senator Nick Gautreaux and Representative Gordon Dove will also serve.

The committee will hold its first meeting on Wednesday, October 6th in New Orleans.

## ***Texas Adopt-A-Beach Volunteers Cleanup 172.7 Tons of Trash***

*24th Annual Texas General Land Office Adopt-A-Beach Fall Cleanup draws 8,815 volunteers*

AUSTIN — More than 8,815 volunteers joined forces Saturday for the 24th Annual Texas General Land Office Adopt-A-Beach Fall Cleanup. The volunteers removed nearly 172.7 tons of trash off more than 167 miles of Texas coast.

"The turnout this year was great," said Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson. "I think our social media efforts to reach surfers, fishermen — people who care about the beach — through Facebook and other online media is really starting to have an effect."

Volunteers this year reported a shocking array of items among the usual cigarette butts and beer cans, including an Oriental rug and an empty beer box with a 24-inch rattle snake living inside at Surfside Beach, a vial of heroin at the Padre Island National Seashore (which was turned over to law enforcement), a prom corsage in Chambers County, an intravenous fluid bag and TV on Galveston Island, a federal permanent resident, or green card, in Horsepen Bayou and a bottle of catsup from Japan on Matagorda Island.

The Texas General Land Office Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup is an all-volunteer effort to remove trash from Texas' shores. Coastal cleanups are held three times each year and the program's success is due to the hard work of volunteers, including local coordinators who work many unpaid hours publicizing the cleanups in coastal communities.

Since 1986, more than 406,000 Adopt-A-Beach volunteers have picked up more than 7,800 tons of trash from Texas beaches, some of it originating from as far away as South America. Volunteers record data on the trash to learn more about the causes of marine debris and to help mitigate pollution along Texas' 367 miles of coastline. The next coastwide cleanup will be the Spring Adopt-A-Beach effort scheduled for April 30, 2011.

The success of the Adopt-A-Beach program is made possible not only by the generous efforts of thousands of volunteers, but through the generous donations of community leaders and sponsors statewide. The lead, statewide sponsor for the 24th Texas General Land Office Adopt-A-Beach Fall Cleanup was Shell Oil Company. Other sponsors include HNTB Corporation, AT&T Pioneers, El Paso Corporation, KBR, Halliburton, Lyondell Basell and the Ocean Conservancy.

### ***Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies Signs Memorandum of Agreement with The Nature Conservancy***

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with The Nature Conservancy that increases cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations on marine science, conservation, and the management of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Nature Conservancy is an international, nonprofit, private organization committed to the conservation of the Earth's diverse biological resources through the preservation of plants, animals and natural communities, and protection of the land and waters they need to survive. The MOA emphasizes the HRI's role in assessing the impact of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, their focus on the Gulf of Mexico as a whole, as well as research on the Gulf's oyster populations.

"The Nature Conservancy is one of the oldest and most respected conservation organizations and HRI is pleased to establish a formal relationship with them to further conservation efforts in the Gulf" stated Dr. Larry McKinney, HRI director. "There are many challenges to assuring an economically and ecologically healthy Gulf and together we can make a significant contribution toward that goal."

Among its many accomplishments, The Nature Conservancy, which is involved in more than 100 marine conservation projects across the globe, has protected more than 119 million acres of land and 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide. In addition, the Conservancy has scientists and conservation staff working in all 50 states and more than 30 countries, protecting habitats from grasslands to coral reefs from Australia to Zambia.

## Other News

### ***BP and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Announce Implementation of BP's \$500 Million Independent Research Initiative***

Release date: 29 September 2010

HOUSTON - BP and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance today announced plans for the implementation of BP's \$500 million Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GRI) to study the effects of the Deepwater Horizon incident and the potential associated impact on the environment and public health.

On May 24, BP announced the overall research program with the commitment to fund \$500 million over a 10-year period for scientific studies. While the details of the full program were being developed, a series of fast-track grants were made to accelerate data acquisition and analysis: Louisiana State University (\$5 million), the Northern Gulf Institute (\$10 million), the Florida Institute of Oceanography (\$10 million), the Alabama Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium (\$5 million) and the National Institutes of Health (\$10m).

Today's announcement details the agreement for program implementation for the remaining years of the 10-year program. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance will administer the GRI with the ability to execute contracts and provide the required program management support.

"We are delighted that the Gulf of Mexico Alliance has agreed to participate in the implementation of the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative," said David Rainey, Vice President of Science, Technology, Environment, and Regulatory Affairs, in BP's Gulf Coast Restoration Organization. "BP is committed to understanding the long-term impacts of the Deepwater Horizon incident on the ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico. With this agreement in place we can now move forward to engage the best research scientists in the Gulf Coast, and elsewhere."

The GRI will be managed by a board comprised of scientists from academic institutions with peer-recognized credentials. BP and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance will appoint an equal number of research scientists to the board.

The objectives of the research will be to address the following five themes:

- The physical distribution and ultimate fate of contaminants associated with the Deepwater Horizon incident.
- The chemical evolution and biological degradation of the contaminants.
- The environmental effects of the contaminants on Gulf of Mexico ecosystems, and the science of ecosystem recovery.
- Technology developments for improved detection, characterization, mitigation, and remediation of offshore oil spills.
- Integration of the previous four themes in the context of human health.

"I am extremely excited that the Gulf of Mexico Alliance has this opportunity to join BP in this groundbreaking research initiative," said Dr. Bill Walker, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and current Co-Chair of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Management Team. "The Alliance has worked for several years on priority issues such as water quality, habitat conservation,

ecosystem integration and coastal community resilience. We believe the fundamental work provided by this research initiative will both inform and help direct work to ensure the viability of the Gulf Coast.”

The independent scientific research will be conducted at academic institutions primarily in the US Gulf Coast states. However, appropriate partnerships with institutions based outside the US Gulf region will be welcome.

Funds will be distributed using the practice of merit review by peer evaluation as described in the 2005 Report of the National Science Board (NSB-05-119).

Individual researchers will comply with professional standards as laid out in the National Academy of Sciences Publication – On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research (2009).

The research will involve sampling, modeling and studies – not acquisition or construction of infrastructure such as ships or laboratories.

All GRI-funded research will be independent of BP, and the results will be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals with no requirement for BP approval.

Notes to editors:

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a partnership of the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas with the goal of significantly increasing regional collaboration to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico.

For further information:

BP Gulf of Mexico response: [www.bp.com/gulfofmexicoresponse](http://www.bp.com/gulfofmexicoresponse)

BP Press Office, London: +44 20 7496 4076

BP Press Office, US: +1 281 366 0265

### ***Obama Administration Moves Long-Term Gulf Plan Forward***

For immediate release: Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Contacts: Captain Beci Brenton (Navy), 703-697-7491, [Beci.brenton@navy.mil](mailto:Beci.brenton@navy.mil);

Adora Andy (EPA), 202-527-5866, [andy.adora@epa.gov](mailto:andy.adora@epa.gov)

NEW ORLEANS, La. — The Obama Administration has put forward an aggressive restoration plan, including a call for dedicated funds, to help strengthen the Gulf region’s environment, economy, and health following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The restoration plan, written by Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, was submitted to the President today. A key recommendation in the report is that Congress dedicate a significant amount of any civil penalties obtained from parties responsible for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill into a Gulf Coast Recovery Fund to go toward addressing long-term recovery and restoration efforts in the Gulf. The President has decided to follow this recommendation, and Congressional action is critical to the overall effort.

"I am honored to have been asked by the President to put together this plan, and am pleased to present him a plan which meets the goals he set in June. The plan is the result of listening to the people of the Gulf Coast. It balances the needs of the people, the environment and the economic livelihood of the region," Secretary Mabus stated.

To manage the funds and to coordinate recovery projects, the Mabus report recommends that Congress authorize a Gulf Coast Recovery Council. As designed, the Recovery Council would include representatives from the states and federally recognized Gulf tribes. The Recovery Council would work to ensure that local governments and citizen stakeholders also play a critical role.

The President will not let the recovery process wait until Congress acts to approve the Recovery Council. He soon will sign an executive order to establish the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force. A bridge to the Recovery Council, this intergovernmental advisory body will coordinate restoration programs and projects in the Gulf region. It will focus on efforts to create more resilient and healthy Gulf Coast ecosystems, while also encouraging support for economic recovery and long-term health issues. Given her extensive environmental experience, ability to work successfully with stakeholders, and roots in the Gulf Coast region, the President has named Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson to serve as Task Force chair.

"President Obama has said many times that our commitment to the families and environment in the Gulf extends far beyond capping the well. We're sending that message loud and clear today: our work is not complete until the people and the environment they rely on are on the path to restoration and recovery," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "I'm proud to take on leadership of this task force. As someone charged with protecting health and the environment, and as someone who grew up as part of the Gulf Coast community, I welcome the opportunity to make a difference for the people here."

The Task Force will be expected to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services on public health issues and with the Department of Commerce and other federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, on ways to improve the economic impact of ecosystem restoration.

The Mabus report recommends continued support for individuals, families, and businesses to help them navigate the claims process, and to give assistance to communities to identify additional needs. It urges a media campaign — paid for by the oil spill's responsible parties — to help restore public confidence in the seafood industry and promote tourism in the area. The report examines ways that the Gulf can take advantage of opportunities in emerging industries. The report also identifies critical needs for health and human services across the region and recommends continued engagement with the nonprofit sector.

In June, as the urgent oil spill response efforts were still underway, President Obama tapped Secretary Mabus, a former governor of Mississippi and a son of the Gulf, to develop the framework for long-term recovery. The President was clear that he wanted the plan to come from the Gulf, and not be imposed from Washington on the Gulf. Mabus spent countless hours hearing from thousands of local residents, businesses, and elected officials to create the foundation for this report.

The [full report to the President](#) is available online.

### ***Elevated Nitrogen and Phosphorus Still Widespread in Much of the Nation's Streams and Groundwater***

Complete findings, as well as a USGS fact sheet, podcast, and graphics are available [online](#). Elevated concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus, nutrients that can negatively impact aquatic ecosystems and human health, have remained the same or increased in many streams and aquifers across the Nation since the early 1990's, according to a new national study by the U.S. Geological Survey.

“This USGS report provides the most comprehensive national-scale assessment to date of nitrogen and phosphorus in our streams and groundwater,” said Marcia McNutt, USGS Director. “For years we have known that these same nutrients in high concentrations have resulted in ‘dead zones’ when they reach our estuaries, such as during the spring at the mouth of the Mississippi, and now we have improved science-based explanations of when, where, and how elevated concentrations reach our streams and aquifers and affect aquatic life and the quality of our drinking water.”

“Despite major Federal, State and local efforts and expenditures to control sources and movement of nutrients within our Nation’s watersheds, national-scale progress was not evident in this assessment, which is based on thousands of measurements and hundreds of studies across the country from the 1990’s and early 2000’s,” said Matthew C. Larsen, USGS Associate Director for Water.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, nutrient pollution has consistently ranked as one of the top three causes of degradation in U.S. streams and rivers for decades.

USGS findings show that widespread concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus remain two to ten times greater than levels recommended by the EPA to protect aquatic life. Most often, these elevated levels were found in agricultural and urban streams. These findings show that continued reductions in nutrient sources and implementation of land-management strategies for reducing nutrient delivery to streams are needed to meet EPA recommended levels in most regions.

Nutrients occur naturally in water and are needed for plant growth and productive aquatic ecosystems; however, in high concentrations nutrients often result in the growth of large amounts of algae and other nuisance plants in streams, lakes and estuaries. The decay of these plants and algae can cause areas of low dissolved oxygen, known as hypoxic, or “dead,” zones that stress or kill aquatic life. Some forms of algae release toxins that can result in health concerns.

The study also found that nitrate is a continuing human-health concern in many shallow aquifers across the Nation that are sources of drinking water. In agricultural areas, more than one in five shallow, private wells contained nitrate at levels above the EPA drinking water standard. The quality and safety of water from private wells—which are a source of drinking water for about 40 million people—are not regulated by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and are the responsibility of the homeowner.

Because nitrate can persist in groundwater for years and even decades, nitrate concentrations are likely to increase in aquifers used for public drinking-water supplies during at least the next decade, as shallow groundwater with high nutrient concentrations moves downward into deeper aquifers.

“Strategies designed to reduce nutrient inputs on the land will improve the quality of water in near-surface parts of aquifers; however, decades may pass before quality improves in deeper parts of the aquifer, which serve as major sources for public-supply wells,” said Neil Dubrovsky, USGS hydrologist and lead scientist on this study. “Unfortunately, similar time delays for improvements are expected for streams that receive substantial inputs of groundwater”

A variety of sources can contribute nutrients to surface and groundwater, such as wastewater and industrial discharges, fertilizer and manure applications to agricultural land, runoff from urban areas, and atmospheric sources. USGS findings show that nutrient sources and resulting concentrations vary across the Nation. For example, concentrations of nitrogen generally are highest in agricultural streams in the Northeast, Midwest, and the Northwest, which have some of the most intense applications of fertilizer and manure in the Nation.

Differences in concentrations across the Nation also are due to natural features and human activities. For example, concentrations of nitrogen in streams draining parts of the agricultural Midwest are increased by contributions from artificial subsurface tile drains that are used to promote rapid dewatering of poorly drained soils. Conversely, concentrations of nitrate in streams draining parts of the Southeast appear to dissipate faster as a result of enhanced natural removal processes in soils and streams.

“This nationwide assessment of sources and natural and human factors that control how nutrients enter our streams and groundwater helps decision-makers anticipate where watersheds are most vulnerable to contamination and set priorities and management actions in different geographic regions of the country,” said Dubrovsky.

For more than 125 years, the USGS has served as the Nation’s water monitoring agency, including flow and (or) quality in selected streams and rivers across the U.S. USGS continues to work closely with the EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the States, and local watersheds to assure that USGS monitoring and assessments provide useful information for managing nutrients throughout the Nation.

Water-quality data from more than 1,300 locations, much of it in real-time, is available through [USGS Water Quality Watch](#). Additional information about surface water, groundwater and water quality is available at [National Water Information System Web Interface](#). You can also receive instant, customized updates about water conditions by subscribing to [WaterAlert](#), a new service from the USGS.

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Links and contacts within this release are valid at the time of publication.

## ***Restore America’s Estuaries Releases Greenhouse Gas Action Plan for Tidal Wetlands***

*Blue Ribbon Panel Issues Report on Development of National Greenhouse Gas Offset Protocol*

Download the report at [www.estuaries.org/climate-change.html](http://www.estuaries.org/climate-change.html)

WASHINGTON—Restore America’s Estuaries (RAE) announced today that it has released an action plan that will speed the creation of a greenhouse gas offset protocol for coastal tidal wetlands. RAE’s “Action Plan for the Development of a National Greenhouse Gas Offset Protocol for Tidal Wetlands Restoration and Management,” developed by a National Blue Ribbon Panel of national experts in wetlands science, carbon markets, and public policy, examines the scientific, methodological, and policy hurdles that still must be overcome, and charts a “roadmap” for the next phase of offset protocol development.

“We know that coastal tidal wetlands sequester carbon dioxide at impressive rates, both in the soil and as biomass,” said Dr. Stephen Crooks, Blue Ribbon Panel chair and director of Climate Change Services for Philip William and Associates (PWA), an environmental hydrology firm headquartered in San Francisco. “We intend to answer the remaining questions surrounding the creation of an offset protocol, quantify sequestration rates across a variety of different coastal tidal wetland ecosystems, and make those findings available to investors in national and international carbon trading markets. This is truly historic.”

The plan—the product of a year-long collaboration capped by an intensive three-day workshop convened by Restore America’s Estuaries in April 2010—marks the first-ever attempt to make tidal wetlands restoration and management projects integral parts of commercial carbon offset planning, strategy, and investment through the development of a GHG offset protocol.

Among the plan's goals are procedures for quantifying and monitoring GHG flux and sequestration, ensuring that the sequestration is not reversed, and guidelines for determining the eligibility of projects under the offset protocol.

“Preserving and restoring some of America’s most threatened ecosystems—coastal tidal wetlands—may be among the best ways of mitigating greenhouse emissions that fuel global warming and climate change,” said Jeff Benoit, President and CEO of Restore America’s Estuaries. “Increased investment in wetlands protection and restoration gained through greenhouse gas offset markets will provide an added benefit of helping vulnerable coastal areas adapt to the impacts of future climate change.”

Sea-level rise, development, pollution, and other factors destroy thousands of acres of coastal wetlands in the United States every year. Scientists agree that tidal wetlands and estuaries are key components in ensuring biodiversity and coastal resiliency in the face of rising sea levels.

The authors and other scientific and policy experts will be discussing the Action Plan and its implications for coastal tidal wetlands restoration and management during a special session of the 5<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration, November 15<sup>th</sup>, in Galveston, Texas. Information is available at [www.estuaries.org/conference](http://www.estuaries.org/conference).

## Grant Opportunities

### *Gulf of Mexico B-WET Funding Opportunity*

The National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Region, is seeking proposals under the Gulf of Mexico Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program. Attached slides (with presenter's annotations) provide an overview of the program and the funding opportunity. The deadline for applications is **October 14, 2010**. The full Federal Funding Opportunity can be found at the following URL: [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/grants/FY11%20BWET%20\(Final%20with%20dates\).pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/grants/FY11%20BWET%20(Final%20with%20dates).pdf).

The B-WET program is an environmental education program that promotes locally relevant, experiential learning in the K-12 environment. Funded projects provide meaningful watershed educational experiences for students, related professional development for teachers, and help to support regional education and environmental priorities in the Gulf of Mexico.

### *SARP-NOAA Community-based Restoration Request for Proposals*

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s Community-based Restoration Program are now accepting proposals for their FY 2011 matching grant program. Proposals are due **Oct. 22nd, 2010**. Awards will be made in December and projects will begin in January 2011.

The partnership between SARP and NOAA provides funds for projects in the Southeast Region which promote the health of NOAA Trust Resources and further the goal of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan (SAHP):

To maintain, restore, and conserve the quantity and quality of freshwater, estuarine, and marine habitats to support healthy, sustainable fish and aquatic communities and sustainable public use for the benefit of all in the southeastern region and the entire U.S.

Projects proposed should address threats to aquatic habitats and/or diadromous fish and promote their restoration or improvement in one or more of the 10 coastal states of the region: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. An example would be a project involving establishing living shoreline in a coastal watershed draining into the south Atlantic.

Eligible applicants include: non-governmental organizations (e.g., community associations, watershed groups, cooperatives, civic groups), municipalities, universities, schools, and state and tribal governments. Federal agencies are not eligible to apply. Projects should include community involvement and monitoring components.

A complete description of eligibility, goals, full proposal processes, and the review criteria are available. Request for Proposals: final rfp 2010-11.pdf - [download](#)  
[Submit a Proposal](#)

### *Regional Ocean Partnership Funding Program Opportunity*

NOAA is pleased to announce the availability of an FY2011 competitive grant opportunity to support the NOAA Regional Ocean Partnership Funding Program (subject to Congressional appropriations). NOAA is soliciting proposals for a national competition focused on advancing effective coastal and ocean management through regional ocean governance; including the national ocean policy goals set out in the July 2010 [Final Recommendations](#) of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, which includes a national Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) Framework. The full grant announcement includes details on the funding priorities, eligibility, deadlines, review process, and how to apply.

The grant announcement and application can be found at: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppId=57212>. The Federal Register Notice is available at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-09-13/html/2010-22645.htm>.

The Regional Ocean Partnership Funding Program will support two categories of activities:

1. Implementation of activities that contribute to achieving the priorities identified by Regional Ocean Partnerships while also advancing CMSP as envisioned in the national CMSP Framework; and
2. Regional Ocean Partnership development and governance support for administration and operation of existing Regional Ocean Partnerships and for start-up costs of those regions beginning Regional Ocean Partnerships.

Eligible applicants must submit full proposals to NOAA on or before **December 10, 2010** in order to participate in this Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 funding opportunity. Total anticipated funding is approximately \$20,000,000 and is subject to the availability of FY2011 appropriations. The start date on proposals should be the first day of July, August or September, but no later than October 1, of 2011.

For administrative questions, contact James Lewis Free: [James.L.Free@noaa.gov](mailto:James.L.Free@noaa.gov). For technical questions regarding this announcement, contact Becky Smyth: [Rebecca.Smyth@noaa.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Smyth@noaa.gov).

## Conferences and Workshops

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### *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:

**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](http://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](mailto:avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov)) or Michael Shelton (251-928-9792 & [michael.shelton@dcnr.alabama.gov](mailto: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  
Contact: Cristin Phillips, 850-245-2105 or [Cristin.m.phillips@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Cristin.m.phillips@dep.state.fl.us)

Hotel Information: Lido Beach Resort 700 Ben Franklin Drive Sarasota, FL 34236  
<http://lidobeachresort.com/>. Attendees can call hotel (800) 441-2113 to make reservations (Referring to GOMA or Gulf of Mexico Alliance)

## ***Stormwater Management: Rooftop Disconnection, Filter Strips, and Rainwater Harvesting***

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20th, 2010

Whether you're interested in residential, commercial, or institutional applications, innovative stormwater management practices must begin with the rooftop and yard. This workshop will begin with a webcast hosted by the Center for Watershed Protection that will review various disconnection techniques: simple downspout disconnection, small-scale infiltration and bioretention, compost-amended soils, and rainwater harvesting.

Case studies covering several interesting approaches for inspecting and maintaining these types of distributed practices will be presented. The webcast will be followed by a discussion of rainwater management and harvesting practices at the Grand Bay NERR's Coastal Resources Center (a Gold LEED Certified facility).

**\*Registration Required\***

To register, contact Avia Huisman, Coastal Training Program Coordinator at [avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov).

## *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](mailto:amy@weeksbay.org), (251) 990-5004 Avia: [avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov](mailto:avia.huisman@dmr.ms.gov), (228) 475-7047. Register online at <http://gulfalliancetraining.com/detail.aspx?Id=29>.

## *Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill Conference - Call for Abstracts*

The University of South Florida, Florida Institute of Oceanography, Mote Marine Laboratory, and the State of Florida Oil Spill Academic Task Force will host a major oil spill research conference, **February 9-11, 2011**, at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Oral or poster presentations are invited on substantial and original research on all aspects of the Gulf Oil Spill disaster and its impact. Abstract submission deadline is **October 25, 2010**. Abstracts may be submitted online at <http://oilspill.usf.edu/>.

The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill will forever change the Gulf of Mexico, significantly impacting its citizens, environment, economy and policy of the region—and beyond. As efforts are considered to mitigate effects of the spill, plans must also be made to prepare for a different Gulf of Mexico—5, 10 and 20 years out. This disaster is of global importance and demands new approaches and methods, as well as the shared experience and insight of those who have been engaged in such disasters world-wide (e.g., from Alaska, Brazil, India, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Nigeria). One goal is to ensure that the tools and models are in place to deal with similar crises globally.

To deliberate these issues, the conference will bring together representatives from academia, government, NGOs and the private sector to inform each other about the state of research in relevant topical areas and to translate research into policy and management for predicting and adapting to a changed future, the extent of which is unknown.

Key Topics:

- Geotechnical Engineering
- Regional Oceanography
- Chemical Weathering – Biological Consumption
- Dispersants

- Ecological Consequences and Toxicity
- Economic and Social Impacts
- Human Health Issues
- Stakeholders, Science and Policy

The conference co-chairs are Robert H. Weisberg, Distinguished University Professor of Physical Oceanography, University of South Florida; William T. Hogarth, Dean, USF College of Marine Science and Acting Director Florida Institute of Oceanography; and Michael P. Crosby, Senior Vice President for Research, Mote Marine Laboratory.

### ***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](http://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.

### ***Public Issues and Conflict Management***

November 9-10, 2010

Grand Bay NERR

9:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m. each day.

A workshop for elected officials, resource managers, emergency managers, public employees, researchers, academics, consultants, NGO and non-profit staff and others who work with the public and want to improve group facilitation skills.

This two-day instructor led course is designed to increase participants' ability to design, conduct, and control public or targeted meetings. Participants will learn techniques to reduce conflict, enhance cooperation, and achieve meeting objectives in a timely manner. They will also learn how to use and practice facilitation skills to enhance communication between diverse groups with multiple perspectives.

After completing this course, participants will be able to design and conduct collaborative processes for reaching consensus on public issues and understand how to deal effectively with the media in the public issues management process.

**\*Registration Required\* Limited to 30 Participants!**

The workshop fee is \$15.00 per person and includes all course materials and lunch.

### ***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](mailto:cz11@noaa.gov).

### ***MS Coastal Development Strategies Conference, Call for Session Proposals***

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Office of Coastal Management and Planning is conducting a formal call for Session Proposals for the 12th annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference to be held May 11-12, 2011, in Biloxi, MS. Proposals must be submitted by November 19. The review process will take place late November through early December. Those selected to be included in the final program will be notified by January 1. For more information about submitting a session proposal, visit: <http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/Public-Affairs/Press-Releases/10-116-JG.pdf>.

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



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