

Task Forces/Committees/Commissions Addressing the Gulf Oil Spill

BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling Commission

On May 22, 2010, the President created the bipartisan National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. The Commission is tasked with providing recommendations on how to prevent – and mitigate the impact of – any future spills that result from offshore drilling.

- The commission will be focused on the necessary environmental and safety precautions we must build into our regulatory framework in order to ensure an accident like this never happens again, taking into account the other investigations concerning the causes of the spill.
- The commission will have bipartisan co-chairs with a total membership of seven people. Membership will include broad and diverse representation of individuals with relevant expertise. No sitting government employees or elected officials will sit on the commission.
- The Commission's work will be transparent and subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Commission will issue a report within six months of having been convened.

<http://www.oilspillcommission.gov/>
BPDeepwaterHorizonCommission@hq.doe.gov

Commission phone: (202) 586-0716 (is a voice-mail only line)
Commission fax: (202) 586-6221

Gulf Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force

The Task Force was created by Executive Order 10-101, signed by Governor Crist on April 20, 2010. The Goals of the Task Force include the following:

- Gather all appropriate State of Florida resources and leadership to ensure a coordinated response.
- Make certain the world is accurately informed on the status of Florida's beaches and waters.
- Assess, measure and report on all economic loss data and trends in economic indicators related to the event.
- Provide information to the greater public in a timely and effective manner.

The Task Force has three workgroups:

Workgroup I: Economic Impact Assessment
Workgroup II: Communications
Workgroup III: BP Claims Processing

<http://www.flgov.com/gulfrecoverytaskforce>
GulfRecoveryTaskForce@eog.myflorida.com

Legal Advisory Council

The Council is co-chaired by former Attorneys General Bob Butterworth and Jim Smith. The Council will explore options relating to the Deepwater Horizon incident and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The legal advisory team will bring together private-sector attorneys and other experts who will use their expertise to begin assessing the impact the potential disaster could have on Florida.

http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/files/legal_adv_council_051010.pdf
<http://myfloridalegal.com/deepwaterhorizon>

Senate Select Committee on Florida's Economy

The Senate President has directed the Select Committee on Florida's Economy to evaluate the economic impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and recommend legislative action to address the serious and growing consequences of this tragedy on Florida families and businesses along the Gulf Coast. In the case of the oil spill, the committee is to consider and pursue proposals to help families, businesses, and communities whose livelihoods are threatened. Those proposals may take the form of bills to be considered by a special session or regular session of the Legislature. The President has also defined the scope of the committee to include other "legislative action," such as hearings, to review the response of state and federal agencies and British Petroleum to the economic aspects of Deepwater Horizon and requests for action by the executive branch. To recommend constructive solutions, the Select Committee will:

- Evaluate BP's response related to economic impacts on Florida's residents, businesses, and governments;
- Evaluate the state's response to economic impacts on Florida's residents, businesses, and governments;
- Determine gaps and weaknesses in current economic responses;
- Determine whether the needs of Floridians are being addressed through the damage/claims process established by BP;
- Identify long term outlook for Florida;
- Determine existing options for addressing impacts;
- Review policies adopted by other states to recover from catastrophes;
- Closely monitor federal actions and recommend to the state's congressional delegation ways in which the federal response can be more effective and timely in dealing with economic consequences;
- Closely monitor local actions and consider additional means of advocating for the needs of local governments; and

- Review the timeliness, adequacy, and effectiveness of Visit Florida’s support for the tourism industry.

Senate professional staff will gather all available data related to economic impact, both actual and projected. The data will be used to determine existing options for addressing impacts, and ascertain whether these options are being used to the greatest extent possible:

- Federal aid
- State aid
- Local aid
- Regulatory considerations
- Fishing regulations and restrictions
- Permitting
- Business licensure
- Environmental (as they may affect economic recovery)
- Comparable Experience
- What states have experienced similar disruptions
- Lessons learned
- Policies that promote economic recovery after catastrophes

Preliminary Issues Raised:

- Effect of Oil Catastrophe on Property Values
- Residential / Commercial
- Property tax relief for affected residents and businesses
- Loss of income for Florida residents and businesses
- Review eligibility criteria for state individual and business assistance programs
- Claims paying process
- Emergency loan and grant process

The committee met on July 12, 2010, to receive testimony and discuss potential legislative action regarding the economic consequences of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The discussion and testimony during the workshop included: Tax Relief for affected property owners; Damages and claims related to the event; Changes, which may be necessary, in the regulatory environment pertaining to economic recovery; Performance of Local Government, State Government, Federal Government and British Petroleum in addressing the economic impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill; and Barriers to an aggressive State response to the Crisis.

http://www.flsenate.gov/cgi-bin/View_Page.pl?Tab=committees&Submenu=1&File=index.html&Directory=committees/senate/SFE/

CFO Deepwater Horizon Financial Accountability

The CFO has a [Deepwater Horizon Financial Accountability web page](http://www.myfloridacfo.com/OilSpill/default.htm), <http://www.myfloridacfo.com/OilSpill/default.htm>, to keep track of how the grant money received from BP is being spent. It also has a running tab of state government expenses so that we can file with BP for reimburse of oil spill-related costs.

CFO's number is (850) 413-3089.

Oil Spill Academic Task Force (OSATF)

The **OSATF** is a consortium of scientists and scholars from institutions in the State University System as well as from four of Florida's private universities working in collaboration with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The OSATF brings together expertise and resources to assist the state of Florida and the Gulf region in preparing for and responding to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Major activities of the OSTAF include:

- Coordination of activities with state and other academic resources in Florida's institutions of higher learning
- Serving as a clearing house of information on faculty research expertise and capabilities for local, state and federal agencies
- Providing a communication conduit for researchers within the task force and throughout the region.

<http://oilspill.fsu.edu/>
oilspill@fsu.edu

Florida Association of Counties has a Deepwater Horizon Task Force

"In an effort to provide counties with information that is as up to date as possible regarding the status and response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, we are posting http://www.fl-counties.com/Pages/Advocacy/Hot_Topics/Deepwater_Horizon_Oil_Spill_.aspx"

University of Florida Oil Spill Task Force

This newly created task force met July 15 to discuss its charge and develop a schedule of activities. Much of this task force's goal is to coordinate UF's response for the OSATF. There are 4 committees within the task force, each with different focus areas. The focus areas are: human health, ecological effects, tracking the oil movements and changes, and socio-economic impacts of the spill.

The four committees will draft mini-reviews by August. These reviews will focus on what is known, what is unknown, and the most important questions that need to be answered. The

task force will meet sometime in mid-August to go over these min-reviews and synthesize the information.

<http://news.ufl.edu/2010/07/12/spill-task-force/>
www.urel.ufl.edu/oilSpillResponse

Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA)

SECOORA has established an Oil Spill Response Ad hoc Committee to effectively organize our ongoing collaboration. This committee will assist with our efforts to respond quickly to opportunities while maintaining transparency and broad involvement of our members. The Committee will have two components: a technical group that focuses on keeping a SECOORA/GCOOS/RA [proposal](#) current based on evolving activities and conditions in the Gulf of Mexico. The existing proposal may be broadened from its focus on subsurface mapping and modeling of physical parameters to examine the ocean observing contribution to assessing biological impacts. A second group within the Ad Hoc Committee will focus on political and policy issues associated with this effort. There will be overlap in the work and the participation on the two sub-groups.

http://secoora.org/oil_spill_resources

Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System Consortium (Florida COOS Consortium)

The Florida COOS Consortium consists of a number of organizations with an interest in the marine environment. By applying local expertise, cutting-edge research, and high-tech instruments we provide information and develop solutions to help decision-makers, citizens, and visitors to better protect, manage, and use our beautiful surrounding coastal ocean environment. The ocean touches the lives of every Floridian and Florida COOS is here to help monitor, understand, forecast and preserve this precious resource.

Members of the Florida COOS Consortium are monitoring the spread of oil in the Gulf together with the prevailing atmospheric and ocean weather conditions, including the Loop Current.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/flcoos/>

Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS)

The Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) provides timely information about the environment of the United States portion of the Gulf of Mexico and its estuaries for use by decision-makers, including researchers, government managers, industry, the military, educators, emergency responders, and the general public. GCOOS is one of a series of Regional Coastal Ocean Observing Systems which are part of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System, which is, in turn, part of the intergovernmental Global Ocean Observing System and a significant national contribution to the Global Earth Observing System of Systems.

<http://gcoos.tamu.edu/>

Additional info gathering/response at state level:

Department of Environmental Protection

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been designated the lead state agency for responding to potential impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill along Florida's shoreline.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/default.htm>

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp>

Florida Wildlife Commission (FWC)

The FWC, working with DEP, county governments, water management districts and several federal agencies, is conducting pre-impact wildlife assessments. These include taking water samples and testing for contamination in sediments, fish and shellfish along Florida's coastline and into the Gulf of Mexico. The FWC also is evaluating critical habitat, shorebird and sea turtle nesting areas and other wildlife. These assessments will assist wildlife managers to determine potential impacts. The FWC is also involved in locating the presence of oil. They have scientists aboard an FWC vessel offshore. Their Division of Law Enforcement has engaged 39 vessels, three helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft to conduct regular reconnaissance flights to monitor Florida's shoreline for the presence of oil.

<http://myfwc.com/OilSpill/index.htm>

Pacific States/British Columbia Oil Spill Task Force

The member agencies of the Task Force are closely tracking the ongoing response to the Spill of National Significance in the Gulf of Mexico, and are also providing mutual aid as needed and requested.

www.oilspilltaskforce.org