

## **NOAA Web Update June 5, 2010**

### **DEEPWATER HORIZON Incident**



**Situation: Saturday 05 June —**

#### **Response**

Today, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco conducted Shoreline Cleanup Assessment surveys on Grand Isle, Louisiana.

OR&R's modeling team continues to generate daily trajectories for the nearshore and offshore surface oil. Overflights are also conducted on a daily basis (weather permitting) to provide field verification of model trajectories. Winds from the south and southwest continue to move the northern edge of the spill perimeter closer to Mississippi-Alabama. Tar balls and small oil patties are coming ashore from western Mississippi towards Pensacola.

#### **Closures**

On Saturday, NOAA added 565 square miles to the fishing closed area; the change takes effect at 6 p.m. Eastern. The change is at the northeast edge of the closed area, and encompasses the projected movement of oil toward Panama City Beach, Florida. The total federal fishery closure now measures 78,603 square miles, or about 33% of the federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico. Closing fishing in these areas is a precautionary measure to ensure that seafood from the Gulf will remain safe for consumers. Any changes to the closure are announced daily at 12 p.m. Eastern at [sero.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov) and take effect at 6 p.m. Eastern the same day.

#### **Sea Turtles and Marine Mammals (effective June 4, 2010)**

A total of 282 sea turtles have been verified from April 30 to June 4 within the designated spill area. (The designated spill area for sea turtles and marine mammals is from the Texas/Louisiana border to Apalachicola, Florida; it is based on projections of where sea turtles and marine mammals could travel after exposure to oil.) The on-water turtle surveys by NOAA, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and other partners working under the Unified Command have captured 24 live turtles and one dead turtle -- all heavily oiled -- in areas 20 to 40 miles offshore. The turtles' behavior was abnormal, but they were responsive. All the turtles were cleaned of oil aboard the vessel, received initial veterinary care and were transported to Audubon Aquarium outside New Orleans where they are receiving further care. On water surveys are continuing. In addition to the oil observed on the 25 captured turtles, external oil was visible on three live stranded sea turtles (two caught in skimming operations) and one dead stranded turtle. All others have not had visible evidence of external oil.

Of the 282 turtles verified from April 30 to June 4, a total of 236 turtles stranded dead, 21 stranded alive. Three of those subsequently died. Three live stranded turtles have been released, including two that were found in Mississippi and released after rehabilitation in Ten Thousand Islands, Florida. There are 39 turtles in rehabilitation. Turtle strandings during this time period have been higher in Louisiana,

Mississippi, and Alabama than in previous years for this same time period. This may be due in part to increased detection and reporting, but this does not fully account for the increase.

From April 30 to June 4, 30 dead dolphins have stranded within the designated spill area and one live dolphin stranded, but died on the beach. So far, one of the 31 dolphins had evidence of external oil. Because it was found on an oiled beach, we are unable at this time to determine whether the animal was covered in oil prior to its death or after its death. The other 30 dolphins have had no visible evidence of external oil. Since April 30, the stranding rate for dolphins in Louisiana has been higher than the historic numbers for the same time period in previous years. This may be due to increased detection and reporting and the lingering effects of the earlier observed spike in strandings. A stranding is defined as a dead or debilitated animal that washes ashore or is found in the water.

### **Assessment**

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) is conducting a [Natural Resource Damage Assessment](#) (PDF, 89 K). The focus currently is to assemble existing data on resources and their habitats and collect baseline (pre-spill impact) data. Data on oiled resources and habitats are also being collected.