

REMNANTS OF GULF OF MEXICO BP OIL SPILL STILL CAUSING PROBLEMS

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries News, January 7th 2011 Marsh Tour
State and Local Officials Highlight Remaining Oiled Louisiana Coast in Bay Jimmy

Parts of Louisiana Coastline Still Heavily Oiled; Officials Asking BP, Federal Government to Finish the Job

Press Release: Today, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Secretary Robert Barham and Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser toured a portion of Louisiana's coastline still heavily oiled by the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Bay Jimmy, one of the areas along the Gulf of Mexico coast still severely impacted by thick layers of weathered oil and matted marshland, was highlighted by Secretary Barham and Nungesser as a prime example of portions of the Louisiana coastline still in desperate need of a comprehensive clean-up and recovery plan.

State and local officials voiced concerns today over plans of federal officials and BP to turn the responsibilities for mitigating damage to wildlife across the oiled parts of Louisiana's coast over to LDWF. The continued presence of pooled oil, oil saturated boom in areas such as Bay Jimmy and Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) underscore the need for a comprehensive, long-term plan to rehabilitate the marsh.

"It has been eight months since the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion, and five months since the well was capped. While workers along the coast dedicated themselves to cleaning up our shores there is still so much to be done," LDWF Secretary Barham said. "BP and federal officials are ready to close up shop and claim the job is done, leaving the state to clean up the mess. We will continue to push for a real resolution, more than just a wait-and-see approach for the miles of Louisiana coastline still oiled. They may have forgotten the impact on our wildlife and our habitat, but we have not." "We continue to find oil in different parts of Plaquemines Parish—Redfish Bay, Bay Jimmy, Pass a Loutre—depending on the tides, wind and thunder storms," said Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser. "We're concerned about the long-term plan to keep assets in this region to help remove oil and protect the wildlife. This is by no means over and we're concerned that this is being wrapped up before it is."

Shoreline treatment recommendations (STRs) for areas like Pass a Loutre WMA have been written by contractors for BP, and some have been executed, but rarely to the full extent necessary to restore crucial coastal habitats. For Bay Jimmy, treatment recommended in STRs has yet to begin; state officials are monitoring cleanup operations to ensure they are fulfilled before BP and federal officials pack up shop at the end of February. Oiled boom, once used to prevent oil from hitting the shoreline also remains in numerous locations, forgotten or lost by contractors charged with their maintenance and removal.

Oiled birds also continue to be recovered by LDWF biologists, including three live Brown Pelicans in Bay Jimmy, and one dead Brown Pelican. Biologists also recovered one oiled, dead Brown Pelican in Pass a Loutre and one oiled, live Killdeer. These birds, which were recovered in the last few days, have increased concerns for continued wildlife contamination if marshes are not properly cleaned.

"We will continue to try to work with BP, their contractors and federal officials to come up with reasonable, effective solutions for treating and restoring our coastline," said Secretary Barham. "But we won't step back while officials pack their bags and leave Louisiana. We're hopeful that we can reach an agreement for the next steps in our recovery plan." If BP and federal officials pass off the wildlife hazing efforts to LDWF, officials will be required to take over operations of hazing tools, such as propane cannons and other deterrents. Federal officials have asked LDWF to submit a Pollution Removal Funding Authorization (PRFA) to the Oil Spill Pollution Fund in order to acquire funds to take over the maintenance and operations of hazing cannons – requiring LDWF to justify why such hazing tools are necessary.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is charged with managing and protecting Louisiana's abundant natural resources. **For more information**, visit us at www.wlf.louisiana.gov on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ldwffb or follow us on Twitter @LDWF. For more information, please contact Olivia Watkins at LDWF at (226) 610-8660 or owatkins@wlf.la.gov, or Kurt Fromherz of Plaquemines Parish Government at (504) 450-8779 or kfromherz@plaqueminesparish.com. For additional photos, video footage and research documentation please visit: [ftp://204.12.23.214/Jan_7_Marsh_Tour/](http://204.12.23.214/Jan_7_Marsh_Tour/).

Pictures taken on January 7th 2011 Marsh Tour: Plaquemines parish President Billy Nungesser and Plaquemines Council Member Byron Marinovich (Billy pointing over marsh grass)
Council Member Byron Marinovich digs through oil with a pocket knife as Acy Cooper with the Louisiana Shrimp Association looks over his shoulder.
The rest are Billy (with the blue glove) showing thick oil on his hands, in the ground, and hidden behind marsh grass.

