

Oil Spill Response

Weekly Update – Monday, May 10, 2010

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Dry Tortugas National Park
P.O. Box 6208
Key West, FL 33041



On April 20, 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico. Since that time, the well has spilled large amounts of oil off the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama coastline. Currently, efforts to stem the flow of oil have proven unsuccessful, and contamination from the disaster threatens numerous coastal communities in the area. Because the movement of this oil is driven by the complex interplay of winds, tides, and currents, it is difficult to predict the location and timing of landfall. Given the proximity of eight national parks to the incident, the National Park Service remains an active participant in the ongoing effort to minimize impacts from the spill.

Current Status

As of May 10, 2010, the National Park Service has activated two incident management teams in the Gulf. Many other park service employees across the country are supporting the response with technical information and assistance.

Human safety and **resource protection** are the focus of the National Park Service in the eight parks that may be affected by the oil spill. Park personnel are working to assess resources, collect baseline data, coordinate boom placement, plan for responsible cleanup, install barriers for shorebird and turtle nest protection, and plan for potential park closures, if necessary.

What's at Risk?



Dry Tortugas National Park preserves Fort Jefferson, one of the largest coastal masonry forts of its time, which rises only a few feet from the waters of the Gulf. Shipwrecks located within park boundaries tell stories of past inhabitants and key moments in the history of the park. The park also is known for its coral reefs that support abundant and diverse flora and fauna, including important game fishes. Unique seasonal concentrations of nesting birds and several threatened and endangered species may also be affected. The many natural and cultural resources of the park are susceptible to damage from oil coming from the northern Gulf of Mexico.

What Are We Doing?

The five national park units in south Florida are working together on response efforts. The parks are engaged in planning baseline condition assessments of physical and biological resources in anticipation of potential impacts. The team is currently working in partnership with various local, State, and Federal agencies in formulating potential strategies for mitigation and remediation.

Park Status

The park remains open and all park activities continue as scheduled. For more information on park response efforts, contact the public information office at (305) 224-4125 or email: SouthFloridaNPS@gmail.com

How You Can Help

Fortunately, south Florida national parks have thus far been spared. However, volunteers are currently involved in the larger response effort. For more information on volunteering, please call the Deepwater Horizon Response Volunteer Request Line at (866) 448-5816