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Gulf Restoration Network Responds to BP Oil Drilling Disaster and Inadequate Clean-up Efforts

New Orleans, LA- The Gulf Restoration Network (GRN) is following the situation in the Gulf very closely. We will continue to make flyovers by plane over the site where the Deep Water Horizon sank and where oil is flowing freely into the open water. According to Cynthia Sarthou, Executive Director of GRN, “the GRN is very concerned that the current efforts underway to protect the resources of the Gulf and coast are inadequate. During flyovers our staff have seen very few ships engaged in cleanup, particularly when compared with the growing size of the slick. BP and the federal agencies need to be more aggressive in their response and deploy more resources to match cleanup efforts with the scope and magnitude of this disaster.”

GRN is also concerned about the burning of oil as a cleanup technique. However, since a drilling disaster of this magnitude is beyond the capability of either the government or industry to address, we have been left with few choices. “Basically, we have a suite of bad options to try to get this drilling disaster under control, none of which are guaranteed to work, many of which have not been fully tested, especially 5,000 feet below the surface,” said Ms. Sarthou. “In the end, all of the options require us to choose potential harm to marine species in hopes of saving impacts to species in our coastal wetlands and beaches.”

The GRN is deeply concerned about the impacts this disaster will have on the fragile marine life and coastal ecosystems. “Despite BP’s claims to the contrary, our flyovers have shown a need for more boots on the ground and boats on the water to assess the impacts of this drilling disaster, said Aaron Viles, Campaign Director for GRN. “At this time it is unclear just how much oil is on the Gulf floor and how far and wide it has spread. We are concerned about the sensitive sperm whale population, whale sharks, bluefin tuna, and over hundreds of other species.”

The GRN would also like to see long-term monitoring and research for the entire effected area. “We are concerned that the true impact to marine and coastal wildlife has not been accurately



assessed and are concerned that this critical area of the Gulf ecosystem is in jeopardy. From sensitive Sperm Whale populations to inland oyster beds and gulf fish, all of the fisheries and Wildlife maybe facing severe devastation, not to mention the Gulf wide tourism and recreation industries,” said Mr. Viles.

The GRN is also concerned what effect an expanded offshore drilling footprint will have on the Gulf region and would like to see a halt to further new drilling until the proper research and monitoring can be carefully studied and addressed. “We are concerned that the decision to increase drilling in the Gulf by the Obama administration was made based on false promises by the oil industry” said Jonathan Henderson, Coastal Resiliency Organizer for GRN. “As the sinking of the Deep Water Horizon clearly demonstrates, even the latest industry safeguards are insufficient to protect our coast. The decision to expand drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and other U.S. coastal waters should be immediately reevaluated and reversed. We hope that Louisiana’s political leadership will finally realize that they have been misguided by oil and gas interests about the threats this industry poses to our coast, communities, and economy.”

The [Gulf Restoration Network](#) is a diverse network of local, regional, and national groups and individuals dedicated to protecting and restoring the valuable resources of the Gulf of Mexico. The GRN has members in the five Gulf States of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.