

Ten Years After the Worst Environmental Disaster in US History, Offshore Drilling Remains Dirty and Dangerous

April 20 marks beginning of 10-year memorial of BP Deepwater Horizon drilling disaster in Gulf of Mexico

Ten years after the deadly BP drilling disaster, the Gulf Coast's communities and marine life are still recovering. As the nation and world grapple with the coronavirus pandemic, the struggles of frontline communities and workers remind us of the price we pay when we fail to take swift action to prevent disasters, prepare for emerging threats, and provide needed relief for those who need it the most.

Since President Trump took office, his administration has made offshore drilling more dangerous by rolling back offshore safety rules prompted by the drilling disaster, proposing to [open nearly all federal waters](#) to offshore drilling, and holding the largest offshore lease sales in U.S. history, offering [78 million acres](#) in the Gulf of Mexico to the oil industry.

It was 10 years ago, beginning on April 20th, that the Gulf of Mexico faced the most devastating environmental disaster in U.S. history. The BP *Deepwater Horizon* oil rig exploded 50 miles off the Louisiana coast, killing 11 people and altering the lives of millions. An estimated 210 million gallons of oil and 1.8 million gallons of chemical dispersants polluted the Gulf, coast and seafloor.

25 leading Gulf-based, local, and national organizations offered the following statement regarding the memorial of this historic event:

“Today, we remember the 11 workers who lost their lives during the BP drilling disaster that caused more than 200 million gallons of oil to gush into the Gulf of Mexico over 87 days. New reports continue to show that the oil released reached further than we were initially told and that the damage is far worse than expected.

Ten years after the BP drilling disaster, Gulf communities are still fighting to get the oil industry to clean up its act. The lessons our government should have learned after this disaster have already been forgotten. Gulf communities are disproportionately burdened by polluting petrochemical plants, pipelines, and oil storage facilities that make our families sick from air and water pollution. We can't afford a polluting economy.

BP made a commitment to make Gulf communities whole again and fully restore our fisheries, but 10 years later the company still hasn't followed through on its promises. Fishing communities continue to struggle to stay in business, and cleanup workers who have gotten sick are still being ignored. The commercial and recreational fishing industries lost an estimated 25,000 jobs, \$2.3 billion in industry output, \$1.2 billion in gross regional product, and \$160 million in state and local tax revenues. Fisherfolks are still waiting for their homes and lives to return to normal. Without a transition away from dangerous fossil fuel extraction, fisherfolks could be impacted again before they even recover from the 2010 disaster.

President Trump has pushed to expand offshore drilling across large new swaths of the nation's public waters, including the currently protected areas of the Gulf, Arctic, Atlantic and Pacific. Now, after the Trump administration rolled back critical offshore drilling safeguards meant to prevent another BP disaster, we're no safer than we were 10 years ago. In fact, after holding the largest lease sales in U.S. history in the Gulf, offering almost all of its 78 million acres of unleased waters, the situation might be even more dangerous

than it was in 2010. While President Trump seems to have forgotten about the devastation the BP disaster brought to our oceans and communities, we have not.

Today, we honor the legacy of the brave workers who were killed 10 years ago and those who still risk their own well being and health to feed their families. It's time for us to fight for a just transition to renewable energy to build a better future for the Gulf Coast, the United States, and the world.

Today, we stand united in the fight for the restored health of Gulf communities.”

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350 New Orleans is a volunteer climate activist group connecting our region to the international climate change movement led by 350.org. Our mission is to lend support to initiatives in New Orleans that raise consciousness and promote sound policy around climate change.

We exist because climate change poses unprecedented threats to life, and coastal Louisiana is especially vulnerable. Rising seas, hotter temperatures, and stronger storms have grave implications for the futures of our coasts, communities, and cultures.

Bayou City Waterkeeper works to ensure that the Lower Galveston Bay watershed a productive and healthy ecosystem that serves our communities' natural, economic, and recreational needs for generations to come. Utilizing law and science, we are committed to a clean and healthy watershed, making our waterways fishable, swimmable, and drinkable for all.

FIRST PEOPLE'S CONSERVATION COUNCIL (F.P.C.C.). To become a conservation model for the restoration of the lands, waters and air of the First Peoples in the State of Louisiana. To make federal and state conservation programs work with the First Peoples for the restoration of our land, water and air through education and demonstration

GRAND BAYOU ATAKAPA-ISHAK CHAWASHA TRIBE. TRUTH IS OUR POWER...SPEAK THE TRUTH; LIVE THE TRUTH

Healthy Gulf is committed to uniting and empowering people to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gulf Region.

The **Lowlander Center** supports lowland communities and places, both inland and coastal, for the benefit of both people and environment.

The **Louisiana Bucket Brigade** uses grassroots action to create an informed, healthy society that holds the petrochemical industry and government accountable for the true costs of pollution and hasten the transition from fossil fuels.

The **North Gulfport Community Land Trust** honors the ancestors of the North Gulfport Community through the creation of permanently affordable housing, community advocacy and reinvestment.

Founded in the wake of the 2010 BP oil disaster, **Public Lab** is a community that connects people around the world to develop and apply open-source tools for environmental investigation.

ReThink Energy Florida is a non-profit, non-partisan 501C3 energy education organization based in Tallahassee Florida, and operating statewide.

Founded in 1996, **SouthWings** is a non-profit conservation organization that provides a network of volunteer pilots to advocate for the restoration and protection of the ecosystems and biodiversity of the Southeast through flight.

The CLEO Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization exclusively dedicated to climate change education, engagement, and advocacy in Florida.

XRNOLA (Extinction Rebellion New Orleans)

Alaska Wilderness League galvanizes support to secure vital policies that protect and defend America's last great wild public lands and waters.

The **Center for Biological Diversity** is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.7 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

Earthjustice is the premier nonprofit public interest environmental law organization. We wield the power of law and the strength of partnership to protect people's health, to preserve magnificent places and wildlife, to advance clean energy, and to combat climate change. We are here because the Earth needs a good lawyer.

Friends of the Earth fights to create a more healthy and just world. Our current campaigns focus on promoting clean energy and solutions to climate change, ensuring the food we eat and products we use are safe and sustainable, and protecting marine ecosystems and the people who live and work near them.

GreenLatinos is a national non-profit organization that convenes a broad coalition of Latino leaders committed to addressing national, regional and local environmental, natural resources and conservation issues that significantly affect the health and welfare of the Latino community in the United States.

Greenpeace is a global, independent campaigning organization that uses peaceful protest and creative communication to expose global environmental problems and promote solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future.

Our ocean is in crisis, and its protection can no longer be seen as a coastal issue. The **Inland Ocean Coalition** is dedicated to creating an inland movement that builds land-to-sea stewardship by encouraging citizens and communities to take an active role in improving the impacts and relationships between the inland, the coasts, and the ocean. By engaging individuals and communities that want to help protect the ocean, we build chapters, lead campaigns, and deliver programs that have a direct positive impact on our watersheds, coasts, and ocean.

LCV (League of Conservation Voters) builds political power to protect people and the planet. We influence policy, hold politicians accountable, and win elections. This is how we fight to build a world with clean air, clean water, public lands, and a safe climate that are protected by a just and equitable democracy.

The **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)** is an international nonprofit environmental organization with more than 3 million members and online activists. Since 1970, our lawyers, scientists, and other environmental specialists have worked to protect the world's natural resources, public health, and the environment. NRDC has offices in New York City; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; San Francisco; Chicago; Bozeman, Montana; and Beijing. Visit us at www.nrdc.org and follow us on Twitter @NRDC

Oceana is the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation. Oceana is rebuilding abundant and biodiverse oceans by winning science-based policies in countries that control

one-third of the world's wild fish catch. With more than 225 victories that stop overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution and the killing of threatened species like turtles and sharks, Oceana's campaigns are delivering results. A restored ocean means that 1 billion people can enjoy a healthy seafood meal, every day, forever. Together, we can save the oceans and help feed the world. Visit www.usa.oceana.org to learn more.

The **Sierra Club** is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.8 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit www.sierraclub.org.

The **Surfrider Foundation** is a nonprofit grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our world's ocean, waves and beaches through a powerful network. Founded in 1984 by a handful of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the Surfrider Foundation now maintains over one million supporters, activists and members, with more than 170 volunteer-led chapters and student clubs in the U.S., and more than 600 victories protecting our coasts. Learn more at surfrider.org.