



FAMA

Facility And Maritime Affairs



A publication of the Texas General Land Office ♦ Jerry Patterson, Commissioner

Spring 2008

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OSPR Region 1 Supports JASON Project 2008: Monster Storms

In what has become an annual event, Region 1 OSPR staffers joined Lamar University and numerous state and federal resource agencies and NGOs in the JASON Project 2008: Monster Storms. The two-week program offered information to fourth- through eighth-grade students about tornadoes, hurricanes and general applied sciences.

After Hurricane Rita in 2005 and Hurricane Humberto in 2007, southeast Texas is all too familiar with the wrath of tropical storms and hurricanes. Lamar University students and faculty developed a curriculum that incorporates some of the many lessons learned from these events, and shared them with local elementary and middle school students at the JASON Monster Storms event from January 22 through February 5.

"We expected a huge turnout this year," said Jim Westgate, professor of earth and space sciences. Westgate's prediction proved correct, as 9,600 students participated at Lamar University's campus in Beaumont.

The program began with a viewing of the Monster Storms video, which was produced by Lamar's Communication and Earth and Space Sciences departments. The film documents 28 middle and high school students from southeast Texas as they visit Little Florida Beach and Holly Beach, two areas directly impacted by Hurricane Rita's landfall.

During the first week of the event, area seventh- and eighth-grade students viewed Monster Storms and then spent time with area emergency response professionals. Engineers, medical professionals and scientists hosted small discussion groups about their respective professions.



The GLO gave a presentation on the steps required to remove this diesel storage tank from a wildlife refuge area after Hurricane Rita's storm surge moved it more than 1.5 miles.

Fourth- through sixth-grade students participated in scientific interactive sessions during the second week. After viewing the same Monster Storms video, the younger students performed hands-on experiments and talked with representatives from several local, state and federal resource agencies. In addition to the Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Division, other organizations included the Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center, Department of the Interior–National Parks Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas A&M Sea Grant, Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the U.S. Department of Commerce–National Weather Service. Two former employees of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality also took part.

Region 1 OSPR Regional Director J.T. Ewing and Response Officers Johnny Darcy and Jim Williams gave a presentation on a four-month response action initially caused by Hurricane Rita. A diesel storage tank was picked up and moved by the storm surge 1.5 miles into an estuarine marsh on the Texas Point National

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GLO Supports Jason Project in SE Texas

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Wildlife Refuge. The presentation discussed the steps taken to remove it, while minimizing environmental impacts.

Monster Storms is sponsored by the JASON Alliance of Southeast Texas (JASET). JASET was established in 2001 by Lamar University and the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce. Through grants from local industries and other generous benefactors, JASET provides free curricula and training to southeast Texas school districts.

Robert Ballard founded the JASON Project in

1989 after receiving thousands of letters from young students inspired by his discovery of the RMS Titanic. The nonprofit subsidiary of the National Geographic Society aims to inspire students to get involved in science through hands-on training and real-world discovery. The project is headquartered at George Washington University's Ashburn, Va. campus, where researchers and students are continually evaluating the program's effectiveness and developing new materials.

17th Annual Clean Gulf a Huge Success

By any standard, the 17th Annual Clean Gulf Conference, held November 14-16 at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa Bay, Florida was a tremendous success. The conference theme—Building Partnerships: Strengthening our Prevention, Preparedness and Response—was reiterated throughout the conference through the keynote address, technical presentations and discussions among participants and exhibitors. Key professionals from municipal and state regulatory agencies, the federal



government and private industry addressed the issues of cooperation, regulation, preparedness, prevention and response. The conference attracted 1,654 attendees, and the 592 exhibitors set an all time record with 221 booths. A unique feature of the conference was several pre-Conference workshops. While all workshops were very well attended, "Applied Research for

Providing federal and state updates at the conference were Phil Wieczynski, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Phillip Woods, Alabama Department of Environmental Management; Rusty Wright, Minerals Management Service; Eric Dear, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; Greg Pollock, Texas General Land Office; CDR Anthony Lloyd, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters; John Temperilli, Chemical Transportation Advisory Committee and Roland Guidry, Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office.

the Spill Response Community" received excellent reviews and is destined to be replicated at the next Clean Gulf Conference.

Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend the 18th annual Clean Gulf Conference. In 2008, Clean Gulf is back in Texas and will be held at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio from October 28-30.

GLO Plans Dispersant Training Workshop

The Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program, U.S. Coast Guard, Clean Channels Association and the American Petroleum Institute are planning and will host a Dispersant Training Workshop from Sept. 16-17 at Moody Gardens Hotel in Galveston. The free two-day workshop will include the following topics:

Dispersant 101: How they work and conditions for use, application methods and safety concerns; Federal regulations; SMART protocol; and FOSC/SOSC/RP decision making matrix. A final agenda will be available in early spring. For more information please contact Robin Jamail at 512-475-1593 or at robin.jamail@glo.state.tx.us.



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Texas Coastal Spill Analysis Reveals: Plenty of Work

Each year, Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program staffers analyze spill data and compare them with historical data to identify trends and the impact of single events. No matter how it's interpreted, the spill data for calendar year 2007 shows the OSPR

coastal waters decreased by 16,759 gallons from 2006 and even more from 2005. Other spill data appear to remain relatively constant, such as source ratios (e.g., unknown – 50 percent, vessels – 30 percent and facilities – 20 percent). However, the single most important facet of the

annual data that remains constant, is that like all accidents, the vast majority of spills are caused by human error, and as such, are preventable. Consequently, prevention activities remain a high priority for the OSPR Program, as they have from the beginning of the program in 1991. This year's (2008) annual performance measures include targets of 800 facility prevention activities, 1,400 vessel prevention activities, and 1,580 prevention patrols. For more information concerning the numbers and types of Texas coastal oil spills, please con-

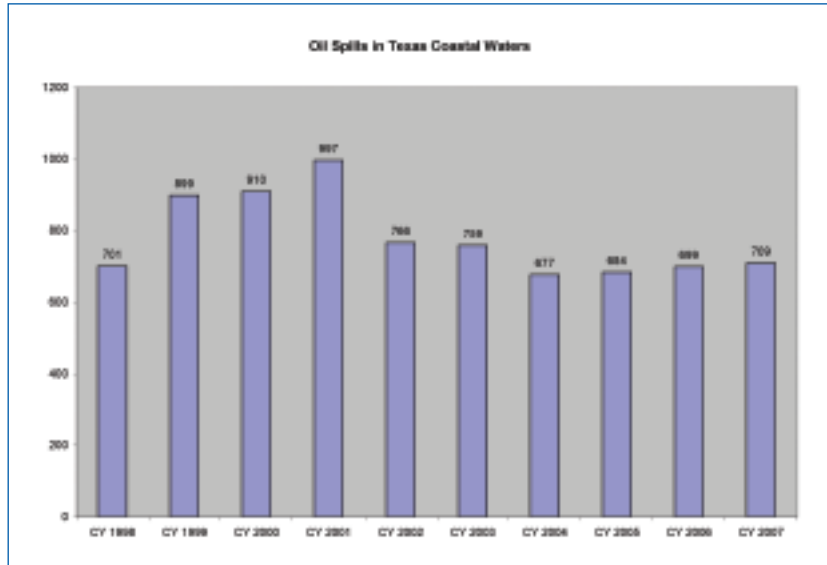


Table 1.

Program of the Land Office has its work cut out for it. Since the OSPR field staff physically responds to all reported threats and spills of oil that enter coastal waters, Table 1 clearly shows that the number of spills over the last few years has changed very little.

The good news is that while field staffers respond to about 700 spills per year, more than 90 percent are small spills of less than one barrel (42 gallons) of oil entering coastal waters. We believe the quick and effective response to these smaller spills keeps them from turning into larger spills.

Although these smaller spills cumulatively impact the environment, it's the other 9-10 percent that really deserve a closer look when summarizing the volume of oil that enters coastal waters in any given year (see Table 2). The Valero spill on June 1, 2006 accounted for 73 percent of the oil that entered Texas coastal waters in 2006. If the Valero spill is factored out of the 2006 data, the 2007 data indicate that the amount of oil that entered Texas

contact Peggy Spies, Director-Spill Case Management by e-mail at peggy.spies@glo.state.tx.us or by phone at 512-463-6554.

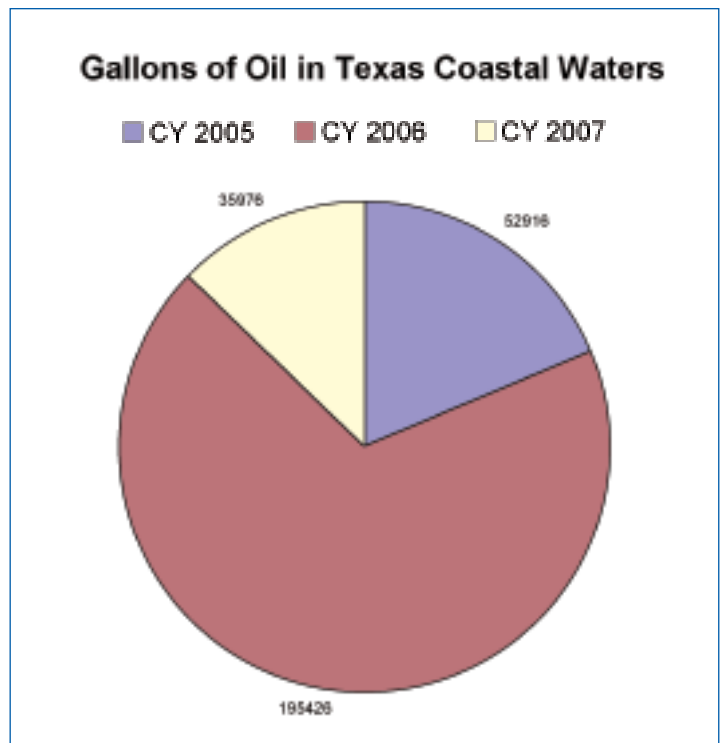


Table 2.



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Bilge Water Reclamation Program Still Going Strong

Before the Bilge Water Reclamation Program was established, floating patches of dirty motor oil were common in Texas coastal waters. Although it was well known that commercial fishermen were largely responsible, it was impossible to catch more than a tiny fraction of the culprits. "I compare it to the DPS trying to give every speeder a ticket," said Dale Smith, of Oil Spill, who runs the Bilge Water Reclamation Program. "You have a big area and few responders."

Although used motor oil wreaks havoc on the very source of their livelihood, many fishermen were unwilling to pay the cost for responsible disposal. So in late 1995, the first bilge water reclamation facility was completed at Port Isabel. Over the years it was joined by seven more bilge water facilities in Sabine Pass, Freeport, Palacios, Port Lavaca, Port O'Connor, Rockport and Seadrift. Two other facilities are used solely for collecting used oil and five skid-mounted units are located in the South Texas Coastal Zone.

One measure of the program's success is the amount of contaminated water and oil collected: roughly 2.5 million gallons—almost half of it used motor oil. "The easiest oil spill to clean up is the one that never happened," Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson said. "So far, these bilge water facilities have kept more than a million gallons of oil out of Texas waters. I call that a success by any measure." Patterson was the keynote speaker at the mid-December dedication of the newest reclamation facility, located in Rockport's South Cove Harbor. Four reclamation facilities have been constructed since Patterson became Land Commissioner.

Thanks to the program, professional fishermen and recreational boaters have a free and convenient way to be environmentally responsible. It's also a cost-effective way to prevent small spills that consume GLO resources. According to a U.S. Coast Guard estimate, it costs \$5,000 in taxpayers' money to clean up five gallons of spilled oil.

"The Bilge Water Reclamation Program is

probably the most results-oriented initiative we've implemented in the last 15 years," said Greg Pollock, Deputy Commissioner for the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program.

The effects of used motor oil on marine life are well documented. A gallon can kill half the fish and shrimp larvae in a million gallons of seawater. The larvae develop in the top microlayer of water and are sensitive to even low levels of toxic compounds.

"You don't know how many spills you're preventing, but you know what you collect didn't go in the water," Smith said. All oil collected is recycled and the bilge water is either cleaned or hauled away for proper disposal. Used oil filters—more than 18,000 so far—are also collected and disposed of free of charge. Six mobile pump-out units are available to go to fishing vessels that are in need of bilge pump-out service.

Public education is a vital part of the program. Flyers in both English and Vietnamese are posted where fishermen are likely to see them. GLO staffers and Coast Guardsmen take every opportunity to mention the program to fishermen.

Smith has been managing the program for 11 years now and still enjoys what he's doing, even though it gets hectic at times. "It's fun," he said. "You actually get to see the results of your work." For additional information on the Bilge Water Reclamation Program, visit the General Land Office Web site at: www.glo.state.tx.us/oilspill/prevent.html.



This new bilge water reclamation facility at Rockport is the fourth built since Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson took office in 2003. Oil collected at the facility will be recycled, and bilge water will either be cleaned or hauled away for proper disposal.



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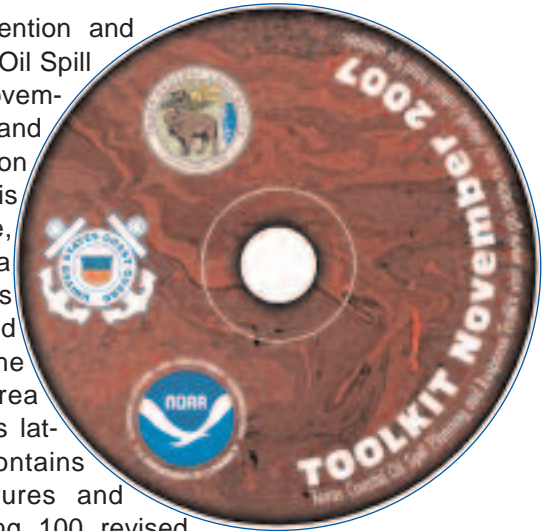
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2007 Coastal Oil Spill Planning and Response Toolkit Now Available

The Texas General Land Office Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program introduced the 2007 Coastal Oil Spill Prevention and Response Toolkit at Clean Gulf in November 2007. The toolkit provides the spill planning and response community with the best available information and resources for Texas coastal oil spill response. It is available on the agency Web site, <http://www.glo.state.tx.us/oilspill/cdtool.html>, or as a CD-ROM. The Toolkit is a joint effort between the Texas



General Land Office and the three Texas Area Committees. This latest edition contains many new features and updates, including 100 revised Lower Coast Response Maps, Site-Specific Response Plans for Sector Houston-Galveston, the RRT phone directory, SMART guidelines, and new ICS forms. For information on how to get a free 2007 Toolkit, or if you have additional questions, please contact Dr. Buzz Martin at (512) 475-4611 or buzz.martin@glo.state.tx.us.



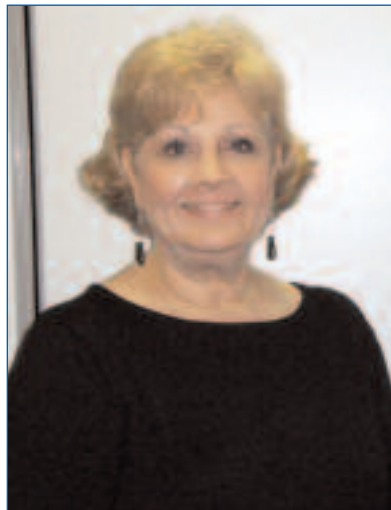
Employee of the Quarter Program Evolves into Distinguished Service Award

With the end of our fiscal year on August 31 2007, the Employee of the Quarter program has been renamed the Distinguished Service Award by the Oil Spill Prevention and Response management team. The move more accurately reflects the Management Team's goal of acknowledging employees who exhibit exemplary service. The first recipient of the new Distinguished Service Award is Debbie Warwick, OSPR Region 2.

Debbie received the award for her selfless contributions to the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Program's flood relief team that was dispatched to New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina on September 1, 2005.

With hotels full along the entire route from South Texas to New Orleans, and nine OSPR staffers requiring overnight accommodations, Debbie was kind enough to open up her home to her colleagues. Throughout the evening she greeted each arriving group and

provided parking areas for trucks, boats and command posts. She prepared a wonderful meal and continued to serve team members as they arrived. Shower facilities and comfortable sleeping arrangements were also provided. On the morning of deployment into New Orleans, personnel awoke to a hot breakfast.



Debbie Warwick, the first recipient of the Distinguished Service Award.

Debbie's efforts to support program personnel cannot be overstated. She provided everything with no request for compensation—she was simply supporting the mission. For the team members who enjoyed her hospitality, it was a wonderful refuge prior to entering an unknown and potentially hostile environment. The short stay at Debbie's home was a tremendous morale boost and helped ensure the team's safe arrival in New Orleans. Although this recognition is late in coming, Debbie's assistance to the Hurricane Katrina response team was timely indeed, and most appreciated.

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OSPR Staff Changes

OSPR Region 5 welcomes [Kasi Crittendon](#) to the position of Administrative Assistant. She joined the Port Lavaca staff in August 2007. A life-long resident of the area around Calhoun, Jackson and Victoria counties, Kasi brings a wealth of experience to the position with over five years of administrative experience with the Texas Department of Transportation. Married, with three children, Kasi enjoys photography but insists "motherhood" is her most important, enjoyable and demanding job. No doubt, her familiarity with the Coastal Bend will be a great asset in her new position. Welcome aboard, Kasi.

[Steve Buschang](#) recently rejoined the OSPR family after a 7-year hiatus with the GLO's Asset Inspections Division in Corpus Christi. Steve first joined the GLO in 1997 at the Austin headquarters as an intern with Information Systems doing work in the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) group. Originally from the Corpus Christi area, Steve and his family wanted to return to the area and took a position as a Response Officer with OSPR Region 3 in August 1998, and was later promoted to Advanced Response Officer (ARO). An excellent coastal biologist, Steve accepted a position with the Asset Inspections Corpus Christi office in February 2000. In October 2007, he rejoined the Corpus Christi OSPR office. "Steve's knowledge of coastal natural resources and regulatory requirements concerning coastal public land are a perfect fit with his new OSPR responsibilities," said Jimmy Martinez, Region 3 Assistant Regional Director. Welcome back, Steve.

OSPR bids a fond farewell to [Kate McAfee](#). Kate originally joined the Oil Spill Division in September 1995 as a Response Officer in the OSPR Region 3 office in Corpus Christi. After two years, she joined the Austin headquarters support staff. She left in

2000 to pursue other vocational interests, but returned in August 2007 to assume the position of Response Officer in the OSPR Region 2 office in La Porte. In January, she reluctantly resigned to accept a position in the private sector in California. Kate is highly respected by her peers and the regulated community. Her professionalism and integrity will be missed by all who worked with her. Best wishes, Kate.

[Fred Valadez](#), OSPR Senior Response Officer (SRO) has recently been promoted to Senior Response Officer II, the highest rank attainable by field response staff. Fred has been with OSPR since June 1995, after a distinguished 20-year career with the United States Coast Guard. Fred was on the Pacific Strike Team when the Exxon Valdez grounded on Bligh Reef on March 24, 1989. Among other tasks during the response, he was on the team that spent 13 days lightering approximately 42 million gallons of crude oil off the Valdez. In congratulating Fred on this recent advancement, Greg Pollock, Deputy Commissioner of the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Division, said, "Fred exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism and public service and is a fine example for our other response officers." Congratulations, Fred—keep up the good work.

[Kim Griffith](#) with OSPR Region 5 was promoted to Advanced Response Officer effective November 2007. Congratulations, Kim.

After more than four years of exemplary service, [K.C. "Kathleen" Leidolph](#) has resigned her Advanced Response Officer position in OSPR Region 2 to accept a position in the private sector. K.C. worked in both the Corpus Christi (R3) and La Porte (R2) field offices and brought the highest level of professionalism to every aspect of her work. Best wishes, K.C.

Questions, Comments and Success Stories Wanted

The goal of the FAMA newsletter is to provide a forum for the discussion of OSPRA compliance issues. If you have a story or a question about a compliance issue or OSPRA, please contact Bill Grimes at 512-475-1464 or william.grimes@glo.state.tx.us.

Do you have questions or contributions? Call 512-475-1464 or 1-800-998-4GLO.



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