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Salazar Dispatches NPS and FWS Directors to Gulf Coast Command Centers to Support Fight to Protect Coastal Communities and Wildlife

WASHINGTON, DC – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced today that Director of the National Park Service Jon Jarvis and Acting Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service Rowan Gould have been dispatched to command centers along the Gulf Coast to help lead efforts to protect coastal communities and natural resources from BP's Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Jarvis, who is stationed in the Mobile, Alabama Incident Command Center, and Gould, who is stationed in the Houma, Louisiana Incident Command Center, are among the more than 380 DOI personnel who have been deployed as part of the oil spill response. Additional DOI personnel already stationed in the region are among the more than 10,000 personnel currently responding to protect the shoreline and wildlife. Jarvis and Gould will work with federal and state natural resource managers to help protect state and federal natural resources.

“We are continuing to put all hands on deck to support the coordinated response to this spill and to do everything we can to help BP stop its leaks and clean up its spill,” said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. “The National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service, under the leadership of Jon Jarvis and Rowan Gould, are on the front lines as we fight to protect the Gulf Coast from the dangers of the oil spill. Their leadership on the ground will ensure that we remain coordinated, prepared, and effective in protecting natural resources.”

On Friday, Salazar dispatched Dr. Marcia McNutt, the director of the U.S. Geological Survey, to the BP Command Center in Houston to help coordinate the joint efforts of federal scientists who are working with BP engineers to address several technological challenges and approaches to securing the damaged well head, capturing the leak and controlling the spill.

Acting Director Gould joins Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Jane Lyder at the Houma Incident Command Center. Secretary Salazar has also dispatched DOI Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Lori Faeth to support joint response efforts in the Unified Command Center in Robert, Louisiana.

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) continues to work with BP to explore all options that could stop or mitigate oil leaks from the damaged well. Pursuant to MMS's regulatory authority, all plans are being reviewed and approved by MMS before implementation. MMS has completed its inspections of all 30 deepwater drilling rigs and is now inspecting all deepwater production platforms.

Yesterday, Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Tom Strickland, who is coordinating DOI's onshore response efforts, and National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis surveyed the impact of the oil spill on natural resources on the Gulf Coast, which is one of the most ecologically complex regions in the country and site of a number of National Wildlife Refuges, National Parks protected by Interior on behalf of the American people.

The National Park Service, which manages Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, Everglades National Park, Padre Island National Seashore, and other parks along the Gulf Coast, 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.

The Fish and Wildlife Service manages [24 national wildlife refuges](#) that could potentially be affected by the spill, including Breton National Wildlife Refuge, where oil has been confirmed on the Chandeleur Islands. Twenty wildlife teams have been deployed out of the Houma (LA.) Command Center for wildlife recovery and related activities, and the Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team (SCAT) is continuing overflights and shoreline surveys on the Chandeleur Islands. Significant focus will be placed on Mississippi coast's barrier islands over the next 48 hours out of the Mobile Command Center.

For information about the response effort, visit www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com.

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