

# The BP Deepwater Drilling Disaster: Two Years Later



NEMC Conference  
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May 23, 2012

Photo by Kris Krug, (cc) TedXOilSpill via flickr

A satellite-style aerial photograph of the Gulf of Mexico coastline, showing the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida peninsula, and parts of the United States and Mexico. The water is a deep blue, and the land is a mix of green and brown. The title text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# About the Gulf Restoration Network

- Formed in 1994.
- Mission to unite and empower people to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gulf of Mexico.
- Advocacy group: organizing, legislation, litigation
- Board members & member groups from all 5 Gulf states: Sierra Club chapters, state-level, hyper local, national



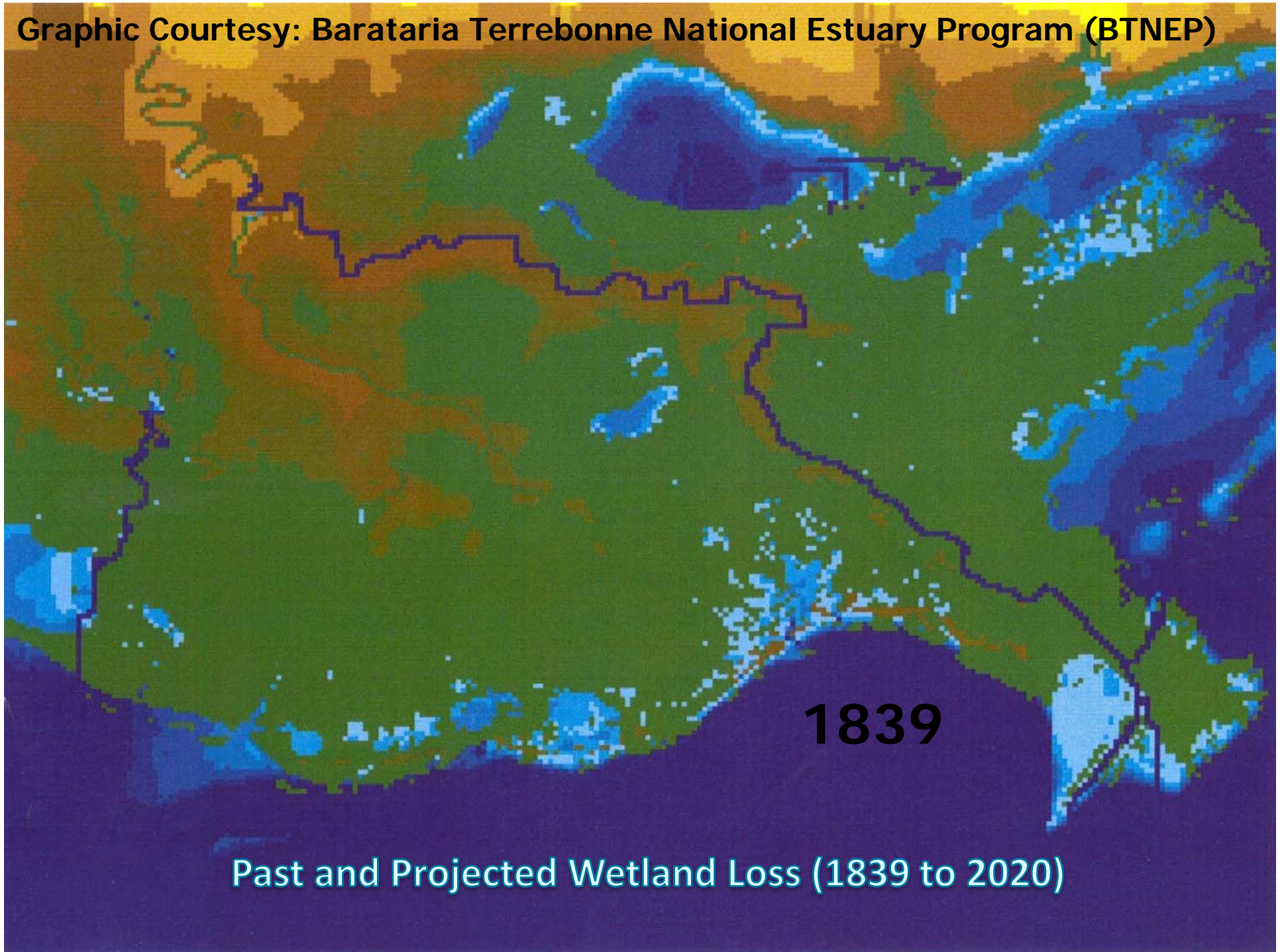
**The Oil Is Still Here  
and So Are We!**



**Gulf Communities Call for  
Congressional Action**

**[bpdrillingdisaster.org](http://bpdrillingdisaster.org)**

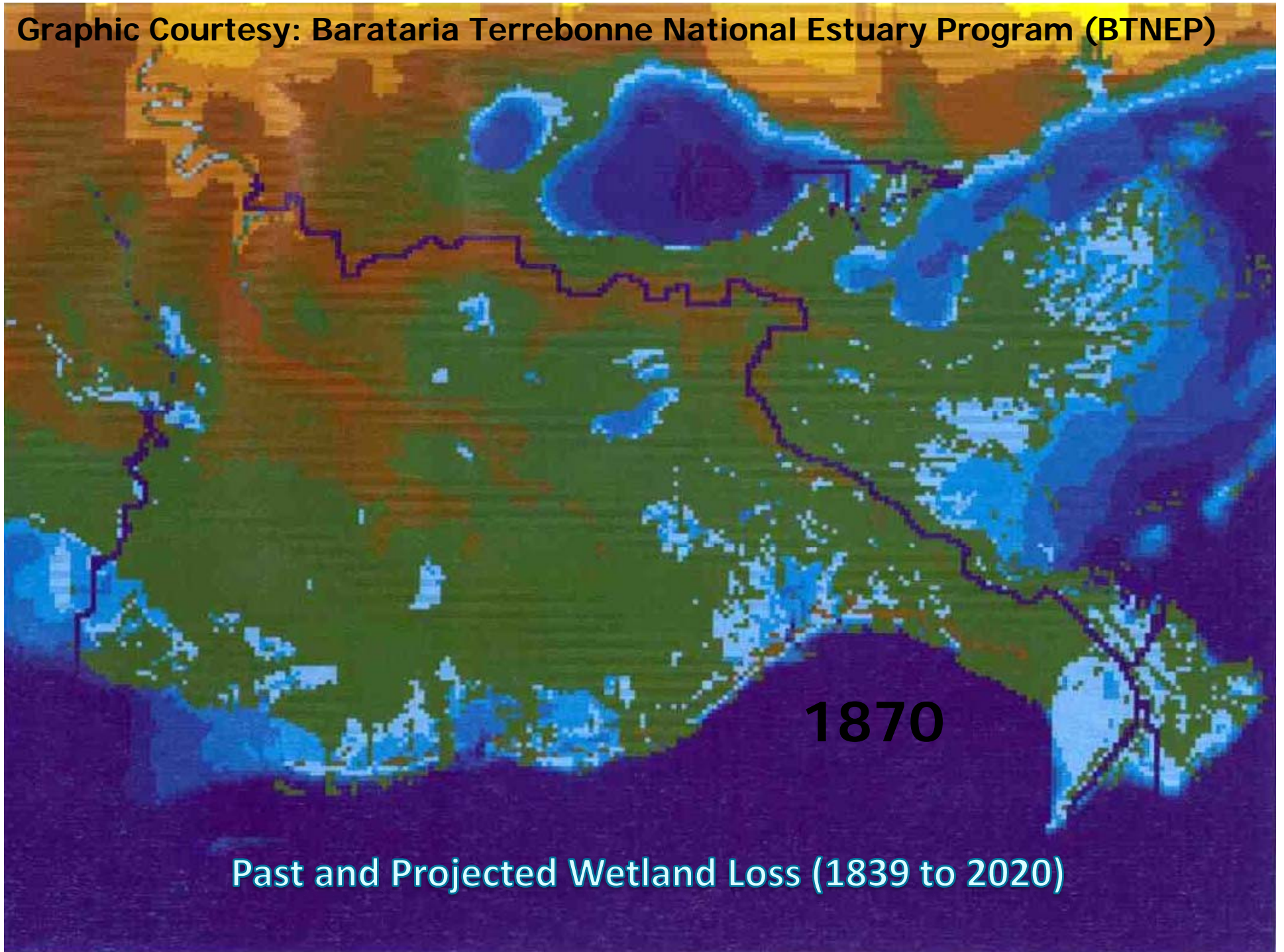
Graphic Courtesy: Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)



1839

Past and Projected Wetland Loss (1839 to 2020)

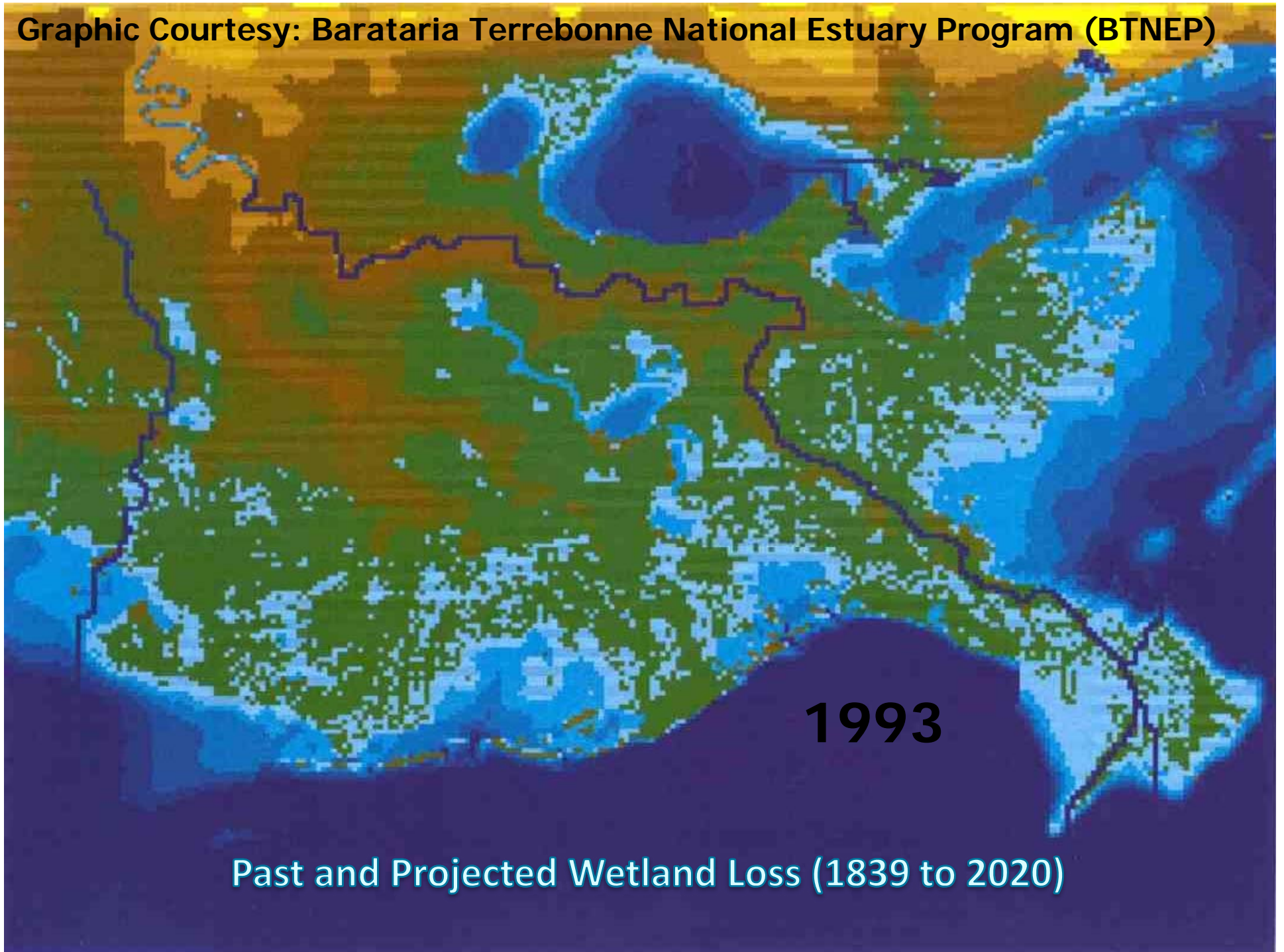
Graphic Courtesy: Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)



1870

Past and Projected Wetland Loss (1839 to 2020)

Graphic Courtesy: Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)



Past and Projected Wetland Loss (1839 to 2020)

Graphic Courtesy: Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)

The Mississippi River Delta is the fastest disappearing land mass on earth. A football field worth of wetlands turns into open water every hour.

2020

Past and Projected Wetland Loss (1839 to 2020)  
1,883 square miles lost since 1932



GULF RESTORATION NETWORK



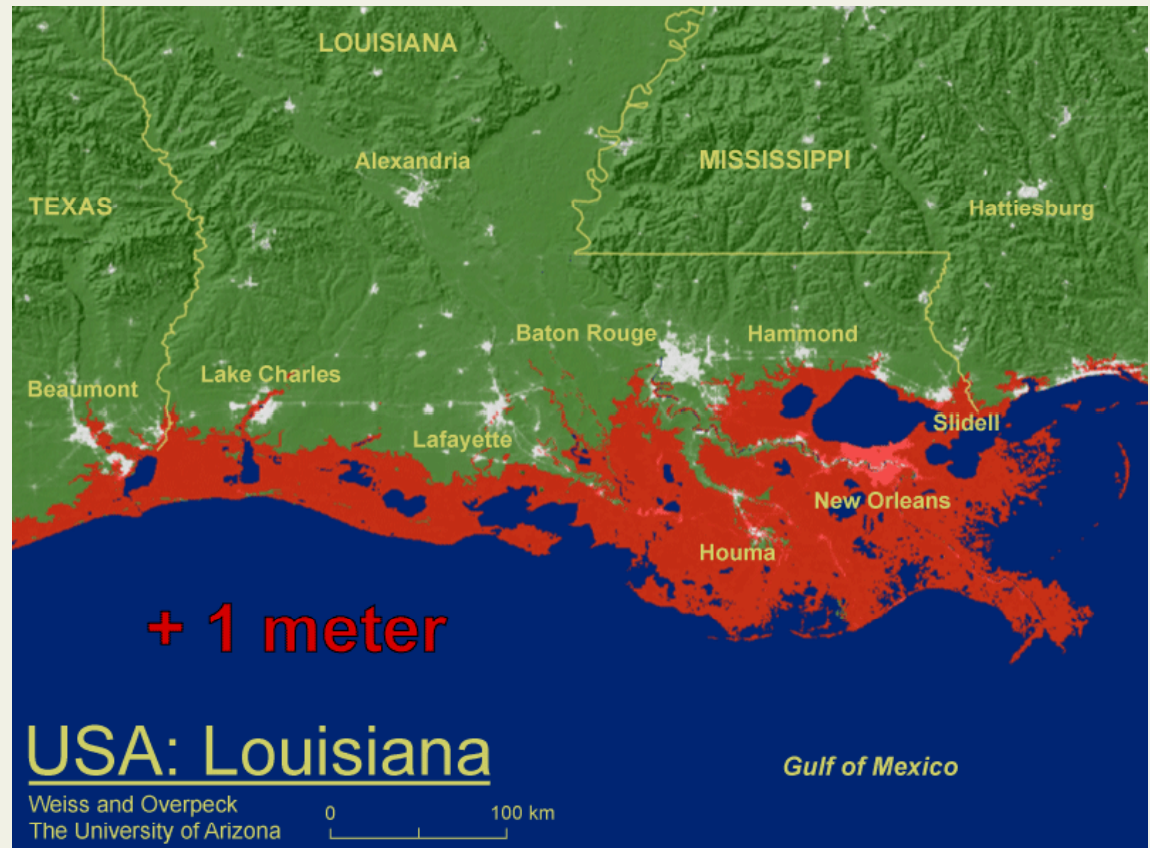
# Cause: River Engineering





# Cause: Sea-Level Rise

- Global warming will increase sea-levels at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  meter by 2100
- Louisiana has even worse **RELATIVE** sea-level rise, due to our subsidence



# Cause: the Oil Industry



The construction of navigation and pipeline canals needed to provide access to oil and gas wells are the primary source of that destruction.

30-60% of Louisiana's coastal wetland loss is associated with oil and gas exploration and development in the Gulf.





## The BP Deepwater Horizon Drilling Disaster: The Latest and Greatest Insult to the Gulf



An aerial photograph showing a vast expanse of deep blue water. The water's surface is covered in fine, rhythmic ripples. In the lower-middle portion of the frame, two small, light-colored boats are visible, one slightly ahead of the other. The top edge of the image shows a dark, curved structure, likely the wing or fuselage of an aircraft, indicating the photo was taken from an elevated perspective. The overall scene is serene and expansive.

April 25, 2010



May 27, 2010

Redfish Bay, Louisiana



© DubinskyPhotography.com for HealthyGulf.org

Redfish Bay, Louisiana



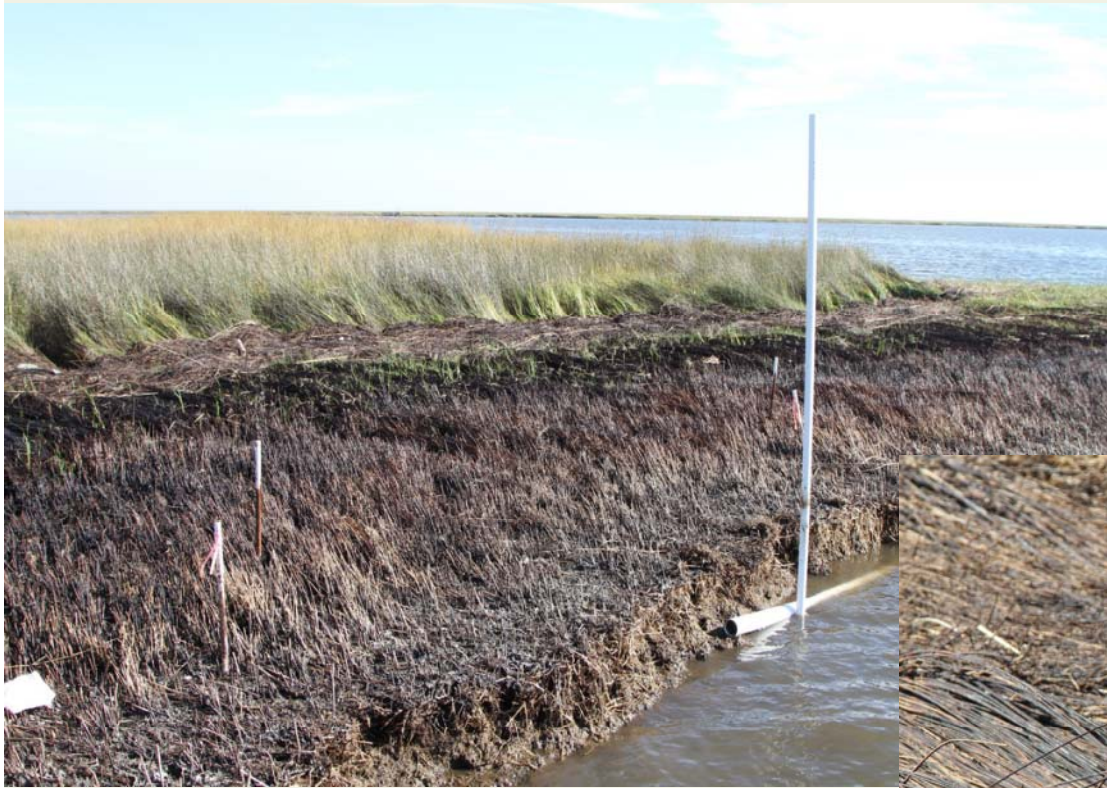
© DubinskyPhotography.com for HealthyGulf.org

July 27, 2010 --New York Times reports  
surface oil vanishing fast



GRN photo from Aug 9





November 11, 2010

Bay Jimmy, LA



April 18, 2011



Bay Jimmy, LA

May 17, 2011  
Fourchon Beach, LA



Nov. 4, 2011, Pass A Loutre, LA



Nov. 12, 2011, Elmer's Island LA

March, 2012 Destin, FL



February 2012, BP disaster site

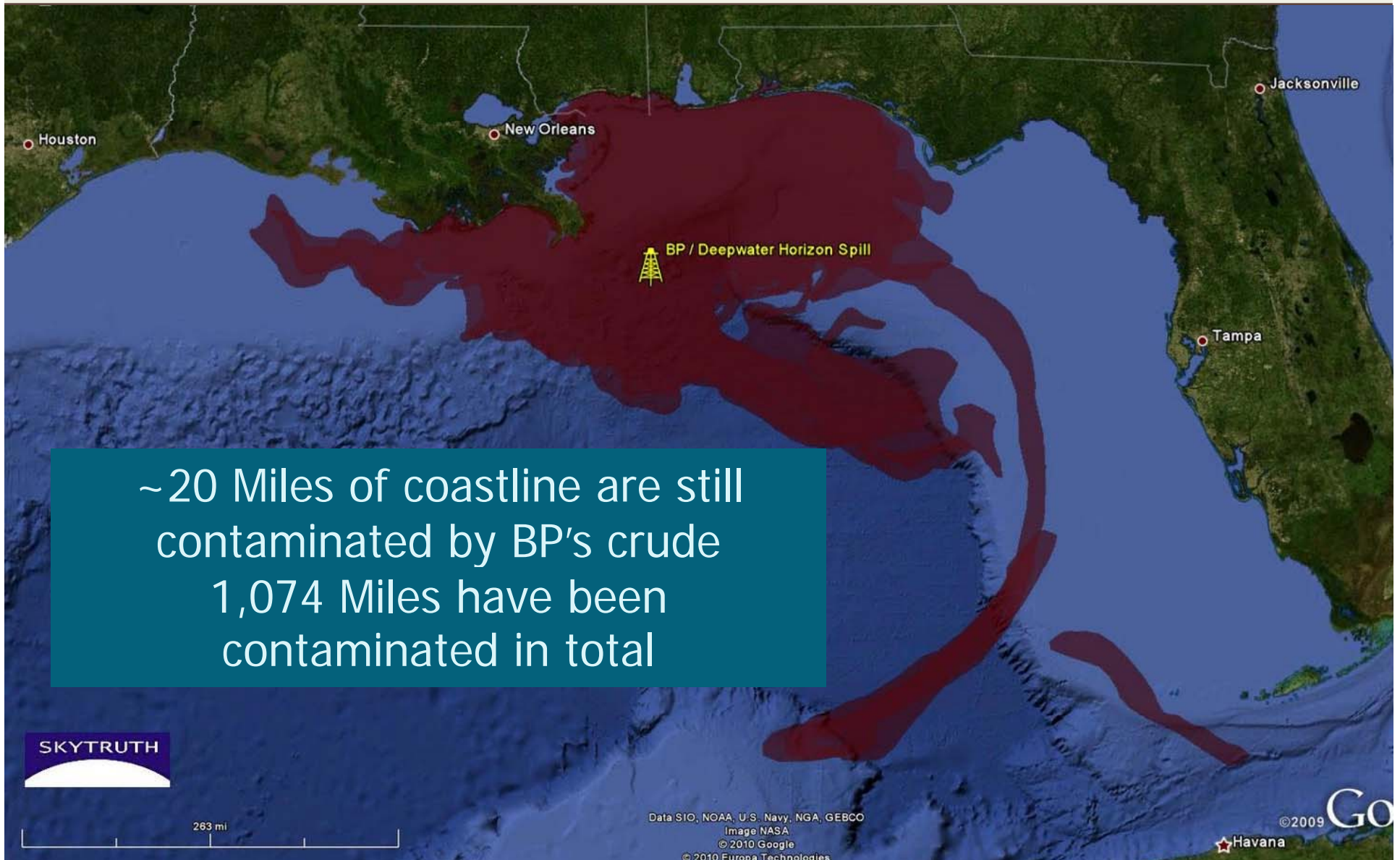




**March 5, 2012**  
Photo by Louisiana CPRA







## Signs of trouble



Sick dolphins, dead baby dolphins and dead sea turtles are washing up in the BP impact zone at elevated levels. NOAA is calling it an “Unusual Mortality Event” and blaming cold water and shrimpers.

Zooplankton have been found with dispersed oil inside.



Blue crab are showing up with odd, previously unseen parasites.



Deformed shrimp with no eyes have been showing up, as some shrimper say catch is off by 80% in historically strong fishing grounds.



Red snapper (and other deepwater fish) are showing up with lesions and organ damage that is consistent with toxic oil exposure.





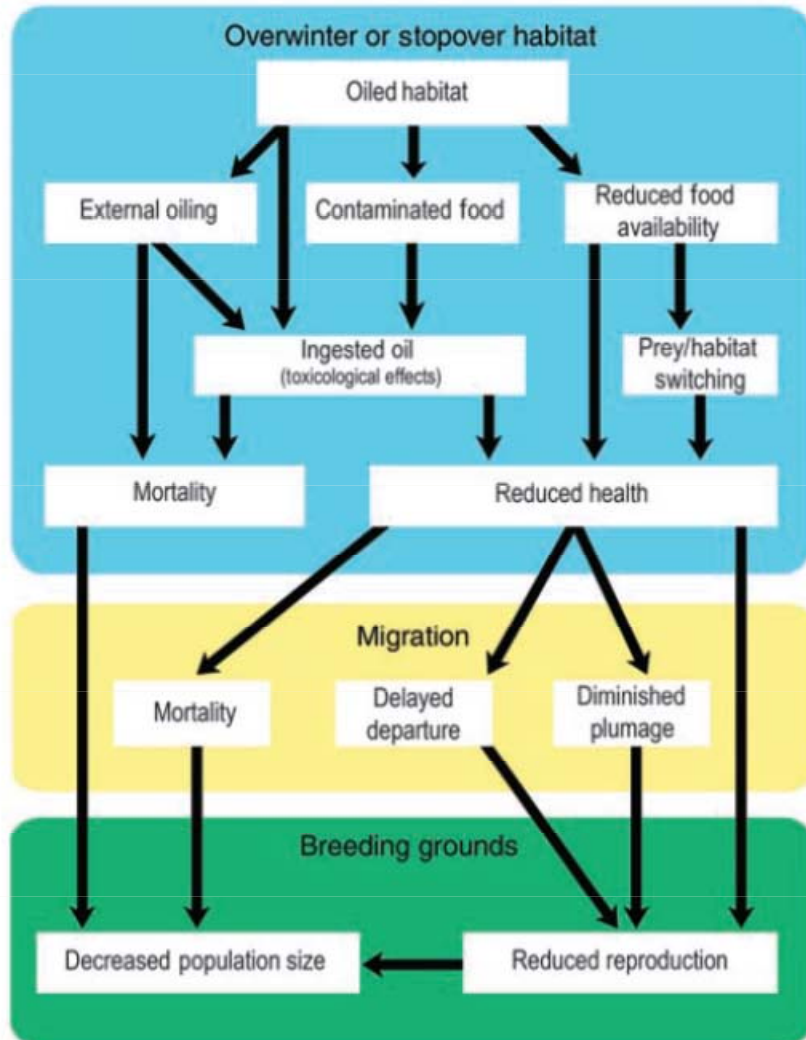
Deep water corals have been damaged by the oil and dispersant.





Gulf killifish (aka cocahoe minnow) have been shown to have gill damage, decreased reproductive fitness, other sub-lethal impacts due to low level exposure

Potential effects of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil on migratory shorebirds



- Researchers must look at acute mortality and long-term, sublethal effects.
- Measuring sublethal effects will be difficult
- Impacts to shore birds could have far reaching impacts, including impacts to arctic foxes

From J.R Henkel, et al. *Bioscience* July 2012



# Advocating for the Gulf

Set aside 80% of BP's Clean Water  
Act fines for Gulf restoration

Establish a Regional Citizens Advisory Council



## After Exxon...

The herring fishery collapsed...



4 seasons after the oil was spilled.

# Restoration Beginning

BP has committed \$1 billion for early restoration.

RESTORE Act Passed as part of Transportation Bill

GRN is working to make sure the money goes to real, valuable, effective restoration, not sidewalks and parking lots.

# Advocating for the Gulf

**We need your help:**

Take action at <http://bpdrillingdisaster.org>



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follow us on Twitter: @HealthyGulf



Watch & share our video series, Gulf Tides