



Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau
Update #4 on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2010

For the latest updates on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, visit the designated Florida Department of Environmental Protection website at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/>.

Charlotte County is closely monitoring developments surrounding the Deepwater Horizon Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. At the time of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's last update (June 1, Noon), no oil sightings associated with this spill have been confirmed on Florida's shores.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a small portion of the oil slick has reached the Loop Current in the form of light sheens. Currents in the Gulf have formed a circular current which caused the loop current to pinch off at the Florida straits and is projected to move oil to the west. Learn more on the [NOAA website](#).

June 1 marked the beginning of Hurricane Season which is through November 30. NOAA has published a fact sheet titled "Hurricanes and the Oil Spill" at http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/pdf/hurricanes_oil_factsheet.pdf

As of June 1, 2010, about 68 percent of the Gulf of Mexico is open to fishing. Information on the Federal Fisheries Closure can be found at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

Charlotte County is Open for Business

Florida has more than 2,200 miles of tidal shoreline and 825 miles of beach including Charlotte County's 28 miles of sand beaches. Like the rest of Florida destinations, all of Charlotte County's accommodations, restaurants and attractions remain 100% open for business. We'll continue to monitor the situation and refer to www.CharlotteHarborTravel.com for the most accurate and up-to-date information on our area.

The Charlotte Harbor VCB is utilizing the social media channels of Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/CharlotteHarbor>) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/chgiflorida>) to update followers on the status of local beaches and waterways. Members of Charlotte County's tourism industry are also encouraged to utilize their social media platforms to educate future visitors that beaches and waterways are currently oil free.

While we remain optimistic Charlotte County beaches will not be directly impacted by the oil spill, the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau is in communication with the Charlotte County Emergency Management. It is the responsibility of the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau to convey to the public the impacts of the spill related to Charlotte County Tourism. Charlotte County Emergency Management has emergency plans in place and a plan of action is dependent on the scenario.

State of Florida Marketing Efforts

VISIT FLORIDA, the state's official tourism marketing corporation, has launched Florida Live, a social media platform where users are encouraged to share same-day Florida images through Facebook. If you would like to share photos of our beautiful beaches and water activities, visit www.FloridaLive.com.

VISIT FLORIDA is the state's trusted source for travel planning and serves as a resource for travelers to Florida. A travel advisory page has been established (http://www.visitflorida.com/florida_travel_advisory/) linking to individual Florida destinations and an interactive map with Twitter feed updates.

All members of the Florida tourism industry should read VISIT FLORIDA's Sunshine Matters blog at www.visitfloridablog.org for the latest on state marketing efforts.

Queries Regarding Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

The VCB office has received queries regarding the status of Charlotte County relating to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and we understand members of the industry are receiving inquiries, too.

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau is providing the following message to our guests and encourages all Charlotte County businesses to do the same:

- Currently, there is no local impact from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands is open for business and the shoreline remains oil free;
- We do not know if our area will be affected, but it is in no imminent danger.

If your business is receiving inquiries or has received cancelations from potential visitors because of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, please keep record of those cancelations for possible reimbursement. Individual and business claimants may file a claim in one of three ways:

- Call the Deepwater Horizon response hotline number at 1-800-440-0858
- File a claim online at www.bp.com/claims
- Visit one of BP's Claims Centers (locate a center at www.bp.com/claims)

BP has a form to file a claim for damages as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The claims form can be found on BP's website www.bp.com/claims

Also, please alert the Charlotte Harbor VCB if your business has received any cancellations as we would like to track the economic loss to the area. Attached is a form you can log the cancelation and forward it to Elizabeth Parker at elizabeth.parker@charlottefl.com or by fax to her attention to (941) 743-2245.

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The Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau has been asked to forward the following information provided by Ray Dempsey Jr., Vice President, Deepwater Horizon Response – Florida

**BP TO APPOINT INDEPENDENT MEDIATOR TO ENSURE TIMELY,
FAIR CLAIMS PROCESS**

Release Date: 26 May 2010

Today, BP announced that it will appoint an Independent Mediator to review and assist in the claims process for the spill associated with the exploratory well that was being drilled by the Transocean Deepwater Horizon in Mississippi Canyon, Block 252.

BP has said consistently that it will pay legitimate claims for loss and damage caused by the spill. BP remains fully committed to responding to and paying claims promptly. To date, more than 26,000 claims already have been submitted, resulting in payments exceeding \$36 million.

“We are absolutely committed to a simple, fair claims process that gets funds to people who have been hurt by this disaster as quickly as possible,” said BP Chief Executive Tony Hayward. “We have opened claims offices across the region, and will make every effort to reach everyone who has a legitimate claim. And we will appoint an independent mediator so that we have as fair a process as possible for everyone in the Gulf region.”

BP has established the claims process in accordance with the requirements of the Oil Pollution Act (“OPA”), which allows claimants to make a claim against BP as a designated responsible party. If a claim is not resolved and paid within 90 days, claimants can submit a claim against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, and ultimately bring suit.

BP will work to pay all legitimate claims as quickly as possible. Appointing an Independent Mediator is a recognized practice to strengthen claims processes and resolve disputes. BP is working to appoint the best possible person to fill this important role.

In those cases in which a claimant and BP cannot agree on resolution of a claim, the claimant can seek review from the Independent Mediator. The Independent Mediator then will make an advisory decision on the claim.

If the claimant feels the advisory decision is unreasonable, he or she retains all rights under OPA either to seek reimbursement from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund or to file a claim in court.

If BP feels the advisory decision is unreasonable, the company may choose not to accept it, but the claimant then may use the Independent Mediator's decision in claiming against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund or in a subsequent court action.

The Mediator's independence will be ensured by a strict set of rules surrounding the position. The Mediator will have access to his or her own legal counsel and will be free to disagree with BP's position.

In addition to evaluating individual claims, the Independent Mediator also will undertake an independent evaluation of BP's claims process and the approach taken to substantiate claims.

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For more information, please visit www.bp.com/claims

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