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South Floridians Fight Against Oil Drilling With “Hands Across The Sand”

TOPICS: Climate Change Environment Miami Beach



Photo Credit: Hands Across the Sand Miami Facebook event page.

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POSTED BY: MARIA SERRANO MAY 14, 2015

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Are you concerned about preserving the coastal environment you in? It turns out that you're not alone in South Florida.

Hands Across the Sand Miami, an event to bring awareness about the dangers associated with non-sustainable sources of energy and their effects in the coastal ecosystem, is going to be held this Saturday May 16th at 11 AM on South Beach.

The annual event was founded by Dave Rauschkolb in February 2010 and is held in cities nationwide.

“It began because Floridians were concerned with off-shore oil drilling, and then their fears were confirmed when the big BP disaster that happened in April 2010,” Mike Gibaldi, one of the event organizers said.

Now in its sixth year, the Miami event will be hosted by Sam Van Leer from Urban

Paradise Guild and Gibaldi from Surfrider South Florida, two environmental groups.

“There are current politicians in Florida that want to open our waters to oil drilling, and we must stand strong,” Jim Harper, president of 350 South Florida, and a co-sponsor of the event said. “Right now there is new exploration for oil in the Atlantic, just north of Florida.”

Per a 2010 report done by U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Oil has the capacity of persisting in the environment after a spill has happened and has been found in sediment after 30 years of the incident. Oil also has the capacity to sink deep into the sediment on sandy beaches.

The main activity of the event is when the attendees hold hands at noon as a symbolic demonstration of concern for the environment. While the attendees hold hands, the organizers will provide information to the public on how to aid to the protection of the coasts.

“Hands Across the Sand used to be primarily against oil shore drilling. Now, we are looking at this as all the dirty carbon that is destroying the world that we live in,” Van Leer said.

According to organizers, other issues such as seismic blasting off coastlines, mountaintop removal, tar sands mining, hydraulic fracturing, and LNG export terminals will be mentioned during the protest.

Some large national groups like the Sierra Club, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, and the Center for a Sustainable Coast and Gulf Restoration Network are sponsoring the event.

Van Leer said that it was important to stop off shore oil drilling because the drilling will deteriorate the ecosystem and hurt South Florida’s tourist based economy.

“There is a lot of clean alternative energy that exist, we are in the sunshine state, there is plenty of energy that is clean and sustainable,” Gibaldi said. “People should participate to stick-up for and make a statement for clean sustainable energy.”

If you want to know more about how you can participate in the event, you are encouraged to email: rico@urban-paradise.org.

Carpooling services and recommended parking and transportation information is available on the event’s Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/730829760365343/>

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If You Go:

Hands Across the Sand – Miami

501 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139

Saturday May 16th, 2015

11:00am – 12:15pm

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