

Gulf Restoration Network

338 Baronne Street, Suite 200
New Orleans, LA 70112


PO Box 2245
New Orleans, LA 70176

Louisiana Office 504.525.1528
Florida Office 727.560.2479

Twitter: @healthygulf
www.facebook.com/healthygulf

UNITED FOR A HEALTHY GULF

Keep GRN
on the Water



GRN's Jonathan Henderson
on a field monitoring trip

Donate Today

GULF EARTH MONTH...EVERY MONTH

For GRN and our supporters, April was Gulf Earth Month. We marked the two-year memorial of the BP oil drilling disaster, we celebrated Earth Day, and we got out into the wetlands a number of times to continue monitoring BP’s impacts. It was a busy month, and we finished exhausted but inspired.

Every trip we take into the Louisiana marsh takes resources . . . Jonathan Henderson’s time and expertise, the nice camera that was donated to us, and, of course, money. To hire the boats that allow us to go see what’s happening and report back to you costs \$500 per trip. Money well spent, in our opinion, but those resources are running out. **We need your help to keep GRN on the water. Please donate today.**

The fight to restore and defend the Gulf’s precious natural resources continues, and we need your help to make every month Gulf Earth Month. Your contribution gives us the resources and the united voice we need to fight for the Gulf everyday.



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TWO YEARS LATER, BP'S OIL DISASTER CONTINUES

More than two years since BP’s oil disaster began, the oil is still here, and science continues to expose many of the unseen impacts from BP’s oil disaster. Oil is surfacing in Louisiana’s wetlands and tar balls and tar mats continue to be picked up in many places on the Gulf Coast.

Aggregating scientific reports paints a bleak picture of the state of the Gulf’s ecosystem. From sick dolphins in Barataria Bay to Gulf killifish, an important bait fish, showing gill damage, there’s cause for alarm at every level of the food chain.

Gulf communities continue to suffer from the BP oil disaster. People are sick from toxic exposure; fishermen in many areas have lost their livelihoods as shrimp and oysters are hard to find; and mental health problems have been widespread.

"FROM SICK DOLPHINS IN BARATARIA BAY TO GULF KILLFISH... THERE'S CAUSE FOR ALARM"

Gulf Restoration Network celebrated April as Gulf Earth Month, and worked hard to make sure the story of ongoing impacts continues to be heard in order to push BP and local, state, and federal governments to take effective action. For the two-year memorial, GRN worked closely with our allies to stage three coordinated press conferences releasing the Progress Report on the Gulf Future Action Plan. Unfortunately, while the potential of the Gulf



Rosina Phillipe and her nephew, John, of the Grand Bayou community. Still photo from GRN's new video, which you can see at healthygulf.org. Photo by: GRN.

Progress Report on the Gulf Future Action Plan	
Gulf Future April 20, 2012	
Coastal Restoration	Needs Improvement
Marine Restoration	Unacceptable
Community Recovery	Unacceptable
Public Health	Unacceptable
Potential for the Gulf – EXCELLENT	
With state and federal leadership, the Gulf Coast's people, economy and environment can be restored and made safe and healthy for this and future generations.	

remains Excellent, Progress Report marks were “Unacceptable” and “Needs Improvement.”

GRN also released a new video featuring musicians and community members fighting for the Gulf, we worked with over 100 chefs on a Letter for the Gulf to deliver to Congress and President Obama, and we spoke at events ranging from church services to Earth Day concerts.

It was a gratifying time to fight for the Gulf, but we’re also aware of how far we need to go. Every day should be Earth Day, every month should be Earth Month, and we treat them all the same. Our work continues, and we still need your help.



GRN's Jonathan Henderson shows off oiled soils in Louisiana marsh on May 14, 2012. As temperatures rise in impacted areas, buried oil loosens and is revealed in a gooey liquid form. Photo by: GRN

A MESSAGE FROM AN ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER



Susan Spicer, GRN Advisory Board Member, is chef at Bayona and Mondo in New Orleans.

As founder and chef of Bayona and Mondo restaurants, I understand intimately how the Gulf and its communities, cultures, and cuisines feed the nation. This is an extremely important region for the nation, producing an enormous amount of the fresh, wild-caught seafood that we rely on. The Gulf of Mexico produces more than 1.3 billion pounds of seafood each year.

Unfortunately, this ecosystem is in peril right now. It has been over two years since the BP oil disaster began, and it’s well past time DC took concrete actions to protect and restore the Gulf. Many chefs have pledged to continue to support the Gulf’s seafood industry; however, we know that it must be safe and protected. One of the best ways to protect the seafood in the Gulf is to restore the habitat it relies upon.

This April, with the help of the Chef’s Collaborative, a group of 123 culinary leaders, including **Anthony Bourdain, Rick Bayless, Donald Link, John Folse, and Leah Chase**, have rallied behind Gulf Restoration Network’s efforts to restore and protect the Gulf in the wake of this historic disaster.

“...IT’S WELL PAST TIME DC TOOK CONCRETE ACTIONS TO PROTECT AND RESTORE THE GULF”

In a group letter to Congress and the Obama Administration, we asked them to pass the RESTORE Act and send 80% of BP’s Clean Water Act fines back to the Gulf for ecosystem and habitat restoration, both in coastal areas and the deepwater. The statement also underscores the need to prevent future disasters by establishing a Gulf of Mexico Regional Citizens’ Advisory Council to give local, impacted communities the ability to conduct oversight of the safety and disaster response capability of the oil and gas industry.

I look forward to continuing to serve diners the delicious seafood from the Gulf of Mexico, and with appropriate action from Congress, we’ll be able to season it with a little trust.



Catching shrimp in Mobile Bay, AL. The Gulf is an important source of seafood for the nation. Photo by: GRN



Homemade shrimp gumbo, a Louisiana favorite.

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THE GULF HAS SOME FRIENDS INDEED

Have you joined our online network of friends yet? Head over to facebook.com/healthygulf or twitter.com/healthygulf to ‘like’ or follow GRN, for breaking news, action alerts, and new videos. Our online networks are certainly growing, with over 13,000 ‘likes’ on Facebook, and over 4,000 followers on twitter.

Being part of our social networks is a great way to get the most up-to-date information about the Gulf and our work to restore and protect the environment here. Plus, you can easily share updates with your friends and immediately be part of our efforts to create a healthy Gulf.

“FOLLOW GRN FOR BREAKING NEWS, ACTION ALERTS, & NEW VIDEOS”

A few of our friends have been especially helpful recently, sharing our news, videos and action alerts around Earth Month and the two-year memorial of the BP disaster, so we wanted to say “thanks!” to:

Actors Mark Ruffallo (Avengers), Katee Sackhoff and Tricia Helfer (Battlestar Galactica); bands/musicians Bonnie Raitt, Ani Difranto, Rise Against, Pearl Jam, REM (even though they broke up last year, they’re still

on-line and activists), Bonerama, Portugal the Man, MyNameIsJohnMichael, Blind Pilot, and the Voodoo Experience; NFL player Scott Fujita; and truth-tellers/troublemakers Naomi Klein, BP Global PR, Bridge the Gulf Project, Humid Beings and Defend New Orleans.



Renowned musician Ani Difranto, a New Orleans resident, fights for the Gulf with GRN. Photo by: GRN



Actress Katee Sackhoff (Battlestar Galactica, Big Bang Theory, 24, Longmire, and more) tours the Louisiana wetlands with GRN. Photo by: GRN

CREATURE FEATURE:
THE AMERICAN PURPLE GALLINULE



The bright colors of the American Purple Gallinule make it easily recognizable. Photo © Hans Hillewaert.

a white tuft of tail feathers that it uses as a signal to other gallinules that danger is approaching.

The American Purple Gallinule, sometimes called a “swamp hen”, migrates every year from South and Central America to breed in the swamps and marshes along the Gulf Coast. It is instantly recognizable due to its bright green and purple plumage and its long yellow legs. Its oversized feet distribute the gallinule’s body weight and allow it to walk across the tops of aquatic plants where it nests and feeds. It has a

Studies show that its range has shrunk considerably over the past fifty years. The Purple Gallinule used to nest as far North as Pennsylvania and Illinois, but is now generally restricted to the Gulf Coast. However, it is known for flying long distances, and individuals have been found as far away as Iceland! The Florida Everglades is home to the only year-round population of American Purple Gallinules in the United States.

The Purple Gallinule is one of the most beautiful and distinctive birds that lives in the wetlands of the Gulf Coast. It is not currently endangered, and GRN is dedicated to maintaining enough healthy, clean habitat for it to remain that way.



The American Purple Gallinule, or “swamp hen,” has large feet that allow it to walk on aquatic plants. Photo by: Wing-Chi Poon.

SWITCHING GEARS FOR BLUEFIN TUNA

The average size of an Atlantic bluefin tuna is six and a half feet in length and 550 pounds (and can weigh as much as 1500 pounds). Warm blooded, with amazing speed, power and endurance, one bluefin can travel from Nova Scotia to the Gulf of Mexico for spawning and then across the Atlantic. Highly prized for its taste and texture, bluefin holds a special place in Japanese culture.

The western Atlantic bluefin population has declined by 72% since 1970. The 2010 BP oil disaster happened in the western Atlantic bluefin tuna's only known breeding ground and lasted through the peak of its spawning season.

"...POPULATION HAS DECLINED BY 72% SINCE 1970"

Currently, longline fishing gear threatens the very fragile remaining population of bluefin, as well as other Gulf resources. Surface longlines average 30 miles in length with as many as a thousand of baited hooks. In the Gulf they are used

primarily to catch yellowfin tuna and swordfish. However, the 30-mile lines incidentally catch and kill 80 species in the Gulf, including bluefin, marlin and sea turtles.

There is more selective fishing gear available that can protect bluefin and other non-target species. Green stick gear can catch yellowfin tuna and buoy gear can catch swordfish more efficiently with far less incidental



Longlines can stretch 30 miles with hundreds of baited fish, accidentally catching many non-target species, including bluefin tuna. Photo by: Pew Environment Group.

kills. The cost of transitioning to more sustainable gears could be funded by oil disaster damage funds.

This summer the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be considering rule changes to protect bluefin. GRN will be reaching out to recreational and commercial fishermen, scientists, community groups, and environmentalists to voice concerns for our fish resource.



The majestic bluefin tuna. Photo by: Oceana, Keith Ellenbogen.

FLORIDA: ON THE WATERFRONT

Two basic water concerns are on the mind of many Floridians these days: overuse of water that is drying up springs and river flows, and pollution of groundwater from runoff that is destroying drinking water supplies and springs.

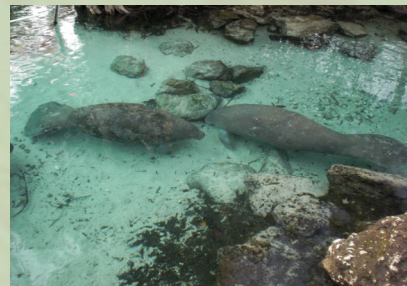
As Peter Colverson, hydrogeologist with Normandeau Associates, says, "Water on the surface and water in the ground are totally and completely connected in Florida—95% of the water we use comes out of the ground. We are all on the waterfront."

Florida has 11,000 miles of streams and rivers, 7800 freshwater lakes,

700 springs, and 11 million acres of wetlands over a massive "swiss cheese" mosaic of underlying aquifers. In 1955, Florida's population used 2.2 billion gallons of freshwater per day. By 2005, 17.9 million people used 7 billion gallons per day. Industrial uses, like power plants and mills, have skyrocketed. The pending loss of iconic gems like Silver Springs tells us consumption far exceeds replenishment. Many springs have already run dry.

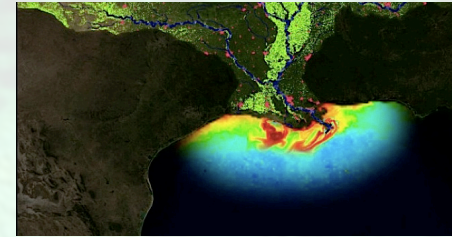
Springs are the canary in the coal mine for Florida's water systems that are the engines of environmental and economic opportunity. Their loss puts Florida at risk

from saltwater intrusion, damage to natural environments and property loss from sinkholes. We all live on the waterfront, it's time to protect it. For more information and to take action, visit www.healthygulf.org or contact cathy@healthygulf.org.



Manatees in a Florida spring. Photo by: Florida Spring Institute.

DEAD ZONE EPA LAWSUIT



Algae concentrations in the Gulf of Mexico showing extent of the Dead Zone. Photo by: NOAA.

The Mississippi River, and by extension the Gulf of Mexico, has been treated as the nation's sewer for decades. The Environmental Protection Agency has long known the impacts of nitrogen and phosphorous pollution from agricultural land, animal feeding operations, sewage treatment plants, and industrial facilities. Yet, little to no real action has been taken to lessen the impacts to local streams that are choked with harmful algae or to alleviate the poster child of the impacts of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution: the Gulf Dead Zone.

"CURRENT EFFORTS BY EPA AND THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER STATES ARE SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH."

Due to this lack of action, GRN, along with members of the Mississippi River Collaborative filed two legal actions against the U.S. EPA objecting to their failure to address the pollution that causes the Dead Zone.

Current efforts by EPA and the Mississippi River states are simply not enough. The states and EPA often refer to the Hypoxia "Action" Plan as a mechanism to reduce Dead Zone pollution, but their reliance on these solely voluntary measures is completely inadequate to reach the laudable goal of reducing the size of the Dead Zone.

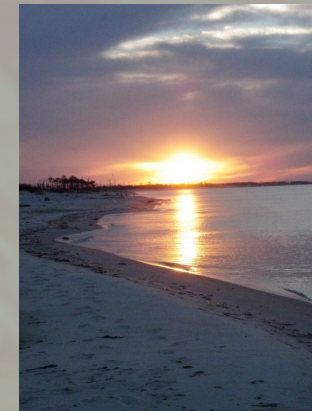
Several polluters have complained how much reducing nitrogen and phosphorus pollution will "cost." Any such costs are speculative, but what we will gain is not. If we reduce this pollution, drinking water treatment plants, fishermen, swimmers, boaters, the tourism industry, and those that simply love the water will reap the benefits of clean, swimmable, drinkable, and fishable water.

To view a short new video on the Dead Zone, produced by GRN, visit <http://youtu.be/rZFcLYqOxZQ>



Algae bloom in the Wisconsin River fueled by nitrogen and phosphorous pollution. Photo by: Midwest Environmental Associates.

12 MILES SOUTH COALITION



The sunset from Mississippi's Horn Island. Photo by: South Coast Paddling Co., D. Rumery.

Venture just a few miles off the coast of mainland Mississippi, and you will find one of the Gulf's most magical treasures—Mississippi's wilderness barrier islands. These islands, together with a handful of other slightly more developed islands and mainland areas, form Gulf Islands National Seashore. Every year, millions of people from around the world visit the national park to watch dolphins frolicking offshore, lie on the sandy beaches, and enjoy the pristine, untouched beauty. Sadly, there are plans afoot that could permanently mar the islands' natural beauty and ecological health.

Last December, the state of Mississippi proposed a plan to open up portions of state waters, and areas within less than a mile of the barrier islands, to oil and gas drilling. If allowed to move forward, 4–6 story rigs and drilling platforms would be plainly visible from the national seashore, and rigs and platforms also mean more oil and gas pipelines along the coast, more industrial ship traffic, and a greater risk of accidents like the BP disaster.

To combat this threat, GRN has joined the 12 Miles South Coalition and is working to push Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant to reject oil and gas drilling in state waters. Formed in 2004 to combat an earlier threat to the islands, the 12 Miles South Coalition is a diverse coalition of conservationists, business leaders, and citizens dedicated to ensuring that there is absolutely no drilling within 12 miles south of the islands. Learn more at www.12milessouthcoalition.org.



Rigs 1.4 miles off the coast of Alabama's Dauphin Island mar the view and environment. Photo by: Harold Wright Associates.

GULF GATHERING 2012: A UNITED RESPONSE TO THE BP DRILLING DISASTER

This February, over 100 activists, scientists and concerned coastal residents representing 46 different organizations met to check in on the progress of the Gulf Future Action Plan for a Healthy Gulf, and plan out the Gulf Future Coalition’s next steps for 2012 and the two-year memorial of the BP disaster.

The gathering has proven critical to keeping our Gulf Future Coalition members educated, coordinated and motivated to keep up the fight for comprehensive restoration of our Gulf! A big thank you goes out to all of the great sponsors of this year’s event—Gulf Coast Fund, NRDC, Oxfam America, Save Our Gulf and Sierra Club.

"KEEP UP THE FIGHT FOR COMPREHENSIVE RESTORATION OF OUR GULF"

To learn more about how you can get involved please visit www.GulfFuture.org.



Drew Landry, musician and activist, provides evening entertainment for the group.
Photo by: GRN



Participants gathered for a plenary session.
Photo by: GRN



Dr. Ian MacDonald of Florida State University gave the keynote address covering his research into where BP’s oil remains in the Gulf. Photo by: GRN

CONGRATULATIONS & THANK YOU, EIR!



Aleu Hakan Botelho, born April 16, 2012.

We’re happy to announce that Eir Danielson, GRN’s Development Director for the last 3 years, had a beautiful, healthy baby boy, Aleu Hakan Botelho, on April 16. Soon, Eir and her family will be moving to Pennsylvania.

Everyone at GRN will be sad to see her go, and we’d like to extend a sincere thanks for the years she has spent coordinating and developing our membership base, organizing fundraising events, and generally helping to strengthen and grow the organization. Eir’s dedication, skill, and tremendous effort have gone a long way towards restoring and protecting the Gulf of Mexico. We wish her all the best!

EASTER KEG HUNT

On April 7th, GRN partnered with NOLA Brewing to bring the 4th Annual Easter keg hunt to the Warehouse District of New Orleans. Over 300 costumed contestants followed clues to the final stop at 12 Bar, where they found lots of NOLA beer, trophies for best dressed, and Colin Lake jamming with his band. Thanks to everyone who attended, and NOLA Brewing, for supporting a healthy Gulf!



The Peeps and The Wild Hopitoulas teams at the Plaze de Espana.
Photo by: GRN



A team finds The Bunny sculpture in Lafayette square. Photo by: GRN

CRUISIN' FOR THE COAST

GRN supporters gathered on April 10th for a beautiful evening at our annual Cruisin’ for the Coast fundraiser in Gulfport, MS. The party set sail on Ship Island Excursion’s boat, he Captain Pete, for a sunset cruise full of food from The Harbor View Cafe, Lazy Magnolia beer, and bidding on auction items from local artists, including Steve Shepard and Beth Skrmetta. Thanks to Louis Skrmetta for hosting the tour and to all who attended and contributed. Hope to see you next year!



The Captain Pete, a boat that normally takes people out to Ship Island, part of the Gulf Island National Seashore, was helmed by Captain Louis Skrmetta for our sunset cruise. Photo by: Joe Tomasovsky.



Event attendees watch the sunset and playful dolphins from the top deck. Photo by: GRN



Lively conversation on board the Captain Pete. Photo by: GRN

AVEDA EARTH MONTH 2012



For all of April, Aveda salons across the Gulf raised money and awareness for GRN’s healthy water work. More than 200 salons partnered with GRN, many of whom held fashion shows, walks, and galas to

advocate for clean water. We are honored to have Aveda partner with us for Earth Month, and GRN thanks all the participating salons and staff for their hard work and dedication to protecting the health of our Gulf waters.



Model showcases local designers at the Catwalk for Water in the Metropolitan, New Orleans.
Photo by: GRN



Beach cleanup day for a salon in Florida.
Photo by: GRN



Aveda Institute Houston hosted a “Pedal for water” fundraiser on 12 person bicycles!
Photo by: GRN