

Gulf-Alaska Knowledge Exchange

Evaluating Community Response, Advancing Transformative Recovery, and Enhancing Proactive Preparedness for the Impacts of Future Oil Spills

Day 1: Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CST

Day 2: Wednesday, December 11, 2024, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. CST



Background

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in Alaska and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico are the two spills of record in the United States that resulted in detrimental and long-lasting environmental, economic, and societal impacts for both regions. In recognition of this shared history, the Gulf Research Program (GRP) will host a workshop series to bring together representatives from both regions to share their experiences, knowledge, strategies, and best practices to help prepare for and recover from potential future spills. This effort is in accord with GRP's settlement agreement language which refers to reducing risk of future harm to people, the environment, and the economy due to oil spills as a "national priority." An ad-hoc committee was appointed to organize three workshops that will engage researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders from both regions.

Workshop Description

The Gulf-Alaska Knowledge Exchange Workshop series will hold the second of three workshops in Thibodaux, LA on December 10th and 11th, 2024. With an overarching goal of learning from and applying past oil spill experiences to future spills, the workshop will focus on understanding the impacts of oil spills on community well-being including mental and physical health. Other topics will include ecological impacts and methods to increase local community capacity, resilience, and preparedness by sharing ideas about community and environmental restoration activities. Speakers representing community organizations, agencies, industry, academia, and indigenous communities will provide context for the rich discussion by all participants in the workshop. Participation is open to all interested parties, and there will be a virtual attendance option. Following brief panel discussions by invited speakers, all interested parties are welcome to participate in breakout group discussions.

Workshop Objectives

1. Generate avenues for the exchange of ideas and experiences between various groups of people (i.e., community members, academics, government officials, resource managers, etc.) in the Gulf of Mexico and Gulf of Alaska regions.
2. Share lessons learned and remaining knowledge gaps around oil spill response, recovery, and preparation for vulnerable regions based on experience gained from the Exxon Valdez and Deep Water Horizon oil spills.
3. Foster relationships between community members in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska regions to bolster community resilience and be better prepared for future oil spills, climate change, and/or other disasters.

Upcoming Workshop Details

- **Workshop #3:** Washington, DC in March 25th & 26th, 2025