

Gulf-Alaska Knowledge Exchange

Oil Spill Response, Transformative Recovery, and Proactive Preparedness

National Academy of Sciences Building, Washington, D.C.

Day 1: Tuesday, March 25, 2025, 9:00 am-4:30 pm EST

Day 2: Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 9:00 am-12:45 pm EST



Background

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in Alaska and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf 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 final of three workshops in Washington, D.C. on March 25-26, 2025. 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, ecological impacts of spills, and methods to increase prevention and preparedness by sharing ideas about restoration activities, community engagement, and innovations in the oil and gas industry. Speakers representing communities, agencies, industry, and academia 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. Key topic areas will include:

- Strategies for effective information exchange and communication before, during, and after an oil spill.
- How to ensure that impacted community needs are prioritized based on lessons learned.
- Effective strategies, technologies, and policies aimed at preventing oil spills in the United States.

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.) from Alaska, the Gulf Coast, and elsewhere.
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. Convey findings from first two workshops and continue conversations with industry representatives, regulators, and policymakers on the national stage.

A cumulative workshop proceedings summarizing the workshops in this series and digital product will be available in Fall of 2025 at <https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/gulf-alaska-knowledge-exchange-a-workshop-series>.