

---

**From:** Doug Young <dgyoung@bellsouth.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 28, 2016 7:41 PM  
**To:** Haley, Nikki  
**Cc:** Senator Thomas Alexander; Representative W. Brian White; sandiferbill@bellsouth.net  
**Subject:** FW: Six years later, we're still learning how badly the BP spill damaged the environment

Governor Haley – the article below from the April 26 [Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/04/26/six-years-later-were-still-learning-how-badly-the-bp-spill-damaged-the-environment/?wpmm=1&wpisrc=nl_green) illustrates why we should not allow oil drilling off of the South Carolina coast. Six years later the environmental and economic damages from the 2010 BP oil disaster are still being tallied. Had the oil come ashore on Myrtle Beach, Edisto, Hilton Head, Charleston Harbor or 100 other places, SC would still be counting the losses. Please reconsider your position concerning offshore drilling.

Doug Young  
864-247-3900

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/04/26/six-years-later-were-still-learning-how-badly-the-bp-spill-damaged-the-environment/?wpmm=1&wpisrc=nl\\_green](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/04/26/six-years-later-were-still-learning-how-badly-the-bp-spill-damaged-the-environment/?wpmm=1&wpisrc=nl_green)

[Energy and Environment](#)

# Six years later, we're still learning how badly the BP spill damaged the environment

By [Brady Dennis](#)

[Energy and Environment](#)

April 26



A worker washes an oil-covered pelican at the Fort Jackson Bird Rehabilitation Center in Buras, La. (Carol Guzy/The Washington Post)

Six years on, scientists are continuing to tally the ecological harms caused by the deadly 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

The latest glimpse at the ongoing environmental effects of the disaster came [in a new report](#) by the conservation and advocacy group Oceana, which compiled the findings of a broad range of studies — primarily from the past two years — examining the aftermath of the spill. The report makes clear that the reach of the disaster, which ranks as one of the costliest environmental catastrophes ever, continues to grow.

## Among the effects highlighted in the recent report:

- Years after the spill, scientists [detected hydrocarbons](#) from the Deepwater Horizon spill in 90 percent of pelican eggs tested in Minnesota — more than 1,000 miles away — where many birds that winter in the Gulf of Mexico spend their summers. In addition, the chemical dispersant used to break up oil in the wake of the spill was found in about 80 percent of the eggs. Researchers say that exposing bird eggs to oil can cause birth defects and premature deaths in offspring. Scientists are continuing to study the problem.
- Endangered sea turtles that had migrated to the Gulf from West Africa, South America and elsewhere died as a result of the spill, underscoring the global ripple effects of the disaster. About 75 percent of the sea turtles that died after the Deepwater Horizon spill were Kemp's ridley sea turtles — among the smallest and most endangered species in the world. Scientists have estimated that four times as many Kemp's ridley sea turtles died in 2010, about 65,000, than in the year before the oil spill.
- Bottlenose dolphins living in Barataria Bay, La. — an area heavily affected by the oil spill — had mortality rates 8 percent higher than dolphin populations elsewhere. But their “reproductive success” dropped a startling 63 percent, [according to a team of researchers](#). “Several years after the spill, pregnant bottlenose dolphins only gave birth to healthy calves 20 percent of the time, compared to 83 percent prior to the oil spill,” the report found.
- A long list of fish, from bluefin tuna to sharks to shellfish, were exposed to oil from the spill, with potentially devastating consequences. The Oceana report details varied scientific research that has documented heart failure in juvenile bluefin and yellowfin tuna, as well as hindered swimming ability in juvenile mahi-mahi fish caused by gill tissue damage. “The consistency of serious negative effects in embryonic heart development in tuna species indicates that many other large fish species spawning at the same time in the oiled areas also faced high rates of juvenile mortality, including swordfish and billfish,” the report states.

The Oceana report, which also details the ongoing human, economic and environmental fallout from the 2010 oil spill, comes amid additional finding that said far more coastline was affected by the catastrophe than experts initially thought. Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, along with several private research companies, [recently reported](#) finding oil along more than 1,300 miles of shoreline (out of 5,930 miles surveyed) after the spill. The area spanned numerous states, from Texas to Florida.

The recent findings also seem largely in line with a massive damage assessment published by the federal government earlier this year.

“Unprecedented in both scope and nature, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill was the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history. The spill dealt a heavy blow to the Gulf Coast region natural resources and its natural resource-dependent economy,” the assessment found. “The oil came into contact with and injured natural resources as diverse as deep-sea coral, fish and shellfish, productive wetland habitats, sandy beaches, birds, endangered sea turtles, and protected marine life. The oil spill prevented people from fishing, going to the

beach, and enjoying their typical recreational activities along the Gulf of Mexico. 1  
Extensive response actions, including cleanup activities and actions to try to prevent the oil from reaching sensitive resources, were undertaken to try to reduce harm to people and the environment. However, many of these response actions had collateral impacts on the environment.”



Brady Dennis is a national reporter for The Washington Post, focusing on the environment and public health issues.