

*** * * ACTION ALERT * * ***

HELP OUR WATERKEEPER FRIENDS IN THE GULF...
And read more to understand what BP's Gulf Oil Spill Disaster means for Cook Inlet.

Donate [here](#) to help Gulf Waterkeepers fight the BP Horizon oil spill!

As you know, there's an unspeakable tragedy unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico right now, as roughly a quarter million gallons (or more) of crude continues to gush daily from BP's deep water oil well into sensitive Gulf habitats and fisheries.



11 men lost their lives in the blow-out and ensuing fire and explosion on BP's "state of the art" Horizon drill rig, and now Gulf residents and businesses are facing the same chaos, uncertainty and fear Alaskans experienced during the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill.

Cook Inletkeeper is part of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a family of Waterkeepers throughout the nation and the world dedicated to clean water and healthy communities.

Waterkeeper programs in the Gulf of Mexico (Mobile Baykeeper (AL), Louisiana Bayoukeeper (LA), Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper(LA) and Emerald Coastkeeper (FL)) are now fighting a gargantuan battle to protect the fisheries and habitat that support countless families and businesses, and to hold BP and the government accountable so similar tragedies never happen again.

Inletkeeper is supporting our Gulf Waterkeepers with Alaskan spill expertise, information and cash – and cash may be the most important support of all. Please consider making a donation to our brothers and sisters fighting the BP Horizon oil spill in the Gulf. I know they would do the same for us. Go [here](#) to make a tax-deductible donation today:

A NOTE FROM YOUR COOK INLETKEEPER

Dear Friends of Cook Inlet -

On April 20, the "state-of-the-art" semisubmersible drilling rig Horizon burst into flames after blow-out prevention devices failed to function. On Earth Day, April 22, the rig sank. 11 workers died, and as of this writing, the well is spewing anywhere from a quarter million to a million gallons a day of crude oil into important fisheries habitats. The primary operator – British Petroleum – has a long string of regulatory violations in Alaska, and it allegedly fought rules to enhance blow-out safeguards in the Gulf. Now, for Alaskans, we're watching the horror of another *Exxon Valdez* unleashed on Gulf

ecosystems and communities. This tragedy comes on the heels of the Obama Administration's recent announcement to expand offshore oil and gas drilling off the Lower 48, and to press forward with additional exploration in Cook Inlet and the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.

In Alaska, Governor Parnell is poised to sign SB 309, which would dole out up to a 100% subsidy – at a value up to \$25 million - to the first oil company that drills a new well in Cook Inlet waters. Lesser rebates would be available for subsequent wells. The bill passed the Alaska legislature with only two dissenting votes. At a time when Tea Party activists are condemning government spending, and when free market principles are frequently heralded as the savior of our economic woes, it's especially ironic for the State of Alaska to be distorting our markets with massive subsidies to well-heeled oil corporations in the wake of the Horizon tragedy.

Clearly, the geology, technology and other conditions are very different in Cook Inlet compared to the Gulf. And while little oil has spilled in the three recorded well blow outs in Cook Inlet, the potential for blow-out related spills remains, especially if drillers target new, deeper reserves with unknown formation pressures. To make matters worse, Cook Inlet is woefully unprepared for a blow-out. Regulatory reforms after the *Exxon Valdez* required industry to prove the ability to stop a blow-out. But starting around 2002, state regulators – under pressure from industry – began to rollback requirements for relief wells in the event blow-out prevention failed. Relief wells function by intersecting the blow-out well, and injecting cements and other heavy materials to quell the blow-out. The three previous blow-outs in Cook Inlet mobilized relief well capacities, and industry is scrambling right now in the Gulf to do the same.

But in Cook Inlet, there is no requirement for industry to drill a relief well, and if a corporation opts to pursue the incentives offered by SB 309, it will only bring one new jack-up drilling rig to Cook Inlet – not a second one to drill a relief well if needed.

The *Exxon Valdez* brought about some much needed reforms, and the Horizon tragedy will presumably do the same. But as time passes and complacency sets back in, relentless pressure from industry to maximize profits invariably erodes the safeguards common sense and experience show we need. Since its inception, Cook Inletkeeper has worked to halt the regulatory backsliding that creates dangerous conditions for workers and undue threats to our fisheries. Our hearts go out to the people and the communities in the Gulf, and in the wake of the Horizon tragedy, we will continue our work with renewed vigor.

Yours for Cook Inlet,



Bob Shavelson
Cook Inletkeeper &
Executive Director

P.S. Cook Inletkeeper is celebrating 15 years protecting the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. Please join us May 30 from 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM at the Kachemak

Bay Shellfish Growers Building on the Homer Spit for live music, great seafood, a bucking salmon, and more!

Information Resources:

[Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper](#)

[Mobile Baykeeper](#)

[Emerald Coastkeeper](#)

[Skytruth \(aerial images & analysis\)](#)

[Unified Command \(Coast Guard, BP, State\)](#)

[NOAA](#)

15 Years Protecting Alaska's Cook Inlet watershed & the life it sustains. Join us for our 15th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, May 30th at the Shellfish Building on the Homer Spit from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

