



OFF SHORE OIL DRILLING OFFICIAL POSITION 11 NOVEMBER 2009

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FACT: NOAA documents 32 oil spills, of every size & source, in the US so far in 2009.

FACT: Since August 21st this year, 400-barrels a day have spilled into the Timor Sea, off the NW coast of Australia; 1,400-barrels spilled 30 miles off Louisiana's coast, producing a 16 x 3 mile oil slick, described as a 'rainbow' by Coast Guard aircraft; basketball sized oil globs on the beaches of Padre Island, TX, where visitors were advised to use baby oil to remove the crude tar.

FACT: Hurricane Katrina destroyed or damaged 167 oil platforms, almost shutting down Gulf oil production, & yielding a 17,643-barrel oil slick, visible from space.

FACT: Oil spills in cold climates are somewhat easier to clean up & pose slightly less threat to eco-systems & wildlife than oil spills in warmer climates; Florida is sub-tropical, & any oil or toxin spill will have a significantly larger impact on human endeavors & wildlife, as well as the eco-systems which support those endeavors & that wildlife.

FACT: The "loop current" in the Gulf of Mexico could transport any oil spill in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico along the entire coast of the Florida peninsula, contaminating heavily populated coastal areas, as well as those beaches & eco-systems which enable Florida's tourism industry.

FACT: An oil spill in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico has the potential to impact: every Florida tidal estuary; Florida's Ten Thousand Islands; the Florida Bay; the Florida Keys & John Pennekamp State Park, the only coral reef in the lower 48 states [already impacted by climate change]; then flowing north in the Gulf Stream to wreak havoc along the Atlantic Coast as far as Newfoundland.

FACT: In 2005 former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, opposed oil drilling off the Florida panhandle due to the oil industry's conflict with training operations from military installations that occupy the Florida Panhandle; Robert Gates, current Secretary of Defense, will soon oppose oil drilling off Florida for the same reasons, according to FL Senator Bill Nelson.

FACT: 37-million acres of seabed in the central & western Gulf of Mexico are available for oil exploration; about 7-million of those acres [19%] have been leased & explored.

FACT: The Interior Department's Minerals & Mining Service *estimates* that there are about 6¼-billion barrels of oil in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico; the oil industry *claims* 25-billion.

FACT: The U.S. consumes about 20-million barrels of oil each day, of which about 12-million are imported; the MMS *estimate* of oil in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico equals about 10 months supply at current consumption rates; the oil industry *claims* would supply oil for about 3½ years.

FACT: Any oil found in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico would not be available for about 10 years, in all probability, with absolutely no guarantee that it would be sold to the U.S. market.

FACT: The result of the human consumption of fossil fuels is the principal source of carbon compounds contributing to climate change, verified by scientific research.

FACT: The concentration of carbon compounds in the atmosphere was 280 parts per million at the dawn of the industrial age, about 2½ centuries ago; today it is 387ppm & rising, forecast to be as high as 500ppm at the end of the 21st century, again confirmed by scientific research.

FACT: Climate change is a proven phenomenon, endorsed by more than 2,500 scientists around the world, including every Nobel laureate; the only variable is how climate change will ultimately affect life on Earth; humanity ignores the climate change reality at its peril.

FACT: The oil industry is a notoriously dirty one; contamination of ocean & fresh water resources by spills & toxins that adversely impact life on Earth, & threaten those natural eco-systems upon which life depends, are historically & scientifically known facts.

FACT: 964,700 Floridians depend upon the \$65-billion tourism industry for their livelihood, which would be severely impacted by even the tiniest of spills; the high paying jobs promised by the oil industry probably would not be filled by Floridians, because those skills do not exist in Florida's workforce; those jobs would most likely be filled by foreign workers, or from other oil producing states depressed by the current economy.

CONCLUSION: Oil drilling off the coast of Florida seriously imperils our natural resources, as well as Florida's tourism industry, for the *possibility* of 10 months to 3½ years supply of oil, & a small, undefined, number of jobs available to Florida's work force.

THEREFORE: Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. is opposed to oil drilling any closer to Florida's coasts than is already permitted under existing leases & laws; and

Clearwater Audubon Society, Inc. supports energy conservation endeavors, and the development of alternative energy resources, in order to reduce U.S. consumption of fossil fuels and dependence upon imported oil, to create high paying jobs in alternative energy technologies, and to curtail carbon contributions to climate change.

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APPROVED: by the Board of Directors, 11/11/2009.

SIGNED: **DATE** 11 November 2009

Michael L. MacDonald

Michael L. MacDonald, President
For the Board of Directors