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Commentary by a Coonass

Posted on [May 18, 2010](#) by [earthfare](#)

So, what's a coonass? Well, I am. I was raised in Southern Louisiana, and, with a last name like Fauchoux, there's no question there. From afar, I have watched my little native state of Louisiana go through one of the worst disasters in its history: Katrina. Katrina nearly ruined much of the Gulf Coast, but it didn't. They survived. And, now when we're nearing the five year anniversary of that awful storm, and it looks like we finally made it. Then, the BP oil spill happens.



There had already been enough problems in the Gulf before the spill. The yearly dead zone, an oxygen-deprived area that kills marine organisms, already causes intensely deadly algae blooms. And, now the oil spill may intensify and expand this already too large of a problem.

So what? Well, this oil spill could disrupt the seafood industry for years. And, the Louisiana seafood industry

accounts for nearly one-third of all seafood harvested in the United States. You know those oyster, shrimp and crab delicacies that you enjoy so much. Well, there's a good chance that that seafood came from the Gulf. Same goes for nearly 400 fish species. And, when the spill gets to the open waters of the ocean, dolphins, sperm whales, sharks and bluefin tuna could be threatened next.



Plus, livelihoods could be lost. Many fisherman and others in the seafood industry could lose the only thing that they've ever known how to do. Professions that have existed for generations could be gone in a flash of muck and oil.

And, with only three months to the anniversary of the first disaster that nearly destroyed the Gulf Coast, the area is dealing with another environmental tragedy of epic proportions. Or, to put it more aptly, another man-made failure.

What are your thoughts? Have any stories?

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2 Responses to Commentary by a Coonass



Natalie says:

[May 19, 2010 at 7:53 am](#)

Although I'm originally from New Orleans, I have lived in Lafayette, Louisiana for the past 4 years. So I know all about Thibodeauxs, Boudreauxs, and well, I Faucheuxs. You are right to call awareness to what might be the gravest oil spill and accident to occur within this millennium.

My dad actually works in the offshore drilling industry so I was able to ask him first hand what he thinks will result from the BP spill. He gave me some pretty helpful insight on the whole situation:

a) He knows and understands that this spill will forever change the industry, its standards for drilling, and the safety measures and limitations that will be newly

implemented.

b) He admits that a spill like this was a fear for all major drilling companies. It is an unfortunate and extremely unlucky situation for BP.

c) Although everyone is expressing their unwavering concerns for the effects this spill will have on our coast, the shrimpers, and our environment – my dad explains that in the long run the excess of natural oil in our waters will actually have very little effect on our environment. By this, he admits the spill will ensue a 50 year clean-up, but those living along the coast will not be forced to change or alter their lifestyles as a result. He also explained to me that the West Coast has always had higher concentrations of oil enriched water that comes ashore.

d) Lastly, he understands that the uproar of the BP oil spill is not ill-inclined. He thinks that implementing higher standards and limitations in drilling will only benefit the industry and save companies from future accidents of this nature. He is passionate about helping BP with an effective and efficient recovery from this spill in order to preserve our land as best possible.

a)-d) are MY interpretation of news stories and my discussions with my dad

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katie says:

[May 19, 2010 at 9:16 am](#)

I once worked on a website for a company that maps the oil rigs in the gulf in order to provide the crews with fuel and other necessities. I remember being amazed by the sheer number of sites – literally hundreds upon hundreds – where oil is being pumped each day from beneath the ocean and thinking then that it was a disaster waiting to happen.

When I heard the CEO of BP comment last week that of the thousands of places they have drilled, this is the first time they have had this type of problem, I was relieved to hear the talk-show interviewer ask if he thought he deserved a pat on the back. This is devastating beyond any environmental disaster we have seen in this country...and there is no way to foresee how it will affect us and at what magnitude. It sort of reminds me of spraying chemicals on our food, but not realizing for thirty or forty years how it affects the physical and mental development of our kids. It will be a long time before we understand the full scope of this disaster.

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