

2010 Special Topic for the State Marine Ecology Event

OIL SPILL IMPACTS IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

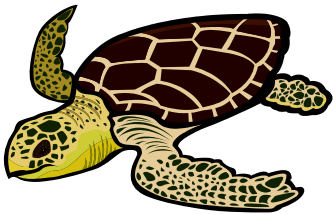
The following questions are based on information provided in three fact sheets developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) concerning the impacts on the Gulf of Mexico from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Answers to these questions will be the basis for 8-10 additional questions in the Section 5 – Multiple Choice Test. These fact sheets are PDFs on the 4-H MEE website at: http://florida4h.org/projects/marine/state_mee.shtml

I. Shorelines and Coastal Habitats in Gulf of Mexico (NOAA Fact Sheet)

1. The effects of an oil spill, such as the Deep Horizon spill, depend on what four factors?
2. Why are the wetlands of the Gulf of Mexico so important?
3. How can an oil spill cause coastal erosion?
4. Besides beaches, what other marine habitats are found in the Gulf of Mexico?
5. In the Gulf of Mexico, what percentage of commercial fish and shellfish caught (based on weight) are from species that depend on coastal marshes for some part of their life?
6. What is PAH? How can it harm marine life?



II. The Effects of Oil on Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles (NOAA Fact Sheet)



1. The toxicity of oil depends on what four factors?
2. Why are marine mammals and sea turtles particularly affected by an oil spill?
3. Describe three ways that oil can come in contact with these animals?
4. What are some external effects of oil on the health of these animals?
5. What are some internal effects of oil on the health of these animals?
6. What organization provides a response protocol for responding to live animals exposed to the oil spill?

III. Oil Spills and Coral Reefs (NOAA Fact Sheet)

1. Why are coral reefs so important?
2. What are three ways that oil can reach corals?
3. What are dispersants? What do they do? Why is using them often considered a “trade-off”?
4. The amount of harm oil can have on coral depends on what 4 factors?
5. How can oil harm corals or coral reefs?

