



16450
21 July 2010

Dear Parish President:

The response to the Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill has been the largest oil spill response in U.S. history. We currently have amassed more than 750 skimmers and 2,371 vessels of opportunity. More than 42,000 personnel and 120 aircraft continue their efforts against the massive amount of oil that has been released into the Gulf of Mexico and continues to threaten sensitive eco-systems and livelihoods along the Gulf Coast. Additionally, there are more than 3.5 million feet of hard boom deployed in the water, nearly 1.5 million feet staged in low-lying areas and along the shoreline in a "ready to deploy" status.

As if the steady discharge of oil weren't a formidable enough adversary, we have also had to contend with the weather. Today we learned of a potential tropical storm that could enter the Gulf of Mexico. We have always been concerned about the fate of boom in the event of a storm surge. During two recent storm surges – one from tropical storm Alex that passed more than 500 miles clear of the well site, and a second local low pressure system, tens of thousands of feet of this hard boom were washed onto the shoreline and into the marshes due to the high surf and storm surge. Some of the current boom in low lying areas will afford no protection from oil in high wind and sea conditions and will, in fact, pose a significant threat once it is displaced and cast adrift into environmentally sensitive marshlands. This boom takes considerable time and effort to extract, causes damage to the marsh as wind and sea conditions drag it inland and is difficult to extract without causing further damage to the marsh.

To get ahead of this potential approaching storm, I have established a series of staging areas in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida that rest on high ground. I will begin relocating resources to these staging areas, which will also serve as the rapid response distribution center for each of the affected States. Meanwhile, I have been tracking the daily replacement rate of deployed boom, and will maintain a minimum three-day inventory in a forward deployed status. And make no mistake, boom is only part of our layered approach to keep oil from making landfall. As I noted earlier, we now have more than 750 skimmers deployed, an increase of 330 since the middle of June.

This relocation of resources is part of our dynamic and proactive response to a spill that is ever-evolving. The Unified Area Command will maintain its offensive in removing oil in the water and on the shore, rescuing wildlife, and most importantly, working elbow-to-elbow with local officials and first responders in mitigating the effects of this catastrophic oil spill.

I look forward to working with you in the many days ahead. Please feel free to contact me should this letter cause you any concern or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul F. Zkunft".

PAUL F. ZUKUNFT
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Federal On-Scene Coordinator



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Dear Mayor:

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Dear Board of Supervisors:

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