

# Oil spill science seminar: Spill response in coastal wetlands

October 26, 2017 – Biloxi, MS

## Our presenters

**Jeff Dauzat** (Jeff.Dauzat@la.gov) has been employed with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality since 1989. He has served in many roles including water and air surveillance and inspection, water permitting, environmental supervising, and as an environmental scientist in the Southeast Regional Office. He currently serves as the Environmental Division Administrator of the Emergency Response and Radiological Services Division.



**Marla Steinhoff** (marla.steinhoff@noaa.gov) is a Regional Resource Coordinator with the Assessment and Restoration Division (ARD) of NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration. ARD is responsible for conducting Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDA) to evaluate and restore coastal and estuarine habitats damaged by hazardous waste releases, oil spills, and vessel groundings. Marla led the shoreline damage assessment for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.



**Barret Fortier** (barret\_fortier@fws.gov) is the Regional Energy Coordinator for the US Fish & Wildlife Service Southeast Region's Refuge Division. He has over 14 years of oil and gas and spill response experience. He currently serves as the Oil Spill Coordinator for USFWS Southeast Refuges. He also helps coordinate oil and gas activities with refuge managers and operators, oil spill response, and development of restoration projects.



**Jacqueline Michel** (jmichel@researchplanning.com) is a geochemist and President of Research Planning, Inc. Much of her experience in response comes from her role as a member of the NOAA Scientific Support Team since 1978. She provides scientific support for about 100 spills per year. She specializes in shoreline cleanup assessment and countermeasures, in-situ burning, behavior and response to non-floating oil spills, and natural resource damage assessment.



**Brittany Bernik** (brie.bernik@restorethegulf.gov) is a Science Policy Fellow for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine Gulf Research Program, serving with the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council that was established by the RESTORE Act. Following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, she coordinated her research activities with cleanup response operations to improve guidelines for marsh remediation approaches.



# Our panelists



**Patrick Biber** (Patrick.Biber@usm.edu) is an Associate Professor at The University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and heads the Center for Plant Restoration and Coastal Plant Research. He works on marine and coastal botanical research of interest to the state of Mississippi, from ecology to restoration of marshes and seagrasses.

**Kelly Boyle** (kboyle@disl.org) is a postdoctoral researcher in the Fisheries Ecology Laboratory of the University of South Alabama and Dauphin Island Sea Lab. He is working in the Alabama Center for Coastal Ecological Resistance (ACER) to study resilience of oyster reefs to oil spills and response activities. In addition, he has studied ecology, anatomy, bioacoustics, and hearing in bony fishes.



**Irv Mendelsohn** (imendel@lsu.edu) is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences at Louisiana State University. His studies how environmental stressors, including oil, impact wetland plant condition. He has investigated oil spill impacts to wetland vegetation as well as oil spill remediation through in-situ burning, bioremediation, and phytoremediation. Most recently, he examined the response of the plant-microbial-benthic ecosystem in salt marshes after the Deepwater Horizon spill.

**Ed Overton** (ebovert@lsu.edu) is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Louisiana State University. He and his research group have worked closely with NOAA's Emergency Response Division as their response chemists for over 35 years, helping to mitigate the releases of hydrocarbons and other hazardous materials. His first oil spill was the blowout at the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve's West Hackberry site in 1978 and he has been involved in major spills including the Exxon Valdez and Deepwater Horizon.



**Brian Roberts** (broberts@lumcon.edu) is the Associate Director of Science and an Associate Professor of Ecosystem Ecology and Biogeochemistry at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON). His research program is broadly focused on how human activities influence the ability of ecosystems to retain and transform carbon, nutrients, and energy and how restoration activities may help ameliorate some of these impacts. He leads the Coastal Waters Consortium wetland biogeochemistry, microbial ecology and plant ecology components.

**Alison Robertson** (ecotox@disl.org) is a Senior Marine Scientist at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and Assistant Professor in Marine Sciences at the University of South Alabama, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Chemistry. Her research focuses on the fate and effects of natural toxins and contaminants in marine organisms and coral reef food webs and linkages to human exposure and health. Alison was a key member of the oil spill response for the US FDA following the Deepwater Horizon spill for seafood safety.

