Deepwater Horizon: Disaster in the Gulf



0. Deepwater Horizon: Disaster in the Gulf - Story Preface

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Deepwater Horizon Off-shore drilling rig. Photograph online courtesy Wikipedia Commons.

What I get is 25,000 barrels a day coming out of that tiny hole that's a 1.2-inch hole.

Steve Wereley
Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering
Purdue University
Describing One of Three BP Leaks

Lying beneath the waters of the Gulf of Mexico are about 3.6 billion barrels of oil. That, at least, is the <u>federal government's estimate</u>.

If the Minerals Management Service is correct, the total amount of buried oil - if fully extracted - would satisfy all of <u>America's oil needs</u> for about ... six months.

Given those numbers, people have long debated whether <u>offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico</u> is worth the risk. Although rigs dot the seascape along the coasts of Louisiana and Mississippi, Florida has not allowed it. Tourism and fishing - both commercial and sport - drive that state's economy.

After an offshore oil rig called "Deepwater Horizon" exploded (on the 20th of April, 2010) - then sank, two days later, in a <u>dramatic sequence of events</u> over a four-minute period - America sustained its worst-ever oil spill.

How did such a catastrophe occur?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Deepwater-Horizon-Disaster-in-the-Gulf

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Media Stream



Location of Oil Leases in the Gulf of Mexico

Image created by Alice Kreit, of National Public Radio, using data from Minerals Management Service, Department of the Interior. Image online, courtesy NPR.

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