



OCEAN RESEARCH & CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

June 10, 2010

Dear Friends of ORCA,

I'm not sure I have the words to describe how we at ORCA feel as we watch the Gulf of Mexico fill with oil and potentially toxic dispersants. It is heart wrenching to watch that hideous stain on the ocean expanding over some of the most beautiful deep-sea reefs I've ever seen, extending its deadly tentacles into some of the most productive marine nurseries in the world and now, oozing into the Loop Current to be carried around the southern tip of Florida and up along our eastern shores. If we hadn't already started ORCA, I have no doubt I'd be quitting whatever job I had, to do so now.

Having just returned from the Unified Incident Command in Mobile, Alabama I wish I could report a strong, well organized, science-driven oil spill response plan. Unfortunately, that is not the case. The best science is being done by independent groups outside of the BP-controlled Incident Command structure.

ORCA is one such independent group. We are applying our innovative, low cost monitoring to support the science-based efforts directed at tracking the oil and its impacts in order to insure the best use of resources to optimize response and recovery efforts. In order to track the oil and assess its impact on Florida's east coast lagoons, estuaries and rivers, we must first establish scientifically defensible measurements of the water quality and sediment toxicity levels in the environment prior to exposure to the oil.

We are pursuing every available funding source (e.g. government, private foundations and BP themselves) to support this vital effort. Unfortunately all of these sources take weeks to months to come through. In this current crisis we must act now. One of things we are most proud of at ORCA is our ability to leverage relatively small amounts of money into a significant amount of valuable information – and we do it quickly.

Your donation can help with the cost of collecting baseline sediment toxicity measurements in the marine environment at the 10 inlets on the East coast of Florida from Sebastian to Key Biscayne. With additional support we can install Kilroys with hydrocarbon (petroleum) sensors in these same inlets as well as critical channels in the Florida Keys. Although, many local and state groups are on alert to report oil sightings, it is the unseen oil that could have the greatest impact. Oil and chemical dispersants traveling subsurface or near the seafloor could go undetected resulting in extensive damage to our seafloor, shores and estuaries. ORCA technology has the unique ability to detect and report in near real time such unseen and unknown oil. If we know where it is we have a much better chance of mitigating its impact.

It is now estimated that the oil could reach Florida's east coast in two to three weeks. We have a very short time to collect the essential information needed to know the true impact of the oil spill on Florida's east coast unique habitats (mangrove, seagrass, coral reefs). Our immediate funding needs to address this emergency situation are extreme. You can help us obtain this critical data. Please go to [www.teamorca.org](http://www.teamorca.org) today and make a donation to support this incredibly important and urgent project.

Thank you. It will take all of us working together to cope with the horrific impact of this oil spill.

Sincerely,

Edith Widder, Ph.D.  
President, CEO & Senior Scientist