



Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association

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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association Calls for Discussion and Preparation for Oil Spill Reaching Maryland Waters

The Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association (MSSA) is calling on Maryland's legislators, the coast guard, and state agencies involved with natural resources and the environment in an effort to prepare and plan for the worst should oil make its way up the East Coast and into Maryland waters.

The Gulf Stream travels from the southern tip of Florida up the east coast and is essential to the marine and coastal life that recreational fishermen enjoy. When the Gulf Loop Current carries the oil and some toxic dispersant chemicals used for oil cleanup to the tip of Florida, these toxins will inevitably travel up the coast in the Gulf Stream. Aside from these direct impacts to the resources, several year classes of sport fish will be impacted by the environmental damage being done currently in the Gulf of Mexico.

It has been widely documented that tar balls will have a tremendous impact on reef fish, and the toxins in the Loop and Gulf Stream Currents will be devastating to larval, juvenile and spawning stages of sport fish and their food supply. A further potential for disaster is the risk of hurricane season as large waves and high winds, among other things, could further amplify the harmful effects of the leaked oil and other toxins.

The MSSA represents the largest number of recreational and sport anglers in the state and will continue to work for and respond to issues affecting Maryland's saltwater recreational anglers, related businesses and long-term sustainability of coastal and marine resources.

"Maryland's recreational anglers provide this state with a tremendous value and they depend upon the health of its marine and coastal resources, and having a plan in place for the effects of the oil spill off our coast is a logical first step to mitigate any damage", said MSSA Executive Director Dave Smith.

Dave Smith
Executive Director