



BP's Deepwater Oil Spill - Restarting Progress - and Open Thread

Posted by [Heading Out](#) on July 27, 2010 - 10:30am

Topic: [Environment/Sustainability](#)

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BP does not seem to have gone back to the daily briefings, let alone the twice-a-day ones that were being issued just a couple of weeks ago. Admiral Allen has given permission for the top and bottom kill (through the relief well (RW)) activities to continue. The Admiral also noted that the riser for the RW has been reattached, and the reconnection, removal of the plugging packer, and cleaning of the well is in process. It is estimated that the intersection with the original well will now occur on the 7th August, with the final set of casing being run into the hole this week, and then, after cement injection, the well will WOC (wait on cement) while the cement hardens, and is then checked. In the meanwhile, the [undersea valve system is being modified](#) to carry out the static kill that I discussed earlier. (And the leak monitoring has transferred to the [BOA ROV 2](#), which is now showing four leaks.)

Once the flow channel to the well is restored, and the casing set and cemented in the relief well, then the Q4000 will carry mud from the HOS Centerline, driven by [pumps on the Blue Dolphin](#) into the riser, and down to the BOP to carry out the static kill. The Admiral currently expects that this will begin on August 2nd. He did note that the plan is still to inject cement into the top of the well, after the mud has killed any pressure differential between the bottom of the well and the reservoir, and thus also stabilized the well.

As the more immediate and visible problems reduce, with this path toward the final sealing of the well, and with future flows from it into the Gulf becoming less likely, the oil on the surface, and that migrating towards the shore is getting less. This will allow the Admiral to [redeploy assets](#). For example it now appears that the risk of oil East of the Mississippi is declining, and that [commercial fishing there may reopen](#) before the end of the week, given that

"We're 90 days into this, and I think the data speaks for itself," said Randy Pausina, assistant secretary for fisheries at the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. "There's been no indication that any seafood is even remotely close to being at any level of concern. Find me the concern and prove it to me."

Sport fishing has already been restarted.

We are now in the most intense driving season of the year, and this is evident, with traffic noticeably heavier on the roads in New England in recent days. [SeaCoast Sunday](#) noted in their paper edition on Sunday that occupancy rates in the York area of Southern Maine are over 90% during the week and at 100% on weekends. It is therefore not surprising that gas prices are on the rise, being on average [25 cents higher](#) than this time last year.

We have been fortunate that the weather in the Gulf has not generated that much damage to the rigs and platforms yet this year, and those that were affected by Bonnie are now back in business. But the season is still young, and may yet remind us of our vulnerable dependence on oil.



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