

FRANK T BROGAN, CHANCELLOR

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STATE
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Board of Governors

Florida State University to lead academic task force to help with response to oil spill in Gulf of Mexico

TALLAHASSEE - Chancellor Frank T. Brogan today announced the establishment of the Oil Spill Academic Task Force to provide assistance to local, state and federal agencies in dealing with the Gulf of Mexico spill and its aftermath.

The task force consists of scientists and scholars from the Florida State University working in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Florida, the University of South Florida and other State University System institutions as well as the University of Miami and other private colleges.

"The explosion and subsequent sinking of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico has created an emergency situation with potentially severe environmental, economic and public-health impacts on coastal states," Brogan said. "I want to thank the Florida State University for heading-up this task force, which is another example of how we can leverage the knowledge and experience of our researchers from across the State University System to help Florida face major challenges."

Eric J. Barron, president of Florida State University, said the aim of the Oil Spill Academic Task Force is to provide coordination of academic resources of all Florida universities to measure and model the magnitude and trajectory of the spill, provide information on the potential and actual ecological impacts of the oil, plan logistics and evaluate risks and assist in citizen-response efforts.

"We have talented researchers at universities throughout our state who can help the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and federal agencies as they wrestle with the complex issues of controlling an oil spill and managing a recovery," Barron said. "I am pleased that FSU is leading the way with our university partners in bringing this talent to bear on this national environmental and economic problem."

The Oil Spill Academic Task Force will bring research tools to focus on a number of issues, including:

- Tracking and estimating the size of the oil spill.
- Developing legal and policy responses.
- Providing assistance with ecological and habitat implications.
- Projecting risk management and modeling of remediation issues.

"We appreciate the State University System's assistance in responding to this event, especially as it pertains to the long-term transport of the spill, the best strategies for dealing with light and medium sheen in salt marshes and remediation strategies," said Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Michael W. Sole. "We look forward to tapping into their vast research capability to help us best prepare Florida for potential impacts to our shoreline."

The efforts at Florida State University are being spearheaded by faculty and staff members in the Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (EOAS), the Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (COAPS), the FSU Coastal and Marine Laboratory (FSUCML), the Institute for Energy Systems, Economics and Sustainability (IESES) as well as personnel from other units including the College of Business.

The Oil Spill Academic Task Force will provide information on the task force efforts and links to partners and resources through its website, <http://oilspill.fsu.edu/>.

The Board of Governors is the constitutional body created by voters in 2002 to guide the State University System of Florida.

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