

## Deepwater Horizon Criminal Task Force

- Special agents from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement (particularly those in the Southeast and Southwest Regions) worked to investigate criminal wrongdoing in connection with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill since that disaster occurred in late April 2010.
- As a member of the Deepwater Horizon investigative team, Service agents worked with counterparts from an array of other Federal and State enforcement agencies and with Department of Justice attorneys to investigate and document violations of Federal laws – including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act, the National Parks Organic Act, and the Clean Water Act.
- One Service special agent was and remains assigned full-time to the Deepwater Horizon Criminal Task Force based in New Orleans; others continue to assist as needed.
- During the criminal investigation, the Office of Law Enforcement documented 7,258 dead migratory birds that washed ashore or were otherwise recovered in the wake of the spill.
- More than 2,247 of these birds were visibly “oiled.”
- The dead specimens included birds found on Federal Lands, including the Breton National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana, the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Mississippi and Florida, and the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge and the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama.
- Birds killed represented 122 different species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
- Scientists at the Service's National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory completed necropsies on 251 of the birds to definitively establish cause of death.
- A U.S. Coast Guard Laboratory matched oil from 144 of the birds to the source oil released from the Macondo well, where the flow of oil was not successfully staunched until July 15, 2010.
- As a result of the Office of Law Enforcement’s investigative work, the criminal charges brought by the U.S. Department of Justice against British Petroleum included one count of violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act – a law that prohibits the “take” of more than 1,000 migratory bird species found in the United States.
- The company was also charged with, and pleaded guilty to, 11 counts of felony manslaughter for the deaths of crew members on the Deepwater Horizon rig (which burned for a day and a half before sinking to the floor of the Gulf of Mexico); one count of felony obstruction of Congress; and one count of violating the Clean Water Act.
- As part of its guilty plea, BP agreed, subject to the Court’s approval, to pay \$4 billion in criminal fines and penalties – the largest criminal resolution in United States history. More than half of this money will support environmental restoration efforts along the Gulf Coast.