TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER

June 4, 2010

Mr. Doug Suttles
Chief Operating Officer
British Petroleum
501 Westlake Park Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77079

Dear Mr. Suttles:

While the oil slick resulting from the Deepwater Horizon incident has not, to date, arrived in Texas Gulf waters, Texas commercial fishing companies are feeling a direct impact from this environmental disaster in a unique and devastating way. For this reason, it is important to include Texas commercial fishing representatives in your discussions.

We are aware of the information on the Deepwater Horizon Unified Command website, but respectfully request you notify the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) of any additional steps Texas companies need to take to formally enter the British Petroleum claims process due to these unique effects. Due to the timeliness of this issue, I respectfully request British Petroleum acknowledge the receipt of this letter and give direction to TDA by June 11, 2010. You may contact TDA's Texas Shrimp Marketing Program Coordinator, Alyssa Herold, at alyssa.herold@TexasAgriculture.gov or (512) 463-8353.

According to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the economic impact of the Gulf fishery on Texas is $8 billion per year. That ranks Texas above Louisiana and makes Texas the second largest state for Gulf fishery behind Florida. Texas commercial fishing companies are experiencing a unique situation. On May 15, state and federal waters in the Texas area were closed for the fishing of shrimp, as they are every year. Typically, Texas boats would migrate to Louisiana waters to complete the shrimp harvest season when our waters are closed. However, due to the current water closures, our shrimp companies are unable to send fleets to Louisiana. Texas oyster companies are also experiencing a loss in business because the Louisiana oyster beds are currently closed to fishing due to the Deepwater Horizon incident.

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www.TexasAgriculture.gov

TDA is launching a campaign to reassure consumers that Texas Gulf seafood within the marketplace is safe to consume. This campaign will be a long lasting effort, which will require the assistance of all stakeholders.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me if TDA may be of assistance in your efforts to address the concerns of Texas' fishing industry.

Sincerely yours,

Todd Staples

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