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For Immediate Release

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### **Long-term Effects of Dispersant Cause Concern for Shrimpers**

*Tarpon Springs, Fla.*—The Southern Shrimp Alliance, which represents the U.S. wild-caught shrimp industry in eight states, has expressed concern to federal government agencies about the potentially harmful effects of the dispersants used by BP to break up the oil slick on the marine environment.

“The Southern Shrimp Alliance is worried about the damages from the oil and additional impact of dispersants on the marine environment—from plankton and shrimp larvae to protected marine mammals, seabirds and endangered species of sea turtles,” said John Williams, Executive Director of the Southern Shrimp Alliance. “The shrimp industry is already facing closures that prevent us from working due to the oil spill. While we are extremely grateful to the federal agencies for all they are doing, we cannot afford further damage from the unintended effects of the clean-up efforts.”

The Southern Shrimp Alliance sent a letter on May 5, 2010 asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to ensure that the actions taken to respond quickly and aggressively to the ongoing oil spill will not create an even greater hazard that is even more difficult to monitor and clean-up.

“Dispersants do not remove oil. They relocate the oil from the shores to the water column and sea floor where it is not seen or easily accessible,” explained Williams. “The U.S. shrimp industry has an extraordinary record of protection and restoration of critical species in the Gulf, like sea turtles and red snapper, which could be severely undermined by the unprecedented, massive use of dispersants.”

While surface currents and winds are carrying the oil spill to the east, bottom currents move in the opposite direction and may cause the dispersed oil to spread to and literally smother the western Gulf of Mexico. This may vastly expand the ecological and economic impacts of the spill as the water column spreads the toxic dispersants and oil to where large numbers of eggs and larvae of countless species of marine life and their food sources are present. Injecting the dispersant at the point of the spill at a depth of 5,000 feet guarantees the maximum adverse impacts reach critical habitat.

In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Southern Shrimp Alliance has been working with state and federal government officials and BP to minimize damages from the oil spill.

The Southern Shrimp Alliance is also coordinating with government agencies to affirm the safety of wild-caught seafood. Seafood currently in the marketplace is safe for consumption. No fishing is occurring in areas the oil spill in either state or federal waters. Tissue samples of shrimp have been taken by both

federal and state governments to create a baseline of health by which shrimp stocks will be tested before waters are re-opened to fishing. Water quality is also being tested and monitored. State and federal governments are working with U.S. fisheries to prevent the harvest of seafood from affected areas through closures of the shrimp fishing season and to verify the safety of the seafood market using protocols that have safely protected the U.S. food market through countless hurricanes and other disasters. There are shrimp grounds in unaffected areas of the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico that continue to supply the U.S. market with safe sources of wild-caught U.S. shrimp.

SSA is an alliance of the U.S. warmwater wild shrimp fishery from eight states: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. For more information on the SSA, please visit [www.shrimpalliance.com](http://www.shrimpalliance.com) or follow [@ShrimpAlliance](https://twitter.com/ShrimpAlliance) on Twitter.