Nearshore Surface Oil Forecast
Deepwater Horizon MC252

This forecast is based on the NWS spot forecast from Thursday, July 29 PM. Currents were obtained from several models (NOAA Gulf of Mexico, West Florida Shelf/USF, TGLO/TAMU, NAVO/NRL) and HFR measurements. The model was initialized from Thursday satellite imagery analysis (NOAA/NESDIS) and overflight observations. The leading edge may contain tarballs that are not readily observable from the imagery (hence not included in the model initialization). Oil near bay inlets could be brought into that bay by local tidal currents.

Winds are forecast to have an offshore component tonight and tomorrow (WNW/NW) with speeds of 10-15 kts, then become westerly late Friday and into Saturday at 5-10 kts. Onshore (SW/S) winds are forecast for Sunday at 5-10 kts. Observations from overflights indicate the remaining scattered “anomalies” observed by remote sensing are predominantly light sheens with very little recoverable oil being observed. Patches of emulsified oil and sheens were observed to the west of the Delta, nearshore off Timbalier Bay and Barataria Bay. Shoreline impacts will continue to be reduced by the offshore winds – however, trajectories indicate potential impacts on the west side of the Mississippi Delta due to the westerly component of the winds.

Significantly less oil is currently being observed on overflights. The Surface Oil Forecast will be suspended once there have been three days in a row of no significant recoverable oil observed.