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CHARLESTON
WATERKEEPER®

Charleston WATERKEEPER® Leads International Effort to Save Our Gulf

Local Organization Creates Campaign to Engage Waterkeeper Alliance in Gulf Coast Recovery Effort

CHARLESTON, SC - May 20, 2010: In the midst of this devastating BP oil disaster, it is safe to say that most everyone is concerned with the current plight facing the Gulf Coast. With no clear end in sight, this catastrophe is forcing many Charlestonians to question how we will be impacted, and what we are going to do about the situation.

Cyrus Buffum, Executive Director of Charleston Waterkeeper, our local water watchdog organization, has taken the lead to create SaveOurGulf.org, a web-based project aiming to raise funds for fellow Waterkeepers on the front lines throughout the Gulf, and provide real-time, accurate information about what may be the largest environmental and economic disaster in U.S. history.

SaveOurGulf.org is an initiative supported by the Waterkeeper Alliance, an international organization of nearly 200 Waterkeeper programs, to aid in the ongoing efforts of the Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper, Louisiana Bayoukeeper, Mobile Baykeeper, Emerald Coastkeeper and Apalachicola Riverkeeper, who are working around the clock to provide their firsthand knowledge and expertise in order to help minimize the environmental impact from the oil disaster. Together with the Waterkeeper Alliance, Buffum and the five Gulf Coast Waterkeeper organizations located in the direct impact zone are updating SaveOurGulf.org daily with accurate and original content to assure that citizens around the world are given a firsthand account of what is happening on the ground.

Utilizing social media tools and innovative fundraising ideas, SaveOurGulf.org gives citizens opportunities to help contribute to crisis efforts. Interactive components, such as live Twitter feeds from the Waterkeepers on scene, aerial photographs of ground zero, maps and firsthand accounts of critical incidents, allow people to receive live, unfiltered content from the front lines. In addition, by using tools like RT2Give, a donation tool allowing users to donate to the relief effort with a simple retweet on Twitter, SaveOurGulf.org is an example of how modern communication can aid in crisis relief.

The Waterkeeper Alliance has mobilized their programs worldwide to assist, advise and aid SaveOurGulf.org and the affected Waterkeepers. Waterkeepers serve as the voice of the world's waters, and during such a disastrous event, Gulf Waterkeepers are working together to best protect their communities and the waterways on which they depend. SaveOurGulf.org shares these efforts with the rest of the world, and reveals a front-line perspective of what is being done on the ground. To lend support and get involved, visit www.SaveOurGulf.org.

Charleston WATERKEEPER® is a citizen-based, environmental organization committed to defending local waterways against pollution, while protecting the public's right to clean water. As part investigator, scientist, lawyer, educator and community organizer, Charleston WATERKEEPER® strives to improve the quality of Charleston's waterways. Our waterways have been given to all of us in trust that we, the public, will watch over and protect these natural resources. As a member of the WATERKEEPER® ALLIANCE, Charleston WATERKEEPER® is one of nearly 200 other WATERKEEPER® programs around the world dedicated to clean water and strong communities.

Waterkeeper Alliance is a global environmental organization uniting more than 190 Waterkeeper programs around the world and focusing citizen advocacy on the issues that affect our waterways, from pollution to climate change. More information can be found at www.waterkeeper.org.

To see what Gulf Coast Waterkeepers are doing to fight the disaster and to find out how you can help, please visit www.SaveOurGulf.org.

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