

GoMRI-sponsored Special Section Articles

**Coral Communities as Indicators of Ecosystem-Level Impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Spill**

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one density layer (North et al. 2011, Spier et al. 2013). After the oil reached the sea surface, natural weathering processes, burning, and the use of additional chemically applied dispersants indicate likely areas of exposed hard ground on the deep-sea floor (Roberts et al. 2015). On the basis of the interpretation of reflectivity in 3-D seismic data sets, the Bureau of Ocean Management (BOEM) has estimated that 400 discrete areas with carbonate deposits exist on the seafloor in the northern GOM.

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