

Alumnus Named to National Oil Spill Commission

June 29, 2010 11:00 AM New Wave staff
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Tulane alumnus Donald “Don” Boesch has been appointed to the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, the White House announced. The commission is tasked with providing recommendations on the prevention and mitigation of future offshore drilling spills.



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Donald “Don” Boesch, a 1967 Tulane graduate, is a native of Louisiana and a pioneer in studying the environmental effects of offshore energy development. (Photo from University of the Maryland Center for Environmental Science)

“These individuals bring tremendous expertise and experience to the critical work of this commission,” said President Barack Obama in a White House press release. “I am grateful they have agreed to serve as we work to determine the causes of this catastrophe and implement the safety and environmental protections we need to prevent a similar disaster from happening again.”

Boesch, who graduated from Tulane in 1967, serves as a professor of marine science and president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. Boesch also is vice chancellor for environmental sustainability for the University System in Maryland.

William E. “Brit” Kirwan, chancellor of the University System of Maryland, said Boesch “knows the region well and the impact this catastrophe will have on the people and the ecology of Louisiana and the surrounding states.”

The chair of the Ocean Studies Board of the National Research Council, Boesch is a member of the National Academies Committee on America's Climate Choices. Previously, he worked as the executive director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium.

Born and raised in New Orleans, Boesch is a pioneer in the study of the environmental effects of offshore energy development and a biological oceanographer who has conducted research on coastal ecosystems along the Atlantic Coast, the Gulf of Mexico, Australia and the East China Sea. He has studied multiple environmental problems of the Gulf Coast and the long-term environmental effects of offshore oil and gas development.