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## Local expert says Gulf Coast oil spill worst in US history

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By Tiffany Pelt - [email](#)

LUBBOCK, TX (KCBD) – From Lubbock to Amarillo in length and from the Hub City to the New Mexico border in width – that's how much oil is covering the Gulf Coast. One local environmental expert believes this could be the worst and most devastating oil spill in our nation's history.

Texas Tech University's Environmental and Human Health Director Ronald Kendall was at the Exxon-Valdez oil spill. He said even after 20 years has passed and \$3 billion spent to clean it up, the oil is still there.

Kendall said with massive amounts of oil dumping into the Gulf with no technology to stop it, this oil spill is worse than the Exxon Valdez spill. "This is going to be more complicated, more challenging, and more devastating," he said.

The Gulf Coast is home to sea turtles, thousands of birds, and is the breeding ground for Tuna and several other species. "You've got hundreds of species at risk here and a very vibrant ecosystem on Earth and for our nation, and this is the most important time of the year. This is when everything is reproducing, so it couldn't have come at a worst time," said Kendall.

One third of the nation's sea food supply also comes from the Gulf Coast area and the Louisiana shoreline. Billions of dollars have already been lost in the sea food industry with effects reaching all the way to Lubbock. "We're going to be probably more stressed for sea food availability, and I wouldn't be surprised to see oil prices to continue to rise as this crisis grows," said Kendall.

Kendall also said the upcoming Hurricane season could bring the oil to the Texas coast. "As hurricanes form and push perhaps to Texas coast we could see this, and we have such a beautiful productive coast it will have serious consequences for our economy," he said.

British Petroleum has already accepted responsibility for the spill and will face the challenge of restoring the Gulf Coast ecosystem to what it was before the contamination.

Kendall said if the oil starts to reach the Texas Coast, he will take a team to gather samples of specimen and organisms to compare before and after when clean up begins.

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