

Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, announced that the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science has accepted his amendment calling for a federal study of the long-term impact of the Deepwater Horizon spill on the northern Gulf fisheries habitat.

“The Deepwater Horizon oil spill will continue to have long-term and potentially catastrophic consequences to fisheries habitat in the northern Gulf of Mexico,” Congressman Bonner said.

“This amendment directs the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in coordination with the affected states, to conduct a full and complete evaluation of the damage to five critical habitat areas: seagrasses, coastal marshes, oyster reefs, hard bottom, and sargassum communities.

“Working with the affected states will allow local, state and federal expertise to be brought to bear to assess the significant impacts of the spill.”

The Bonner amendment was included in the report language accompanying the fiscal 2011 Commerce, Justice and Science appropriations bill, which funds the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The report language and accompanying appropriations bill must now be passed by the full House Appropriations Committee before proceeding to the House floor for a vote. Congressman Bonner is a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science.