

SKYTRUTH

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Dear Friend of SkyTruth,

It's December 22 as I write this -- officially winter, and definitely feeling like it here in Shepherdstown! The main street is all lit up like a Norman Rockwell scene, and the shops seem to be busy this year. We even have some snow on the ground. And, as in much of the US and Europe, it's been unusually cold. I've been learning about the Arctic Oscillation, another of those wonderful mechanisms that rule the rhythms of our planet, putting us in the deep freeze down here while temperatures up in the high Arctic are unusually warm. Our climate, like many of Earth's systems, is a very complicated thing.

So with frost in the air it seems like summer was a very long time ago, and the world's biggest accidental oil spill a hazy memory. I suppose we humans are hardwired to forget about painful things and move on as quickly as possible, but this is one adaptation that serves us very poorly in our technology-dominated society. Now BP -- the company that initially barred scientists from accessing the Macondo spill site, preventing accurate measurement of the flow rate of oil and gas from that doomed well -- claims the spill was not nearly as bad as the government scientists' best estimates. Multiple ongoing investigations of the spill are concluding that industry has a bad habit of making the same mistakes over and over. Meanwhile, the Senate just tabled legislation that would have provided the necessary funding to improve offshore rig inspections, raising the possibility that oversight and enforcement of increasingly risky offshore drilling will continue to be grossly inadequate. And the new leaders of the incoming Congress have already made it clear that they have little inclination to impose new rules and restrictions on an oil and gas industry that caused the nation's worst environmental disaster.

Whew. What does this mean for SkyTruth? We'll be very busy in 2011, doing all we can to remind the public, the media, and our politicians just how bad the Gulf spill actually was, while keeping our eye on all the other things -- mountaintop removal, onshore drilling, deforestation, climate change -- that need monitoring, investigation and exposure. Planet Earth needs an independent eye in the sky to ensure that, no matter where they happen, environmental incidents won't go unnoticed, unmeasured, and unreported. To better serve that mission we just hired a full-time office administrator, Teri Biebel, and moved into new offices here



Satellite images and digital mapping for environmental protection, education, and advocacy

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in town. With your help, SkyTruth will continue to grow, becoming an ever more effective watchdog to provoke positive action on behalf of conservation.

But for now let's take a deep breath, enjoy the warmth and strength of family and good friends as this year draws to a close, and gather our energy to greet 2011 with joy, enthusiasm and optimism!

Wishing you all the best in this holiday season,

John Amos
President, SkyTruth

2010 Recap:

In 2010 SkyTruth produced unique, compelling imagery and timely information on some of the nation's most pressing environmental issues. We extended the results of our Mountaintop Removal Mining work to address water-quality in Appalachian streams and rivers; kept the environmental community updated on last year's Montara blowout and oil spill off the coast of Australia; and, of course, provided near-daily satellite monitoring, maps, information and updates on



the BP/Deepwater Horizon tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico. SkyTruth's president, John Amos, provided comments at the final public meeting of the President's National Oil Spill Commission on Dec. 2 in Washington, DC, urging the Commissioners to recommend routine satellite monitoring for oil pollution as a tool to improve the safety of offshore energy production.

And we are growing to help us become even more effective. We recently moved into our new offices in Shepherdstown, West Virginia and hired a new Office Administrator, Teri Biebel. We can now be found on Facebook and Twitter, and have improved and

expanded our website to be a more dynamic source of information. Please visit us on the web, and let us know what you think.

Get Involved!

SkyTruth is a network of concerned individuals like you who are interested in sharing the truth about the challenging environmental issues that we face in today's world.

Spread the Word!

If you'd like to help us build our network, please forward this e-newsletter to friends of yours who might also be interested in SkyTruth's work.

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Questions, comments, unsubscribe? Contact: Teri@skytruth.org