



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

Soil, Water and  
Environmental Science



**SWES Colloquium Series 2015-2016**  
Department of Soil, Water and Environmental Science

*“Recovery and Resilience in the Gulf: Bouncing Back  
(Or Not) from the 2010 Gulf Coast Oil Spill”*

The 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill was the worst spill in U.S. maritime history. Millions of oil washed ashore along hundreds of miles of Gulf Coast beaches and marshes. While the immediate social and economic impacts seemed severe, the billions of dollars spent by BP to restore the Gulf and compensate disaster victims would appear to have 'made communities whole.' However, this five-year study of recovery from the spill suggests an uneven pattern of recovery, shaped by distinct regional approaches to community resilience. By focusing on the application of 'cultural resilience' to post-disaster recovery, I argue that areas possessing key social resources that better matched the official response plan were quicker to bounce back than other areas regardless of other traditional forms of disaster resilience.

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Marley 230



School of Earth and Environmental Sciences