

The Coastal Waters Consortium Presents:

Scientist Spotlight



Dr. Scott Miles

What is your educational background?

BS, Zoology, Southeastern Louisiana University
BS, Environmental Engineering, Louisiana State University

MS, Environmental Sciences, Louisiana State University
PhD, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Louisiana State University

What is your role as a scientist for CWC?

I supervise the field sampling and in-situ monitoring of water and sediments for the CWC project. I also assist in providing analytical support (extraction, laboratory analysis, and maintain data sets) to other CWC members.

Can you summarize your oil spill research and describe any surprising findings you have come across?

We have collected almost 7 years of salt marsh samples following the spill. It has been interesting to see how this oil has changed, chemically and physically, over the past 4-5 years. As the oil weathers, we are having to develop new and more advanced instrumental techniques to monitor its presence.

The Coastal Waters Consortium's mission is to assess the chemical evolution, biological degradation, and environmental stresses of petroleum and dispersant within Gulf of Mexico coastal and shelf ecosystems.

What inspired you to become a scientist?

I began working in an EPA contract laboratory in the late '80s to pay for my undergraduate education. I enjoyed the challenge of environmental sample collection and analysis. Later, my environmental engineering background allowed me to pursue my interest in project management and environmental systems design.

Can you describe what you enjoy the most about conducting scientific research?

I enjoy the problem solving aspects of field sampling and analysis. The environmental conditions and variables are always changing. There is always a better way to sample or design a sampling device.

