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America's most biologically productive landscape is historically one of its most neglected. The Mississippi River delta and the Gulf are often on the losing end of some man-induced disaster, reminding us of the consequences of current mismanagement. We continue to ignore these warnings of our addiction to nonrenewable fuels. Myopia in environmental management has led to losses in ecosystem productivity and biodiversity, as well as losses in traditional economic terms, dollars and jobs. Oil came ashore at the beginning of nesting for many seabirds and turtles, crowded into ever diminishing barrier island habitat at the perimeter of the delta. Much coastal habitat oiled during the 100 days of the BP eruption was already significantly degraded by legacy effects of other oil & gas activities. The oil, detergent, and the intensive and intrusive cleanup operations caused visible damage to coastal habitats, and invisible damage offshore. Reported visible damage was in the form of wildlife body counts: 6050, 94, 591 for birds, mammals, sea turtles, resp. (USFWS, 22 Sept.) A very positive result was the amazing spontaneous response by volunteers to help make things right. National Audubon Society alone had upwards of 32,000 people register for training to work along the Gulf Coast. (Received September 22, 2010)