

GULF OIL DISASTER PROTECTS NEW ENGLAND'S GEORGES BANK FROM SIMILAR DISASTER

Seeking a silver lining

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There's nothing like a massive (and still growing) oil spill to mobilize politicians and government officials.

The Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded and sank nearly a month ago, killing 11 people and triggering the disastrous Gulf of Mexico spill that threatens the Gulf Coast and the region's commercial fishing fleets.

And as officials continued to scramble to find a way to cap the still gushing well, several West Coast senators introduced legislation Thursday that would permanently ban offshore drilling in all federal waters off the California, Oregon and Washington coasts.

Northwest conservation and fishing groups said in a teleconference regarding the bill's introduction that the gulf spill should spur action to halt ocean oil drilling and accelerate efforts to wean America off its oil dependency.

Then today comes word that the Nova Scotia government is extending its ban on offshore drilling on Georges Bank. Combined with the ban protecting the larger U.S. section of Georges that President Obama announced earlier this year, U.S. harvesters can breathe a little easier knowing that drilling will be verboten on the bountiful fishing grounds there.

If there's a silver lining to the Gulf of Mexico spill (and right now, that's a pretty big if), maybe it's that other important U.S. fishing grounds will be preserved and remain free of offshore drilling. You just wish it didn't take an ecological disaster to get it done.

Thank you for your time.

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