

## OIL SPILL COULD LEAVE 195,000 UNEMPLOYED IN FLORIDA



A report from the University of Central Florida estimates the Gulf oil spill disaster could cost the state up to \$10 billion and put 195,000 people out of work. The figures are based on a worst-case scenario in which the Gulf Coast becomes saturated in oil, according to the Miami Herald. UCF economist Sean Snaith came up with the estimates by taking the value of tourism on Florida's western coast and cutting it in half. He said the estimates are reasonable should the state take a direct hit, but noted predicting such a scenario remains hard to gauge. "The whole economic impact of the episode is a giant layer cake of uncertainty," Snaith told the Herald. "How many counties will be affected? I don't know. We won't really know until the oil starts washing up on the shore." While no Florida beaches have yet to be closed, the director of the Pensacola tourism bureau said the arrival of tar balls on the areas beaches last week resulted in plenty of hotel cancellations. According to Snaith's report, the potential \$10.9 billion economic impact assumes beaches from the western edge of the Panhandle all the way to the keys would be affected by the oil spill. Snaith suggests even a 10 percent decline in tourism throughout Florida's Gulf coast would cost the state about \$2.2 billion and 39,000 jobs.

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