

WILDLIFE PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE IN ALASKA



Alaska Regional Response Team

Wildlife Protection Committee

Version 2020.2

September 30, 2023

Front cover image: Land, Air, and Sea by Laura E. Cleveland, Loveland Living Plant Aquarium, Draper, Utah.

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RECORD OF CHANGES

Version #	Approval Date	Section	Page	Context or Reason for Change
2020.2	September 30, 2023	All	All	Throughout: Improved grammar and readability. Updated references and internal and external links. Incorporated references to the <i>Alaska Spill Response Wildlife ID Aid</i> the training video for the tactic <i>Carcass Collection and Documentation during an Oil Spill Response</i> . Clarified Marine Mammal Protection Act permit information for species under the jurisdiction of USFWS. This revision incorporates applicable information from the 2023 public review of the <i>Pribilof Islands Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response</i> . All proposed modifications were reviewed by federal and state planners.
		1710.3	1-5 to 1-6	Added information about State of Alaska Water Resource Permits.
		3610 & 9740.3.1	3-1 to 3-3 & 9-56 to 9-57	Rearranged Wildlife Best Management Practices.

For more detailed information about the history and revision process of this document, see section [9740.1](#) – Wildlife Protection Guidelines History and Revision Process.



Alaska Regional Response Team

August 31, 2020

ARRT

Environmental Protection Agency

United States Coast Guard

Department of Commerce

Department of the Interior

Department of Agriculture

Department of Defense

Department of Justice

Department of Health and Human Services

Federal Emergency Management Agency

General Services Administration

Department of Energy

Department of Labor

Department of Transportation

State of Alaska

Dear Recipient:

Attached is the Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska (WPG). The WPG provide tools and background information to address wildlife concerns when planning for and responding to a discharge, or substantial threat of discharge, of oil and/or a hazardous substance from a vessel or on/offshore facility operating within Alaska and surrounding waters. The State and Federal On-Scene Coordinators shall use this guidance, in conjunction with the National Contingency Plan and Alaska Regional Contingency Plan, to inform and support the Area Committee within each planning area in building their respective Area Contingency Plan (ACP). The WPG table of contents numbering system matches the ACP structure to facilitate this process.

The WPG is compliant with Section 300.210 of the National Contingency Plan and Alaska Statute 46.04.200.

The Alaska Regional Response Team's (ARRT) Wildlife Protection Committee, chaired by the U.S. Department of the Interior and working under the direction of the ARRT U.S. Coast Guard and Environmental Protection Agency Co-Chairpersons and State of Alaska Representative, will review the WPG annually and update as necessary. We welcome your ideas to improve the plan. Please direct your correspondence to the following addresses:

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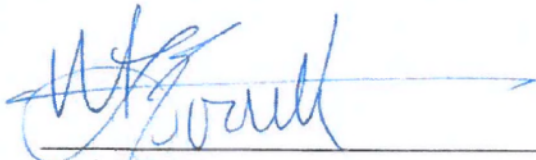
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Alaska Operations Office, Federal Building (Room 537)
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This plan and updated versions will be available on the following websites:

<http://www.alaskarrt.org>

<http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr>

This document is hereby approved by the Co-Chairpersons of the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) and the State of Alaska representative to the ARRT.



Mark Everett
U.S. Coast Guard, Seventeenth Coast Guard District
ARRT Co-Chair

AUGUST 31, 2020

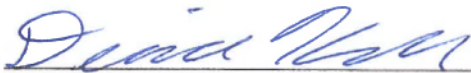
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Date: 2020.08.31 15:58:20 -07'00'

Beth Sheldrake
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
ARRT Co-Chair

Date



Denise Koch
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
State of Alaska Representative to the ARRT

8/31/20

Date

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Alaska Administrative Code
ACP	Area Contingency Plan
ADEC	Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
AKEPIC	Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse
Alaska RCP	Alaska Regional Contingency Plan
Artic ERMA	Arctic Environmental Response Management Application
ARRT	Alaska Regional Response Team
AS	Alaska Statute
BGEPA	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
BMP	Best Management Practice
CANUSDIX	Canada-U.S. Dixon Entrance
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CoC	Chain of Custody
DOC	U.S. Department of Commerce
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
DPS	Distinct Population Segment
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
EU	Environmental Unit
FOSC	Federal On-Scene Coordinator
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
IAP	Incident Action Plan
GRS	Geographic Response Strategy
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
IRT	Initial Response Team
JIC	Joint Information Center
LOA	Letter of Authorization
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MMHSRP	Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program
MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act
MPRSA	Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act
MSFCMA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
NANPCA	Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act
NCP	National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan
NISA	National Invasive Species Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service (synonymous with NOAA Fisheries)
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NRDAR	Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
OEPC	Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
OLE	Office of Law Enforcement
OPA 90	Oil Pollution Act of 1990
OSC	On-Scene Coordinator
OSRO	Oil Spill Removal Organization
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PRAC	Primary Response Action Contractor
PI WPG	Pribilof Islands Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response
RCAC	Regional Citizens' Advisory Council
RP/PRP	Responsible Party/Potentially Responsible Party
RAR	Resources at Risk
SOSC	State On-Scene Coordinator
SSC	Scientific Support Coordinator
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft System
Unified Plan	Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases
USC	United States Code
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WB	Wildlife Branch
WBD	Wildlife Branch Director
WPC	Wildlife Protection Committee
WPG	Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska
WRP	Wildlife Response Plan

HOW TO USE THE WILDLIFE PROTECTION GUIDELINES

The Wildlife Protection Guidelines (WPG) provides spill responders with tools and background information to address wildlife concerns during a spill response in Alaska. Users of the WPG should be familiar with the *Incident Command System (ICS) in Oil Spill Response*, available from the [Homeland Security Digital Library](#); the oil spill response planning structure outlined in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP; particularly § 300.210, .600, and .175, which discuss wildlife response, designation of federal trustees, and federal agency responsibilities, respectively; [59 FR 47416](#)); the *Alaska Regional Contingency Plan (Alaska RCP)*; and the four Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) for Alaska (the *Alaska RCP* and ACPs are available on the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage).

The WPG Table of Contents numbering system matches the Table of Contents of the ACPs. Because only ACP headers that are relevant to the WPG are used in this document, the WPG headers are disjunct between and within some sections. However, adopting the ACP Table of Contents numbering facilitates inclusion of the WPG into ACPs and helps users more easily find information applicable to their roles. Using this numbering system also divides the WPG information into relevant ICS Sections ([Figure i-1](#)), particularly Operations and Planning (Sections [3000](#) and [4000](#) of the WPG, respectively). [Figure i-2](#) outlines general categories of wildlife considerations, cross-referenced by location in the WPG.

Links to online resources can be found throughout the document, but the following online resources contain useful information related to the WPG:

ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#)

ADEC [Permits Tool](#) webpage

Alaska Regional Response Team (AART) [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage

For spills in the Pribilof and Bogoslof Islands, see the *Pribilof Islands Wildlife Protection Guidelines* (PI WPG), available on the AART [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage, for site-specific information and guidance.

Figure i-1 Organization Chart of a Typical Incident Command System (ICS) for an Oil Spill with Wildlife Response. Wildlife-related response activities or roles are in italics.

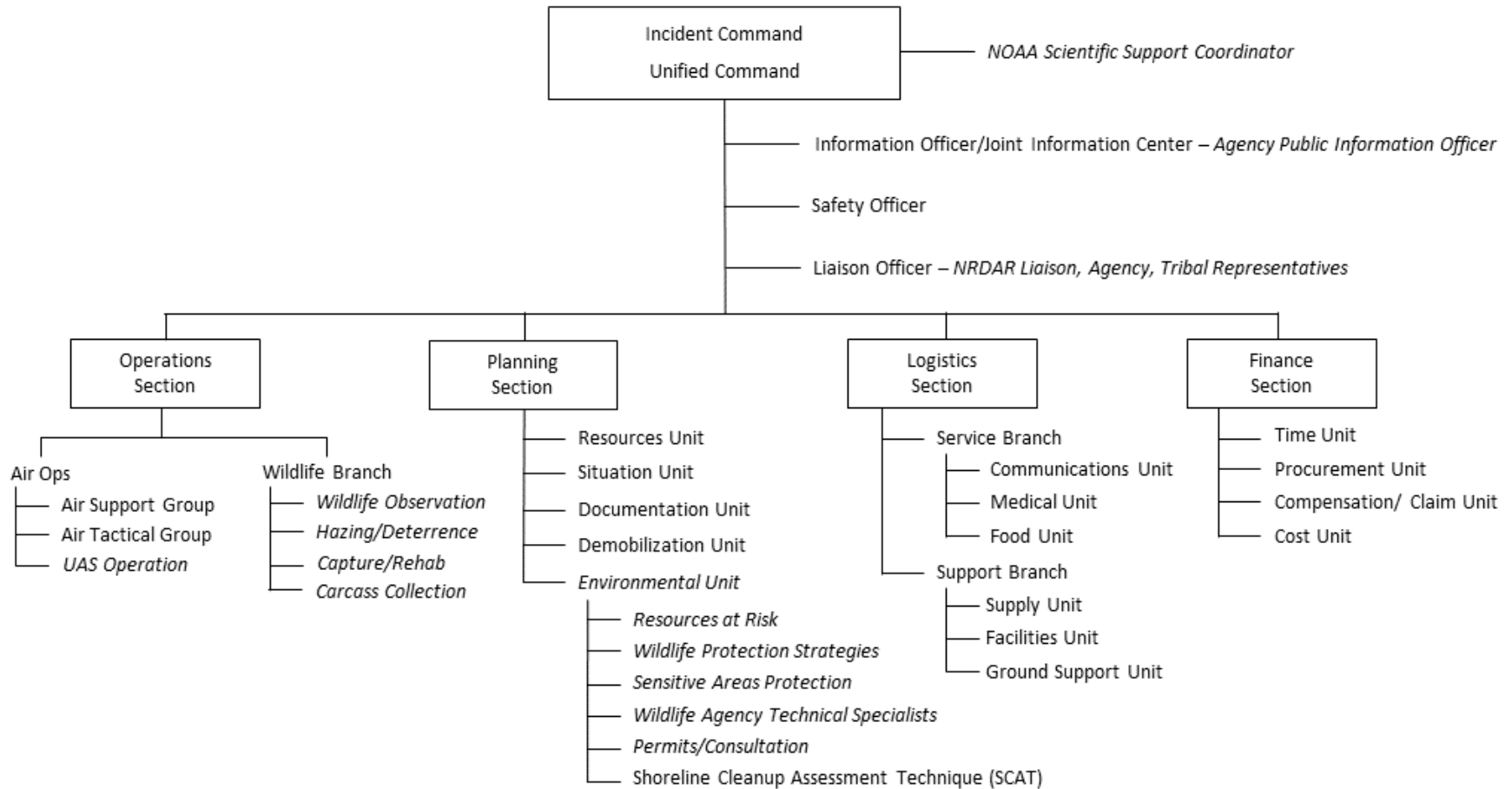
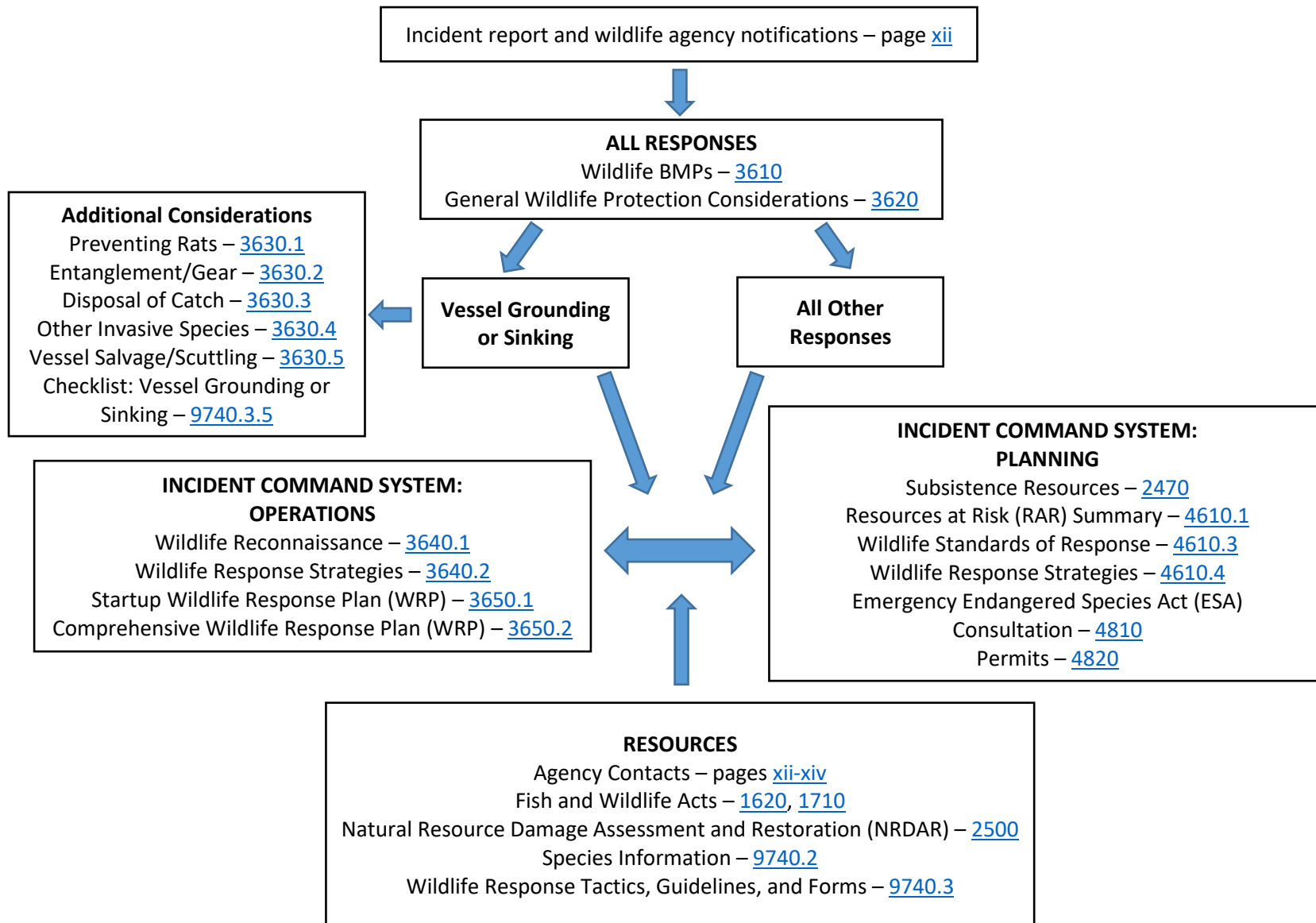


Figure i-2: Wildlife Considerations during Spill Response by Wildlife Protection Guidelines Section.



INITIAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Wildlife response activities may begin when an incident is reported and an Initial Response Team (IRT) is formed. An IRT may include the Federal and State On-Scene Coordinators (FOSC and SOSC), local emergency response, and the Responsible Party/Potentially Responsible Party (RP/PRP) personnel, among others. The IRT will carry out initial response efforts, which include notification and equipment mobilization. The RP/PRP, if known, is responsible for making notifications to local, state (ADEC), and federal (U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) response agencies. Wildlife agencies in Alaska include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS),¹ and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Typically, ADEC notifies ADF&G, and the USCG or EPA notifies the federal agencies DOI and DOC. Contact information for the wildlife agencies is provided below.

WILDLIFE AGENCY POINTS OF CONTACT

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Migratory bird capture and salvage, eagles, sea otters, walruses, polar bears, salmon, Endangered Species Act (ESA) section 7 consultation

Statewide contacts:

Primary:	Alternate:
Alaska Region Spill Response Team	Angela Matz
(907) 242-6893	(907) 750-8527
fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov	fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) / NOAA Fisheries

Whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, sea lions, marine fish, ESA section 7 consultation

Statewide contacts:

Primary:	Alternate:
Sadie Wright	David Gann
(907) 586-7630	(907) 586-7285
akrnmfsspillresponse@noaa.gov	akrnmfsspillresponse@noaa.gov

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)

Migratory bird hazing, terrestrial mammals, anadromous fish, freshwater fish

[Figure i-3](#) shows ADF&G office areas of responsibility. [Table i-1](#) shows ADF&G contacts by areas of responsibility and office location.

¹ Within the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), NMFS is organized under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); NMFS is also referred to as NOAA Fisheries.

Figure i-3: Map Depicting ADF&G Office Areas of Responsibility.

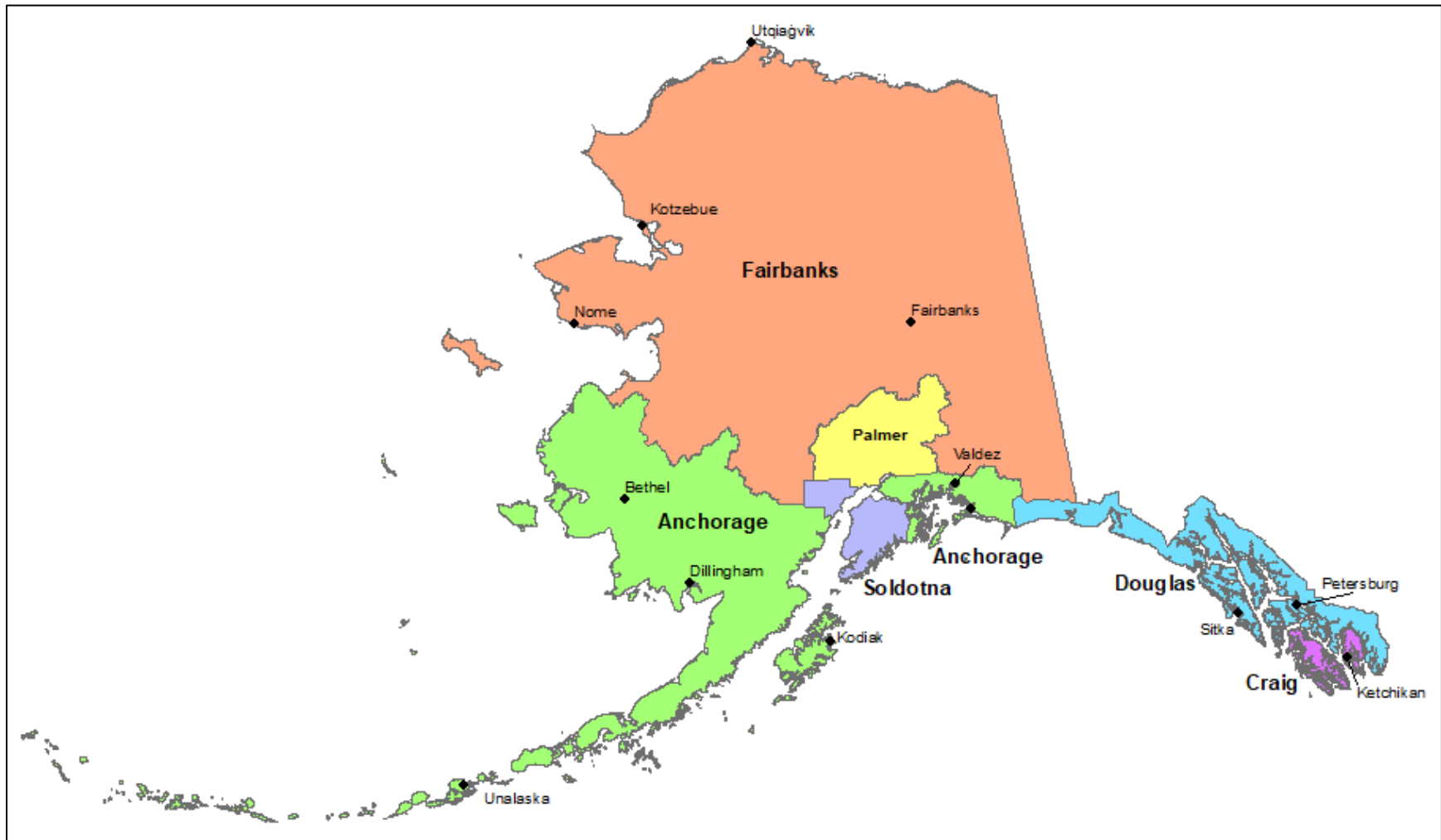


Table i-1: ADF&G Contacts by Area Contingency Plan, Geographic Area of Responsibility, and Office Location.

Area Contingency Plan(s)	Office Location and Geographic Area of Responsibility	Contact Information
Inland Prince William Sound Western and Arctic Alaska	<u>Anchorage</u> Southcentral and southwest Alaska, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak Habitat main office (907) 267-2342	Jeanette Alas (907) 267-2805 jeanette.alas@alaska.gov Andrew Kastning (907) 267-2813 andrew.kastning@alaska.gov
Inland Prince William Sound	Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, Valdez Marine Terminal	Jonathan Kirsch (907) 269-6411 jonathan.kirsch@alaska.gov
Inland Western and Arctic Alaska	<u>Fairbanks</u> North Slope, interior, Arctic, northwest Alaska Habitat main office (907) 459-7289	Todd Nichols (907) 459-7363 todd.nichols@alaska.gov Maria Wessel (907) 459-7281 maria.wessel@alaska.gov
Southeast	<u>Douglas</u> Southeast Alaska (except Prince of Wales and Ketchikan) Habitat main office (907) 465-4105	Greg Albrecht (907) 465-6384 greg.albrecht@alaska.gov Kate Kanouse (907) 465-4290 kate.kanouse@alaska.gov
Southeast	<u>Craig</u> Prince of Wales, Ketchikan	Mark Minnillo (907) 826-2560 mark.minnillo@alaska.gov
Inland	<u>Soldotna</u> Kenai Peninsula, West Cook Inlet Habitat main office (907) 714-2475	Kaitlynn Cafferty (907) 714-2481 kaitlynn.cafferty@alaska.gov
Inland	<u>Palmer</u> Matanuska-Susitna Valley Habitat main office (907) 861-3200	Sarah Wilber (907) 861-3206 sarah.wilber@alaska.gov

ADF&G representatives can be reached outside of normal business hours through the SOSOC for each incident.

WILDLIFE AGENCY NOTIFICATION

As outlined in the *Alaska RCP*, available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage, oil spills and hazardous substance releases are reported, in accordance with existing state and federal regulations, to the USCG or the EPA, and the ADEC. In turn, the USCG or EPA, and ADEC supply information on the incident to pre-identified federal and state natural resource agencies. For a current list of these contacts, see the Alaska Regional Response Team (ARRT) [Members and Contact Information](#) webpage.

Information on wildlife resources at risk (RAR), sensitive habitats, and recommendations for appropriate wildlife response strategies and other activities to help minimize impacts to wildlife will be provided to the Federal and State On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) through representatives of USFWS, NMFS, and ADF&G. If an Incident Management Team (IMT) is established, wildlife agency representatives will provide their input to the Federal and State OSCs, respectively, through the Liaison Officer within the Command Section or through the Environmental Unit (EU) in the Planning Section. In the event field-based activities are authorized and conducted, wildlife agency representatives will also work in the Wildlife Branch (WB) in the Operations Section. For incidents with significant effects, or the potential for significant effects, on migratory birds, marine mammals, and terrestrial mammals under federal wildlife agency management, USFWS and NMFS have the option of providing input directly to the Unified Command.

If wildlife response activities are approved and initiated for migratory birds or marine mammals, USFWS or NMFS will assume lead responsibility for wildlife under their respective jurisdictions; ADF&G will assist on a case-by-case basis. If wildlife response activities are approved and initiated for terrestrial mammals, ADF&G will assume lead responsibility on state and private lands; on federally managed lands, ADF&G will be co-lead with USFWS and the federal land manager.

When response strategies are proposed in locations where species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA or marine mammals are (or may be) present, the FOSC will need to immediately consult with USFWS and NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the ESA and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

NATURAL RESOURCE TRUSTEES

A list of the natural resource trustee emergency contacts can be found on the ARRT [Members and Contact Information](#) webpage.

1000 – INTRODUCTION

Alaska’s offshore areas, rivers, wetlands, and 47,300 miles of tidal coastline provide seasonal feeding, breeding, reproducing, rearing, and staging grounds for large numbers of migratory birds, fish, marine and terrestrial mammals, and their prey. Alaska hosts the majority of some species’ global populations. Billions of pounds of fish and shellfish are harvested commercially in Alaska’s waters each year, supporting tens of thousands of jobs. Sport fishing and hunting activities also provide a large economic benefit to Alaskans. Moreover, Alaska’s fish and wildlife populations include vitally important subsistence resources. The Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska (WPG) provides guidance for minimizing effects of an oil spill on Alaska’s wildlife resources.

During a marine oil spill, wildlife can come into contact with oil on the water surface, along shorelines, marshes, tidelands, in the water column, and on the seafloor. Spills can impact freshwater and terrestrial wildlife in lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and the land surrounding those waters. Species and numbers of wildlife affected by an oil spill will depend on the location, size, and oil characteristics, weather and water conditions, habitats affected, and time of year.

The WPG applies to offshore and coastal marine, inland freshwater, and terrestrial areas of Alaska. The WPG focuses primarily on wildlife species in offshore and coastal marine areas because of the potential for significant effects of oil spills in marine environments, but response strategies may apply equally well in freshwater and terrestrial spill scenarios, including spills from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

The WPG is organized and numbered to match the structure of the four Alaska ACPs: Alaska Inland, Arctic and Western Alaska, Prince William Sound, and Southeast Alaska. The WPG is maintained on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage and incorporated by reference into the four ACPs.

The WPG’s relationship to federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and guidance is summarized in the following sections:

[1610 – Relationship to National Planning Requirements and Guidance](#)

[1620 – Fish and Wildlife Acts Compliance](#)

[1620.1 – Migratory Bird Treaty Act \(MBTA\)](#)

[1620.2 – Marine Mammal Protection Act \(MMPA\)](#)

[1620.3 – Endangered Species Act \(ESA\)](#)

[1620.4 – Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act \(BGEPA\)](#)

[1620.5 – Fur Seal Act](#)

[1620.6 – Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act \(MSFCMA\)](#)

[1620.7 – Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act \(NANPCA\) and National Invasive Species Act \(NISA\)](#)

[1630 – Federal Wildlife Response Guidance](#)

[1710 – Alaska Fish and Wildlife Statutes, Acts, and Policies](#)

[1710.1 – Fish Habitat Permit](#)

[1710.2 – Special Area Permit](#)

[1710.3 – Aquatic Resource Permit](#)

[1710.4 – Wildlife Response Permit \(Carcass Collection, Hazing/Deterrence, and Capture and Rehabilitation\)](#)

1600 – NATIONAL POLICY AND DOCTRINE

1610 – Relationship to National Planning Requirements and Guidance

Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90) section 4201 (33 United States Code (USC) § 1321(c)), the NCP set forth requirements for ACPs to include a Fish and Wildlife and Sensitive Environments Plan consistent with the NCP “to provide for coordinated, immediate and effective protection, rescue, and rehabilitation of, and minimization of risk of injury to, fish and wildlife resources and habitat” (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 300.210(c)(4)(i)). The WPG fulfills the NCP requirements regarding wildlife response planning. Additionally, the WPG was developed to satisfy the USCG Area Contingency Planning Policy as stipulated in the *U.S. Coast Guard Marine Environmental Response and Preparedness Manual*, chapter 4, Area Contingency Plan Policy, section C, part 2a(6) (CIM 16000 14A; September 2018 version; available on the USCG [CG-612 Directives and Publications Division](#) webpage).

For additional information on federal, state, Tribal, and local authorities, refer to the *Alaska RCP*, available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage. For food-related statutes, regulations, and authorities, see *Ensuring Food Safety Following an Oil Spill in Alaska: Regulatory Authorities and Responsibilities*, available on the Oil Spill Recovery Institute [Special Reports](#) webpage.

1620 – Fish and Wildlife Acts Compliance

Under federal statutes, the DOI USFWS has responsibility for managing and protecting migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA); eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA); ESA-listed birds; walruses, polar bears, and sea otters under the MMPA (and polar bears and some populations of sea otters under the ESA); and ESA-listed freshwater fishes (although none are listed in Alaska at this time). The DOC NMFS has responsibility for managing and protecting marine mammals (except walruses, sea otters, and polar bears) under the MMPA and ESA, and marine fishes and invertebrates under the ESA and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). The ADF&G has joint statutory responsibilities with NMFS and USFWS to manage and protect certain species of wildlife, including with the USFWS for wildlife on all federal lands (National Park System units, National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs), National Forest System lands, military reservations, and other federally managed public lands) in Alaska.

1620.1 – Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

The USFWS has responsibility for the administration of the MBTA, which makes it illegal to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird or the parts (including feathers), nests, or eggs of such birds except under the terms of a valid federal permit or under subsistence regulations (see 16 USC § 703 *et seq*). All birds in Alaska are protected under the MBTA, with the exception of upland game birds managed by the State of Alaska, such as grouse and ptarmigan, and non-native species such as European starling.

For more information on the MBTA, including the species to which it applies, please refer to the USFWS [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) webpage.

1620.2 – Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)

All marine mammals are protected under the MMPA. The MMPA, with certain exceptions, prohibits the "take"² of marine mammals in U.S. waters. The NMFS and USFWS are responsible for administration of the MMPA for the marine mammals under their respective jurisdictions.

The primary objectives of the MMPA are to:

- Prevent marine mammal species and stocks from diminishing to the point that they are no longer a significant functioning part of their ecosystems; and
- Restore diminished species and stocks to their optimum sustainable populations (see 16 USC § 3161 *et seq.*).

For more information on the MMPA, please refer to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries [Laws and Policies](#) webpage and the USFWS [Marine Mammal Protection Act](#) webpage.

1620.3 – Endangered Species Act (ESA)

The ESA of 1973, as amended, 16 USC § 1531 *et seq.*, was established to foster the conservation of threatened and endangered plants and animals and their habitats. The NMFS is responsible for administration of the ESA as it applies to cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises), pinnipeds (seals and sea lions, excluding walruses), and other marine species. The USFWS is responsible for the administration of the ESA as it applies to sea otters, polar bears, and birds. The law requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS and USFWS to ensure that actions they authorize, fund, or conduct are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of ESA-listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitats.

For more information on the ESA, please refer to the NOAA Fisheries [Laws and Policies](#) webpage and the USFWS [Endangered Species Act](#) webpage.

1620.4 – Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)

The BGEPA was established to protect bald and golden eagles throughout the U.S (see 16 USC § 668 *et seq.*). The USFWS has responsibility for the administration of the BGEPA.

For more information on the BGEPA, please refer to the USFWS [Bald & Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) webpage.

1620.5 – Fur Seal Act

The Fur Seal Act prohibits the taking of North Pacific fur seals, except by Alaska Natives for subsistence purposes or by permit from NOAA Fisheries (see 16 USC § 1151 *et seq.*).

For more information on the Fur Seal Act, please refer to the NOAA Fisheries [Laws and Policies](#) webpage.

² Take, as defined under the MMPA, means "to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal," 16 USC § 1362(13).

1620.6 – Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA)

The MSFCMA is the primary law governing marine fisheries management in U.S. federal waters. The MSFCMA was established to ensure the long-term biological and economic sustainability of our nation's marine fisheries (see 16 USC § 1801 *et seq.*). NMFS has responsibility for the administration of the MSFCMA.

For more information on the MSFCMA, please refer to the NOAA Fisheries [Laws and Policies](#) webpage.

1620.7 – Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act (NANPCA) and National Invasive Species Act (NISA)

NANPCA and NISA (16 USC § 4701 *et seq.*) were primarily enacted to prevent and control infestations of the coastal inland waters of the U.S. by nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species.

For more information on NANPCA, please refer to the USFWS [NANPCA](#) webpage. For more information on NISA, please refer to the USFWS [NISA](#) webpage.

For more information on invasive species in general, please refer to the USFWS [Aquatic Invasive Species](#), U.S. Department of Agriculture [National Invasive Species Information Center](#), [Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force](#), and the ADF&G [Invasive Species](#) webpages.

1630 – Federal Wildlife Response Guidance

The WPG incorporates guidance from the following wildlife response documents:

Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines

National Marine Fisheries Service. 2017. NMFS Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines. U.S. DOC., NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/AKR-16. 81 p. doi:10.7289/V5/TM-F/AKR-16. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response. USFWS. 86 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines

National Marine Fisheries Service. 2019. NMFS Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines. U.S. DOC., NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-F/AKR-22. 79 p. + appendices. Doi:10.25923/g85z ge25. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters

Williams, Terrie M. and Randall W. Davis (eds). 1995. *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters: A guide for oil spills involving fur bearing animals*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. 279 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska.

Miller, S. (ed.) 2015. *Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska. 65 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines (National Guidelines)

Ziccardi, M.H., S.M. Wilkin, T.K. Rowles, and S. Johnson. 2015. *Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines*. U.S. DOC, NOAA. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-OPR-52, 138 p. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

1700 – ALASKA STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

1710 – Alaska Acts, Laws, Policies, and Statutes for Fish and Wildlife

Under State of Alaska statutes, ADF&G is responsible for managing and protecting fish and wildlife resources in Alaska. The ADF&G also has permitting responsibility for land and water use activities that may affect habitat in fish-bearing streams and in the state’s legislatively designated special areas. The ADF&G has joint statutory responsibilities with NMFS and USFWS to manage and protect certain species of wildlife, including with USFWS for wildlife on federal lands.

1710.1 – Fish Habitat Permit

The **Anadromous Fish Act (Alaska Statute (AS) 16.05.871-.901)** requires prior notification and authorization from ADF&G before altering or affecting “the natural flow or bed” of a specified anadromous water body.³ All activities within or across a specified anadromous water body require approval from the Habitat Section, including road crossings; gravel removal; mining; water withdrawals; the use of vehicles or equipment in the waterway; stream realignment or diversion; bank stabilization; and the placement, excavation, deposition, or removal of any material. Permitting requirements apply to individuals, commercial entities, government agencies, and other organizations.

The **Fishway Act or Fish Passage Act (AS 16.05.841)** requires authorization from the ADF&G Habitat Section for activities within or across a stream used by fish if it is determined that such uses or activities could represent an impediment to the efficient passage of resident or anadromous fish.

For more information on Fish Habitat Permits, please refer to the ADF&G [Fish Habitat Permits](#) webpage.

1710.2 – Special Area Permit

Protection of Fish and Game; Refuges, Sanctuaries, Range Areas, and Habitat Areas (AS 16.20), and 5 Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 95: "Special Areas" refer to ADF&G State Game Refuges, State Game Sanctuaries, State Ranges, and State Critical Habitat Areas. These areas are designated by the Alaska Legislature when it passes a statute describing the legal boundaries of the area, the purpose of the area, and any other specific management considerations for that particular area. Each of the different types of special areas has a different general purpose, though all provide habitat protection. The ADF&G Habitat

³ An anadromous water body is one that supports fish or fish species that spend portions of their life cycle in both fresh and salt waters, entering fresh water from the sea to spawn. Species include the anadromous forms of pacific trout and salmon of the genus *Oncorhynchus* (rainbow and cutthroat trout and chinook, coho, sockeye, chum and pink salmon), Arctic char, Dolly Varden, sheefish, smelts, lamprey, whitefish, and sturgeon.

Section implements a statewide special areas permitting program to manage land and water use activities within a special area. By regulation, permits are required for many activities within a special area (5 AAC 95.420) unless the commissioner has issued a general permit. Access to sanctuaries requires a “Sanctuary Access” permit from the Division of Wildlife Conservation (5 AAC 92.064-.066). Each of the special areas has individual statutes; many of the areas also have management plans that have been adopted into regulation to guide permitting and public use.

For more information on Special Area Permits, please refer to the ADF&G [Special Area Permits](#) webpage.

1710.3 – Aquatic Resource Permit

An Aquatic Resource Permit is required to collect (intentionally or incidentally) live fish, amphibian, shellfish, or marine aquatic plants not covered by current sport, personal use, aquatic farm, and commercial regulations. A permit is required for the collection of live aquatic plants, or parts thereof, that are still naturally attached to the substrate. A permit may be required in Nonsubsistence Areas (Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna, Kenai, Ketchikan, and Juneau) for collection of aquatic plants that are naturally dislodged from the substrate.

For more information on Aquatic Resource Permits, please refer to the ADF&G [Aquatic Resource Permits](#) webpage.

1710.4 – Wildlife Response Permit (Carcass Collection, Hazing/Deterrence, and Capture and Rehabilitation)

AS 16.05.920 prohibits the take,⁴ possession, and transport of fish, game,⁵ or marine aquatic plants unless authorized by permit. The ADF&G Commissioner delegates Habitat Section biologists the authority to issue permits for the salvage (carcass collection), hazing, and rehabilitation of birds and terrestrial mammals during oil spills. ADF&G Habitat Section biologists also issue permits for the salvage (carcass collection) of fish, shellfish, and invertebrates.

For more information on ADF&G authorities related to fish and wildlife capture and transportation, please refer to the ADF&G [Mammals, Bird & Reptile Permits](#) webpage.

⁴ “Take’ means taking, pursuing, hunting, fishing, trapping, or in any manner disturbing, capturing, or killing or attempting to take, pursue, hunt, fish, trap, or in any manner capture or kill fish or game.” AS 16.05.940(34).

⁵ “‘Game’ means any species of bird, reptile, and mammal, including a feral domestic animal, found or introduced in the state, except domestic birds and mammals; and game may be classified by regulation as big game, small game, furbearers or other categories considered essential for carrying out the intention and purposes of AS 16.05 – 16.40.” AS 16.05.940(19).

2000 – COMMAND

During a spill the Unified Command may be involved with additional aspects of the response related to wildlife, such as addressing subsistence concerns or conducting a NRDAR. The following sections provide information about the intersection of these responsibilities:

[2400 – Liaison Officer](#)

[2470 – Subsistence Resources](#)

[2500 – Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration \(NRDAR\)](#)

[2510 – Coordinating Carcass Collections](#)

2400 – LIAISON OFFICER

During a spill response, the ICS position of Liaison Officer is responsible for communicating and coordinating with appropriate stakeholders and for bringing stakeholder concerns to the Unified Command. Subsistence user concerns, including marking of rehabilitated and released oiled wildlife, can be coordinated through the Liaison Officer.

2470 – Subsistence Resources

“Subsistence is sustenance for the life.”⁶

The importance of subsistence in Alaska cannot be overstated. Subsistence is vital to the many cultures, economies, food security, and health of many Alaskans. In a variety of ways, Alaska Native cultures are defined by the specific foods, practices, and reciprocal dependence on their traditional lands and waters that subsistence connections create. These activities connect and express essential elements of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical health sustained by subsistence foods. Due to the economic, cultural, and social value of subsistence foods, concerns about potential impacts to those foods should be addressed promptly during a spill response.

Concerns relating to quality and quantity of subsistence foods that may be impacted by oil spills are characterized by the question, “Is my food safe to eat?” This frequently asked question is difficult to answer immediately and can prompt a larger discussion about benefits and risks. Initial information about the extent and trajectory of a spill may make it challenging to fully answer the question; however, the best available information should be shared with subsistence users, so they are aware of possible impacts.

The specific subsistence foods at risk, impacted, or of concern to subsistence users will determine the appropriate response methods needed to provide food safety information. When available, this information should be included in the assessment of RAR (ICS-232 CG form). Priorities of human safety, property, and spill containment may initially limit the additional data that can be collected to inform subsistence food safety concerns.

The Unified Command may collect and disseminate information about subsistence food safety as it relates to a spill. The ADEC regulates food safety for commercial catches, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services may also provide information to the public about subsistence food safety

⁶ From the Alaska Native Knowledge Network [VALUES of the Unangan/Unangas](#) webpage.

after an oil spill. Sometimes additional testing may be appropriate to address public concerns and, due to the complex permitting systems, Alaska Native Co-Management Organizations may be able to expedite food safety testing, or shape and prioritize data collection. Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) sampling, if conducted, may provide additional data.

Alaskan subsistence users are also concerned about potential impacts to the quality and quantity of subsistence foods after the use of dispersants during a spill response. Communication to the public, and subsistence users in particular, about dispersant use during a spill is recommended. Topics of communication could include the location of dispersant use and anticipated trajectory of oil and dispersant, as well as information regarding the toxicological properties of the dispersant used and its potential health impacts. (Note that dispersants and their use during an oil spill will be addressed through the process outlined in the *Alaska RCP*, available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage.)

The rescue, rehabilitation, and release of oiled wildlife is an important response activity. All released birds will be banded with typical U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) leg bands. Prior to release into the wild, birds of subsistence species will also receive bands that indicate the bird has been oiled, rehabilitated, and released. Marine mammal marking protocols vary by species, incident, and responsible wildlife agency; agencies will communicate with subsistence users about appropriate marking of oiled, rehabilitated, and released marine mammals. Details on wildlife banding and other information important to subsistence users will be described in the incident-specific release plan (Section IX of the Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan (WRP)), developed in cooperation with the wildlife agencies, RP/PRP, rehabilitators, and the Liaison Officer.

During a spill response, it is critically important that the Unified Command explore various approaches to address the communication needs of local communities, geographical considerations, and concerns about oil impacts to subsistence foods. The WPG focuses primarily on oil impacts to wildlife, which in turn affect the availability of animals to serve as a subsistence resource. Human consumption concerns, however, are intended to be addressed in separate ARRT guidance on food safety and security. Additional guidance can be found in *Ensuring Food Safety Following an Oil Spill in Alaska: Regulatory Authorities and Responsibilities*, available on the Oil Spill Recovery Institute [Special Reports](#) webpage.

2500 – NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION (NRDAR)

When oil spills or hazardous substance releases occur, state and federal agencies typically conduct or participate in emergency response activities to minimize impacts. The primary goals of emergency spill are to contain, control, and collect oil or hazardous substances to protect human health and the environment. Sometimes the extent of environmental damage requires further restoration. When this occurs, natural resource trustees from state and federal agencies may opt to conduct a NRDAR to restore injured resources. Authorities for natural resource trustees to conduct assessment and restoration activities are described in the NCP (40 CFR part 300); Clean Water Act (33 USC 1251-1376); Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 USC 9601 *et seq.*); and OPA 90 (33 USC 2701 *et seq.*). The State of Alaska has authority to pursue any person who injures or degrades the environment of the state under AS 46.03.780 Liability for Restoration. [Table 2-1](#) shows typical NRDAR Trustee agencies in Alaska.

Table 2-1: Typical NRDAR Trustee Agencies in Alaska.

NRDAR Trustees	
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	National Park Service
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation	Bureau of Land Management
Alaska Department of Fish & Game	Bureau of Indian Affairs
Alaska Department of Law	U.S. Forest Service

Note: Participation by a specific agency in NRDAR depends on whether the spill affects (or is likely to affect) natural resources under its jurisdiction. For spills under OPA 90, incident-specific NRDAR Trustees can include other state and federal agencies that own, manage, or control natural resources; federally recognized tribes that have governmental authority over lands; and foreign governments, depending on the spill location and resources affected.

Not all spills require a NRDAR, and there are no quantitative thresholds for initiating NRDAR (e.g., no minimum amount of spilled product, no requirement for USCG involvement, and no prerequisite for shoreline impacts). The NRDAR Trustee Representatives decide if and when to initiate NRDAR based on the nature of the spill and its actual or potential impacts to natural resources under their jurisdictions.

If a Unified Command is established for a spill with NRDAR concerns, NRDAR Trustee agencies may collectively appoint a NRDAR Liaison (see the USCG [Incident Management Handbook](#)) to represent the NRDAR team in the Unified Command and serve as a conduit for information to/from the Unified Command. However, NRDAR activities are conducted under separate authority and funding from response activities, and the OSCs do not direct the NRDAR. The NRDAR Trustees and Unified Command personnel are expected to coordinate and share resources and information to maximize efficiencies and reduce duplication. Because NRDAR activities may overlap with the response activities, NRDAR activities must be coordinated with response actions to ensure data collection and analysis do not interfere with response actions. The NRDAR field activities, particularly vessel or aircraft use, must be coordinated with the response agencies consistent with the NCP to ensure crew safety as well as site security. There may also be an obligation for NRDAR Trustees to consult under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act if ground-disturbing NRDAR activities are proposed. Costs associated with NRDAR are tracked and addressed separately from response costs. NRDAR studies and restoration efforts often continue beyond the conclusion of emergency response activities.

NRDAR data and sampling needs may include (note that this is not a comprehensive list):

- Locations and trajectories of spilled oil or hazardous substances.
- Samples of oil or hazardous substances from the spill source.
- Samples of oil or hazardous substances in environmental media.
- Blood, tissue, or other samples from impacted resources.
- Locations and numbers of impacted fish and wildlife.
- Locations of natural resources at risk of being impacted or disturbed by response activities.
- Type, magnitude, and duration of impacts to natural resources.

The Unified Command may collect some of these data for its own purposes, and the NRDAR team would request that the Unified Command share these data, thereby reducing costs and duplication of efforts. If sufficient data are not collected to support NRDAR goals, the NRDAR team may deploy field staff to collect data independently from response activities. Typical NRDAR field activities may include systematic carcass searches and collections, environmental media sampling (pre- and post-impact),

habitat characterization, biota abundance assessments, human use assessments, and aerial wildlife surveys.

Information sharing between response and NRDAR teams helps to minimize injuries to natural resources and human use of those resources. Further, coordination of response and NRDAR efforts maximizes the likelihood of successful resource protection, mitigates resource injuries, and maximizes restoration of natural resources. Information sharing avoids duplication of efforts and expenses; maximizes efficient use of staffing, equipment, and data; and avoids conflicts, misunderstandings, and interference in ongoing operations.

Helpful links:

- *Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Primer for Federal, State and Tribal trustees, Federal On-Scene Coordinators, and Others Involved In Preparedness and Emergency Response Activities under the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, CERCLA, OPA and Other Authorities*, available on the DOI [Restoration Program](#) webpage.
- The NMFS *Guidelines for Assessing Exposure and Impacts of Oil Spills on Marine Mammals*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).
- NOAA Office of Response and Restoration [Natural Resource Damage Assessment](#) webpage.

2510 – Coordinating Carcass Collections

Both the Unified Command and NRDAR Trustees have two goals in removing incident-related carcasses from the environment—minimizing secondary contamination of scavengers and providing evidence of environmental harm. The search methods necessary for minimizing secondary contamination via scavenging of oiled carcasses is different from accumulating evidence of environmental harm (e.g., incidental discovery vs. stratified random systematic sampling, respectively), though both methods follow chain-of-custody procedures. The two goals also require different levels of documentation when a carcass is removed from the environment, and the ultimate disposition of the collected carcass may also be different (although, during an incident, carcasses are stored at the morgue). Therefore, it is critical that the Unified Command and NRDAR Trustees coordinate any carcass collection plans as early in the incident as possible.

Early and full coordination between the Unified Command and NRDAR team will:

- Reduce duplication in carcass search activities.
- Enable efficient allocation of response and NRDAR field teams.
- Allow identification of opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources in the field, ultimately reducing costs for all involved.
- Allow for development of data collection and sharing agreements .
- Consolidate carcass storage and disposition.

It is the OSC's responsibility to facilitate coordination between the Unified Command staff and NRDAR team. The NRDAR Liaison helps facilitate this process. The NRDAR team will identify the appropriate staff from the affected NRDAR trustee agencies to work with Unified Command staff to coordinate incident-specific processes for carcass search and collection.

3000 – OPERATIONS

3600 – WILDLIFE

The following sections provide information on wildlife response considerations, protection measures, and activities relevant to the Operations Section:

- [3610 – Wildlife Response Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#)
- [3620 – General Wildlife Protection Considerations](#)
- [3630 – Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response](#)
- [3640 – Wildlife Branch \(WB\)](#)
 - [3640.1 – Wildlife Reconnaissance \(Recon\)](#)
 - [3640.1.1 – Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Recon](#)
 - [3640.2 – Wildlife Response Strategies](#)
 - [3640.2.1 – Primary Response Strategies](#)
 - [3640.2.2 – Secondary Response Strategies](#)
 - [3640.2.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies](#)
- [3650 – Request for Wildlife Response Activities](#)
 - [3650.1 – Startup Wildlife Response Plan \(WRP\)](#)
 - [3650.2 – Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan \(WRP\)](#)
 - [3650.3 – Inadvertent Impacts of Wildlife Response Activities](#)

Additional information on these topics as they relate to the EU within the Planning Section can be found in [Section 4600](#).

3610 – Wildlife Response Best Management Practices (BMPs)

The BMPs in this section were developed as measures to reduce impacts to wildlife and their habitats during an oil spill response and for responder safety. These should be considered general guidance during spill responses. Not all BMPs will be applicable to every response, which is why incident-specific guidance is developed through the ESA section 7 consultation process and the Startup and Comprehensive WRPs. Best available information and professional judgment should be used when determining how to implement these BMPs during each response. These BMPs are also available in [Section 9740.3.1](#) to facilitate distribution to responders in the field. BMPs include:

All Response Activities

1. Watch for and avoid collisions with wildlife; report all distressed or dead birds, marine mammals, fish, and other wildlife to Wildlife Branch or supervisor.
2. Ensure work areas are well-lit to minimize inadvertent impacts to wildlife or their habitat.
3. If bears are observed during response activities, contact supervisor, Safety Officer, or Environmental Unit.
4. Responders should follow procedures described in Section 3640.2 to report all oiled and unoiled carcasses to enable an assessment to determine if the animal may have died from spill-related

causes (e.g., inhalation of product fumes or *in situ* burning, vessel/vehicle strike, or entanglement from gear in the water). These mortalities should be documented and, when possible, carcasses collected or photo documented according to procedures outlined in Section 3640.2.1.1.

5. Work with Operations and Planning Sections to mitigate impacts to subsistence activities from response activities.
6. Avoid transporting or introducing invasive species (e.g., rats).

Land-Based Activities

7. Avoid disturbing vegetation and shorelines with foot traffic, boats, and equipment. Consult wildlife agency representatives in the Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit if disturbance cannot be avoided.
8. Use existing access and egress areas and roadways.
9. Use low-pressure tire vehicles (e.g., all-terrain vehicles or side-by-side) or consult with wildlife agency representatives in the Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit to minimize impact.
10. Minimize removal of clean (unoiled) sediments.
11. Staging areas and waste collection areas should be examined, and land management agencies (e.g., Alaska Department of Natural Resources) consulted, for the presence of historical properties, cultural resources, and biological resources prior to establishment. Support infrastructure should be located away from sensitive habitats, including shorelines, scrub, riparian habitat, and other vegetated areas.
12. All heavy equipment use should be as low on the beach as possible and avoid the high tide or wrack line while conducting cleanup activities. Keep heavy equipment away from the wrack line unless the wrack line is oiled.
13. Activities that require removal of riparian, forested, scrub, shrub, or other vegetated habitat should be minimized.
14. Waste management should be conducted in a manner that minimizes attracting wildlife (e.g., removing trash daily from work sites). If possible, cut all materials that form closed loops (e.g., plastic packing bands, rubber bands, and all other loops) prior to proper disposal in a closed and secured trash bin.
15. Stakes or flagging that preceded the spill and response activities should not be removed or destroyed.

Aircraft Activities

16. Adhere to incident-specific flight restrictions over sensitive habitats and avoid hovering or landing aircrafts in these areas.
17. Adhere to recommended flight altitude restrictions over wildlife management areas and other conservation units.

On-water Activities

18. If marine mammals or birds become trapped or entangled in boom, anchor lines, or other response equipment, immediately notify wildlife agency representatives for instructions.
19. Install and monitor underwater equipment or booms to prevent entrapment of fish and wildlife.
20. Do not block major egress points in channels, rivers, passes, and bays.
21. Use a properly screened water intake to avoid impacts to fish, especially juvenile or small resident fish. The intake should be centered with a screened enclosure to reduce the potential for fish to be entrained, impinged, or injured. Contact ADF&G for recommendations on screen mesh sizes and minimum water velocity depending on the location and timing of water withdrawal activities.

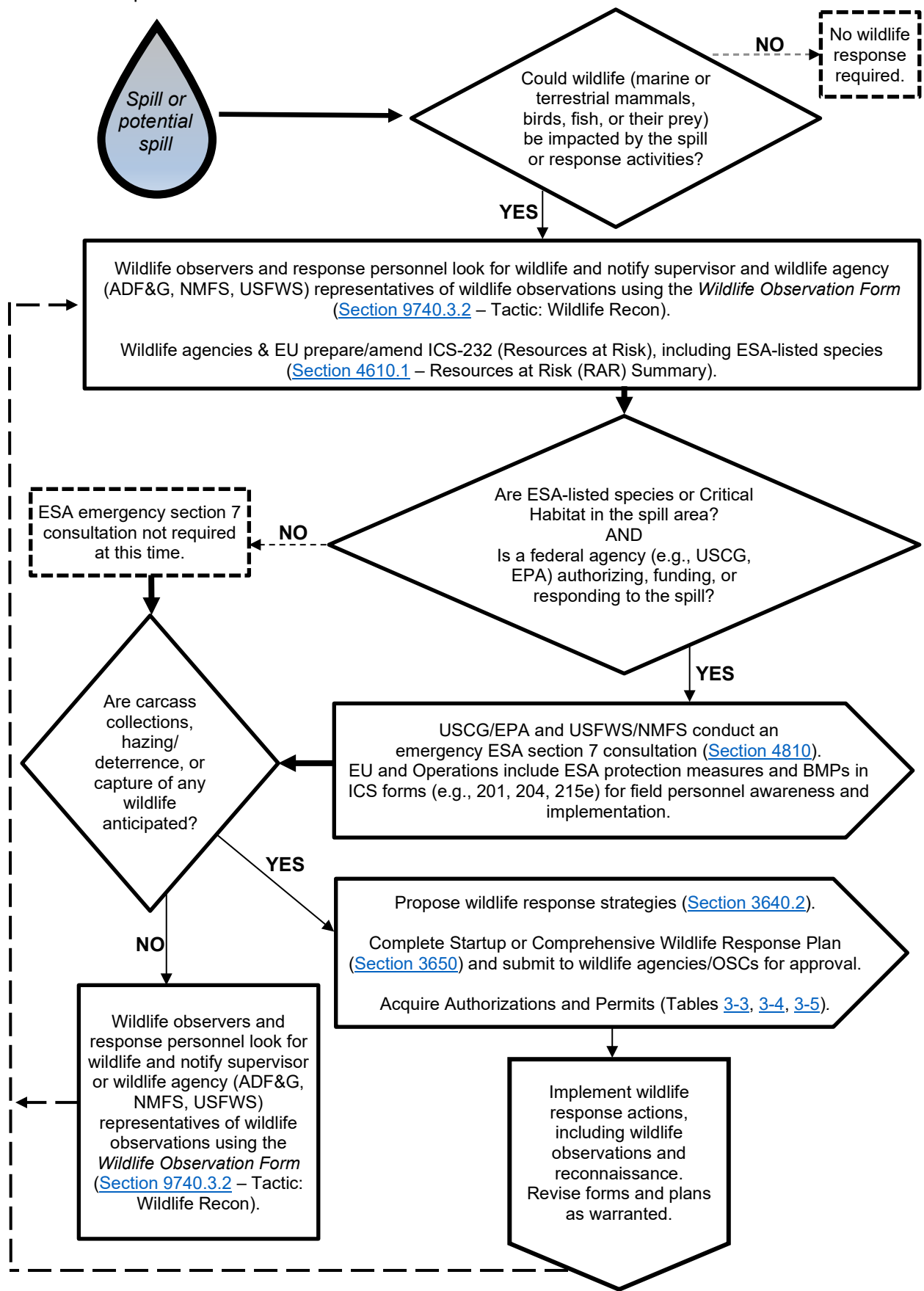
3620 – General Wildlife Protection Considerations

Response activities can have direct and indirect impacts to wildlife, including injury and death. Wildlife agency representatives can provide recommendations to the Federal and State OSCs to minimize adverse impacts to wildlife from response activities. General wildlife protection considerations are listed below; additional information regarding each is available in [Section 4610.2](#):

- Prevention of Introduction of Rats to “Rat-Free” Islands
- Prevention of Unnecessary or Illegal Disturbance to Sensitive Species and Habitats
- Prevention of Potential Injury and/or Disturbance to Bears
- Prevention of the Collection of Wildlife Parts for Personal Use
- Prevention of Wildlife Exposure to Shoreline Treatment Chemicals

Use [Figure 3-1](#): Wildlife Response Flowchart (on following page), for major wildlife response decisions, agency notifications, and initial forms.

Figure 3-1: Wildlife Response Flow Chart.



3630 – Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response

In addition to creating a potential spill, the sinking or grounding of vessels present unique challenges for wildlife protection. Response activities should prevent rat introduction to Alaska’s “rat-free” islands; avoid marine animal entanglement; properly dispose of catch that may be contaminated by oil or spoilage; prevent the spread of invasive species other than rats; and avoid impacts to wildlife or sensitive habitats during vessel removal, salvage, or scuttling. The following sections provide additional information on these topics:

[3630.1 – Preventing Rat Introduction to Alaska’s Rat-Free Islands](#)

[3630.2 – Entanglement and Fishing Gear](#)

[3630.3 – Disposal of On-Board Catch](#)

[3630.4 – Preventing Spread of Invasive Species Other than Rats](#)

[3630.5 – Preventing Impacts to Wildlife and Habitats during Vessel Removal, Salvage, or Scuttling](#)

Response personnel can use the *Checklist: Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response* in [Section 9740.3.5](#) as an aid to protect wildlife during vessel groundings and sinkings.

3630.1 – Preventing Rat Introduction to Alaska’s Rat-Free Islands

State of Alaska law (5 AAC 92.141) prohibits the transport, harboring, or release of specific live rodents, including the Norway rat, the roof rat, and the house mouse. The Norway rat is typically of greatest concern because the species has a wide distribution and rats are excellent swimmers.

Many cities, towns, and some islands in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge ([Table 3-1](#)) have known populations of breeding rats. Invasive rats are a significant concern for rat-free islands in the Alaska Maritime NWR and in the Pribilof Islands because of the devastation introduced rats can have on island ecosystems, including direct predation of nesting seabirds and endemic birds, as well as the introduction of disease to marine and terrestrial mammals. Nesting seabirds are especially vulnerable to impacts from rats because seabirds nest primarily on the ground or in burrows, and adult foraging behavior leaves eggs and young unattended for several hours to days. Rats are extremely difficult and expensive to eradicate, and eradication may not be possible after rats are established on an island or at a remote location.

Table 3-1: Islands in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Known to Have Rats. All other islands in the Alaska Maritime NWR should be considered to be rat free.

Fox Islands	Andreanof Islands	“Rat” Islands	Near Islands
Unalaska	Adak	Kiska	Attu
Amaknak	Great Sitkin	Amchitka	Shemya
Akutan	Kagalaska		
Sedanka	Atka		

All vessels operating in Alaska should follow the *Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels* in [Section 9740.3.6](#). Even with strict adherence to these guidelines, rats can access shorelines from grounded vessels or vessels sinking close to shore, and rats can drift to shore on vessel debris. Stricken vessels should be examined for rats if it is possible and safe to do so. Response vessels or aircraft could also inadvertently transport rats to rat-free areas; vessels and aircraft should be examined for rats before

deployment. In addition to the *Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels* ([Section 9740.3.6](#)), the USFWS and ADF&G can provide guidance and assistance in finding resources to examine boats and planes for rats.

If it is not possible to conduct onboard rat inspection and prevention activities for either a stricken vessel or a response vessel, USFWS and ADF&G representatives will develop an incident-specific rat prevention plan for approval by the OSCs. The plan should include, but not be limited to, the deployment of rat trap and poison bait stations in appropriate locations on the vessel and the island, names of individuals authorized to deploy and monitor the stations, and a station monitoring plan.

There are rigorous rat prevention programs in place for the Pribilof Islands. Refer to the PI WPG, available on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage, for specific details about rat response capabilities in the Pribilof Islands.

Additional information on rats, including ways to prevent their introduction, can be found on the following webpages:

- ADF&G [Invasive Species — Norway Rat \(*Rattus norvegicus*\)](#)
- StopRats.org [Rats on Boats](#)

3630.2 – Entanglement and Fishing Gear

A grounded or sunken fishing vessel with nets deployed in the water, or any vessel with lines, can entangle and harm wildlife, especially marine mammals, diving birds, fish, and shellfish. Efforts should be made to remove nets from the water as soon as possible. Not only will unattended nets left in the water (“ghost nets”) continue to entangle fish in perpetuity, but as fish or shellfish become entangled, they will become attractants to other wildlife. Air-breathing wildlife, such as marine mammals and birds, can subsequently become entangled in nets. Entanglement can cause lacerations, exhaustion, starvation, and drowning of wildlife.

Although fixed gear, such as longlines and pots, is less likely to entangle wildlife than nets, fixed gear still poses an entanglement risk to wildlife. This gear should be retrieved whenever possible.

Observations of entangled wildlife during a spill response should be immediately reported to the following numbers:

Whales, seals, sea lions, porpoises, and dolphins:	NMFS Marine Mammal Stranding Network Hotline (877) 925-7773 or (877) 9-AKR-PRD
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Walrus, sea otters, polar bears, or birds:	USFWS Alaska Region Spill Response Team (907) 242-6893 or fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov
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If entangled whales, seals, sea lions, porpoises, or dolphins are observed in a situation other than during a spill response, please report it to the NMFS Marine Mammal Stranding Network Hotline, (877) 925-7773. If entangled walrus, sea otters, or polar bears are observed in a situation other than during a spill response, please report the observation to USFWS Marine Mammals Management, (800) 362-5148. If entangled birds are observed in a situation other than during a spill response, please report this to the USFWS Sick or Dead Bird Hotline, (866) 527-3358.

3630.3 – Disposal of On-Board Catch

Commercial fishing vessel on-board catch can become unsafe for human consumption if, for example, catch is contaminated (e.g., from a leak in a hydraulic line into a fish hold) or spoiled (e.g., from a power loss that affects refrigeration).

Contaminated or potentially contaminated catch must be reported to, and may be subject to inspection by, the ADEC Food Safety and Sanitation Program, which has broad statutory authority (AS 17.20) over food offered to the public or sold. Additional regulations support a Zero Tolerance Policy for any contamination of food processed in Alaska. For more information, see *Ensuring Food Safety Following an Oil Spill in Alaska: Regulatory Authorities and Responsibilities*, available on the Oil Spill Recovery Institute [Special Reports](#) webpage. Food may also require inspection before the ADEC Wastewater Program will authorize disposal in state waters.

Disposal of oil-contaminated catch in “ocean waters”^{7, 8} is not allowed under the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA; 33 USC § 1401 *et seq.*) and its accompanying EPA regulations (40 CFR Parts 220-229), which prohibit ocean disposal of oil of any kind or in any form except in trace amounts. Disposal of chemically contaminated food items may also violate the Clean Water Act and international treaties, such as the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships. The Unified Command will ensure the proper handling and disposal of contaminated catch at permitted landfills, at disposal facilities outside of Alaska, or other locations approved by ADEC.

Uncontaminated catch may be disposed of in the water, depending on the circumstances (e.g., because it is spoiled or causing vessel instability). [Table 3-2](#) shows agency contact information for disposal in MPRSA-defined ocean waters, state waters,⁹ and where the state and federal zones overlap.¹⁰ Wildlife agencies can provide valuable information on where and how catch should be disposed of at sea to minimize unintentional harm to wildlife and habitat. For example, disposal in Steller sea lion foraging areas or during commercial fishing operations or should be avoided.

Table 3-2: Agency contact information for disposal of uncontaminated catch in ocean and state waters.

Proposed Area for Disposal of Uncontaminated Catch	Contact Agency	Telephone Number
Ocean waters ^{1, 4}	EPA Alaska Operations Office	(907) 271-5083
State waters ^{2, 4}	ADEC Environmental Health Division	(907) 269-7681
Unknown OR in areas where ocean and state waters overlap ³	Contact both EPA and ADEC	See above

⁷ “Ocean waters” means those waters of the open seas lying seaward of the “baseline” from which the territorial sea is measured, as provided for in the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (15 UST 1606; TIAS 5639). See also footnote 7.

⁸ Generally, the baseline is the mean lower low water line (ordinary low water mark) along the coast, or “closing lines” that are depicted on maps across river mouths and openings of bays. The NOAA maintains data for maritime boundaries, including closing lines and state and federal waters, and can be viewed on the [NOAA Baseline](#) ArcGIS Online Map Viewer.

⁹ State waters are generally defined as being 0–3 nautical miles seaward of baseline and all waters inside of baseline. See also footnote 7.

¹⁰ Ocean and state waters may overlap 0-3 nautical miles seaward of the baseline. See also footnote 7.

¹ “Ocean waters” means those waters of the open seas lying seaward of the “baseline” from which the territorial sea is measured, as provided for in the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (15 UST 1606; TIAS 5639). See also footnote 4.

² State waters are generally defined as being 0–3 nautical miles seaward of baseline and all waters inside of baseline. See also footnote 4.

³ Ocean and state waters may overlap 0-3 nautical miles seaward of the baseline. See also footnote 4.

⁴ Generally, the baseline is the mean lower low water line (ordinary low water mark) along the coast, or “closing lines” that are depicted on maps across river mouths and openings of bays. The NOAA maintains data for maritime boundaries, including closing lines and state and federal waters, and can be viewed on the [NOAA Baseline](#) ArcGIS Online Map Viewer.

3630.4 – Preventing Spread of Invasive Species Other than Rats

Invasive species can harm ecosystems in a variety of ways. They can 1) displace, outcompete, and prey on native species, 2) foul infrastructure, and 3) cause diseases in humans. Invasive species can be transported and introduced by vessel groundings, hull-fouling, marine debris, and ballast water. Personal gear and equipment used during response efforts can also inadvertently transport invasive “hitchhikers” to the scene.

The introduction and spread of invasive species during spill response can be prevented by following these BMPs:

1. **ASSESS** the distribution of invasive species in the area of concern.
 - a. Before heading out, consult the Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse ([AKEPIC](#)) and the webpage [Alaska Non-Native Aquatic Species Clearinghouse](#) to determine if there are already invasive animal or plant species present.
 - b. Determine BMPs to prevent introduction or mitigate spread of present or potential invasive species.
2. **REPORT** any suspected or confirmed invasive species to your supervisor who should report them to the following natural resource agencies:
 - a. ADF&G via:
 - i. Phone (1-877-INVASIV or 1-877-468-2748).
 - ii. Email (dfg.dsf.InvasiveSpecies@alaska.gov).
 - iii. Online at the ADF&G [Invasive Species Reporter](#) webpage.
 - b. The appropriate land management agency contact (see [Table 3-3](#)).
3. **Reports should include:**
 - a. Location (Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates if possible).
 - b. Photos (to aid identification).

Federal and State OSCs, RP/PRPs, on-the-ground responders, and overflight observers are requested to notify natural resource agencies of potential sources of invasive species (e.g., the release of ballast water collected in a different location). Examples of BMPs recommended by natural resource agencies include, but are not limited to:

- Inspecting marine debris for invasive species.

- Securing impacted vessels that have fouled hulls or rats.
- Maintaining clean, hitchhiker-free response equipment (e.g., tents, boats, go-bags, and personal gear).

Multiple state and federal laws are in place to prevent the introduction of invasive species. More information on specific invasive species in Alaska and BMPs to prevent their spread can be found on the following webpages:

- ADF&G [Invasive Species](#)
- Alaska Exotic Plants Information Clearinghouse ([AKEPIC](#))
- NOAA Fisheries [Aquatic Invasive Species in Alaska](#)
- ADNR [Invasive Plant and Agricultural Pest Management](#)
- USFWS Alaska Region [Invasive Species](#) and [Aquatic Invasive Species](#)

Table 3-3: List of Agency and Land Management Contacts for Reporting Suspected or Confirmed Invasive Species in Alaska.

Agency	Title	Name	Contact Information
Alaska Department of Fish and Game	Invasive Species Program Coordinator	Tammy Davis	tammy.davis@alaska.gov (907) 465-6183
Alaska Department of Natural Resources	Invasive Weeds & Agricultural Pest Coordinator	Dan Coleman	daniel.coleman@alaska.gov (907) 754-8721
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Natural Resource Manager	Keith Kahklen	keith.kahklen@bia.gov (907) 586-7618
Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office	Forestry Program Lead	Ann Erickson	aerickson@blm.gov (907) 271-1985
National Marine Fisheries Service	Wildlife Biologist	Linda Shaw	linda.shaw@noaa.gov (907) 586-7510
National Park Service	Invasive Plants Coordinator	Anna O'Brien	annaobrien@nps.gov (907) 664-3452
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Regional Invasive Species Coordinator	Kim Holzer	kim_holzer@fws.gov
U.S. Forest Service	Invasive Plant Program Coordinator	Joni Johnson	joni.m.johnson@usda.gov (907) 743-9456

3630.5 – Preventing Impacts to Wildlife and Habitats during Vessel Removal, Salvage, or Scuttling

Intentional ocean disposal of vessels by sinking at sea (scuttling) should only be considered when land-based alternatives are not feasible. The MPRSA requires consideration of land-based alternatives prior to authorization of ocean disposal (33 USC § 1412(a)). Federal requirements for the disposal of vessels at sea, including the notification process, required removal of pollutants, disposal site selection, and

recording of the vessel location on nautical charts, are summarized on the EPA [Disposal of Vessels at Sea](#) webpage.

Vessel scuttling and salvaging tactics can affect wildlife and habitat. For example, detonations or metal-on-metal impacts can have a sound source level that exceeds in-water or in-air acoustic thresholds (i.e., noise levels) of concern, particularly for marine mammals. Acoustic and other stressors are of particular concern when they occur near known concentrations of sensitive species (e.g., Steller sea lion, harbor seal, or walrus haulouts). Some locations are not suitable for scuttling due to their sensitivity or vulnerability (e.g., seamount habitats for rare deep-water corals or designated critical habitat of ESA-listed species). Vessel salvage could occur in areas with high concentrations of wildlife or during critical biological periods (e.g., nesting, breeding, pupping). Coordinate with wildlife agency representatives to identify, mitigate, or avoid incidental stressors to wildlife or habitat from vessel scuttling or salvaging.

3640 – Wildlife Branch (WB)¹¹

Information on WB activities and the authorizations and permits that may be obtained for implementation is found in the following sections:

[3640.1 – Wildlife Reconnaissance \(Recon\)](#)

[3640.1.1 – Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Recon](#)

[3640.2 – Wildlife Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.1 – Primary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.1.1 – Carcass Collection and Documentation](#)

[3640.2.1.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Carcass Collection](#)

[3640.2.2 – Secondary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.2.1 – Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence](#)

[3640.2.2.2 – Pre-emptive Capture](#)

[3640.2.2.3 – Authorizations and Permits for Secondary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.3.1 – Tertiary Response Guidelines](#)

[3640.2.3.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Tertiary Response Activities](#)

Coordination of wildlife response activities (including reconnaissance, carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, capture, and care) usually occurs within the WB, which works within the Operations Section. Some additional actions that are related to wildlife or can help inform wildlife response efforts occur within the EU of the Planning Section ([Section 4600](#))¹² Under the direction of the Wildlife Branch Director (WBD), the principal objectives of the WB are to:

- Conduct all operations in a safe manner for people and animals.
- Respond to oiled or otherwise injured wildlife.
- Minimize injuries to wildlife and habitats from the contamination.

¹¹ Adapted from the NMFS *Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

¹² For example, identification of RAR; assessment of National Historic Preservation Act section 106 properties that may be affected by wildlife response activities; ESA section 7 consultation; MMPA considerations; geographic information system (GIS) and mapping; providing trained wildlife observers on response vessels; and conducting shoreline assessment.

- Minimize injuries to wildlife and habitats from the cleanup effort.
- Collect all data, samples, and wildlife in a legally defensible manner.
- Document for the Unified Command (and potentially others) the immediate impacts to wildlife from the oil spill and cleanup.
- Report to the Unified Command (via the Operations Section Chief), in a timely and complete manner, all pertinent data and information necessary to ensure clarity of wildlife operations.
- Support the efforts of the Joint Information Center (JIC) in disseminating information (much of which may be real-time) to the media, public, and other interested parties.
- Provide the best achievable care to impacted wildlife.

To ensure these objectives are achieved with maximum efficiency, the WBD (in coordination with the EU) coordinates the activities of the federal, state, Tribal, and local agencies along with commercial and non-profit organizations involved in wildlife response who fall under the authority of the Unified Command during spill response. Early development and implementation of a WRP ensures timely mobilization of dedicated staff, equipment, and facilities. The wildlife response effort should be flexible and scalable to the size of the oil spill; only those positions necessary and appropriate for a specific incident are filled. Wildlife contractors may be deployed, depending on the region and risk.

Once the Unified Command activates the WB, several components of wildlife response can be initiated, including reconnaissance to determine species and areas at greatest risk; feasibility of wildlife hazing/deterrence; search and collection for live and dead animals; treatment and rehabilitation of oil-exposed wildlife; and release and monitoring of rehabilitated wildlife.

The process for obtaining permits and authorizations is provided in [Section 3650 – Request for Wildlife Response Activities](#).

3640.1 – Wildlife Reconnaissance (Recon)

Wildlife Recon is initiated before any other wildlife protection strategies ([Section 3640.2](#)) and is continued in concert with those strategies. The “grab-and-go” *Tactic: Wildlife Reconnaissance (Recon)* is available in [Section 9740.3.2](#). It is the WBD’s and RP/PRP’s responsibility to understand and implement the necessary coordination with wildlife agencies for proper application of the tactic. If no WB is established, the Unified Command must coordinate with the EU to ensure sufficient wildlife recon occurs. A permitting summary is provided in [Section 3640.1.1](#).

Wildlife observations provide the baseline data necessary for an effective and efficient response. They can:

- Guide overall incident response priorities.
- Identify sensitive areas and species in need of protection.
- Provide key information to help keep oil away from wildlife and wildlife away from oil.
- Minimize the direct impacts of spills and response actions to wildlife species.
- Reduce incidental response action impacts to wildlife by informing vessel and equipment operators about wildlife locations and reducing strike or entanglement risks.
- Guide planning for wildlife response activities, such as carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, and capture and rehabilitation of oiled wildlife.

Wildlife recon can be performed by **any spill responder**, especially in the first 24 to 48 hours (before dedicated wildlife responders usually arrive on scene). Dedicated **Wildlife Observers** will be deployed based on spill conditions, location, and species likely to be present. Anyone can use the *Wildlife Observation Form* ([Section 9740.3.2](#)) to record and summarize observations. The *Alaska Spill Response Wildlife ID Aid*, available on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage, is a field tool designed to aid spill responders in the identification and recording of wildlife observed during a spill.

In the first hours of a spill, all responders can report birds, marine mammals, or terrestrial animals —any information will be helpful. Try to include:

1. **What kind, and how many?** (e.g., flock of 10 ducks, pod of 5-10 killer whales, 3 large whales, 5 seals)
2. **What were they doing?** (e.g., flying away from response boats, feeding in the area, hauled-out, floating/sitting in the water, transiting in a northerly direction)
3. **Where are they?** (preferably latitude/longitude, but could also be a description, e.g., “nearshore/shoreline approximately 1 kilometer from oil, in [*name of*] Bay”)
4. **Other relevant details** (e.g., degree of oiling).
5. **Photos and video** are helpful.

Wildlife Observers, a specific position within the ICS and described in more detail below, will follow an incident-specific wildlife observation protocol (generally developed by the wildlife agencies). The *Tactic: Wildlife Reconnaissance (Recon)* ([Section 9740.3.1](#)) is a generic protocol that can be adapted for specific incidents. Incident-specific protocols should be scaled appropriately for the size and location of the incident and should include more detail on species most likely to be in the area and ESA-listed or other protected species. The skills and duties of Wildlife Observers differ from those of first responders conducting initial wildlife recon and all other responders. Wildlife Observers must:

1. Be proficient at identifying marine and terrestrial mammals and birds *to species* (or species group for some birds) for species likely to be in the area, especially ESA-listed wildlife.
2. Not be assigned any other duties, such as Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) teams, maintaining boom, or overseeing skimming operations.

A Wildlife Observer’s sole duty is to observe, record, and report information on wildlife.

3640.1.1 – Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Recon

No specific permits are needed for incidental wildlife observations made by responders. Wildlife Observer activities (e.g., aerial or boat-based surveys) may need permits for incidental disturbance of protected species, such as hauled-out harbor seals (see [Table 3-4](#) and [Table 4-1](#)). In all cases, avoidance of unnecessary disturbance to wildlife while conducting surveys is important and must be included in incident-specific protocols. Use of unmanned aerial systems (drones) and other types of remote monitoring often require different types of permits, authorizations, and procedures and, therefore, are not covered in this version (2020.1) of the WPG.

3640.2 – Wildlife Response Strategies

The following sections provide information about primary, secondary, and tertiary response strategies and the authorizations and permits that may be obtained to implement them:

[3640.2.1 – Primary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.1.1 – Carcass Collection and Documentation](#)

[3640.2.1.1.1 – Collection and Documentation of Large Carcasses](#)

[3640.2.1.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Carcass Collection](#)

[3640.2.2 – Secondary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.2.1 – Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence](#)

[3640.2.2.2 – Pre-emptive Capture](#)

[3640.2.2.3 – Authorizations and Permits for Secondary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies](#)

[3640.2.3.1 – Tertiary Response Guidelines](#)

[3640.2.3.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Tertiary Response Activities](#)

The WPG focuses on wildlife resources at risk from an oil spill in offshore and coastal waters and along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, including migratory birds, marine mammals, terrestrial mammals, and aquatic resources. Migratory birds discussed in the WPG include waterfowl, seabirds, diving birds, shorebirds, raptors, and selected species of upland birds. Marine mammals include sea otters, pinnipeds (seals, sea lions, and walrus), cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises), and polar bears. Terrestrial mammals include bears, ungulates (such as caribou, moose, and Dall sheep), and furbearers (such as foxes, river otters, and beavers). Aquatic resources include fish and shellfish. See [Section 9740.2](#), [Table 9-3](#), [Table 9-5](#), and [Table 9-6](#) for species of concern in different geographic zones in Alaska ([Figure 9-1](#)).

Wildlife protection during oil spill response is categorized into three basic strategies, summarized as follows:

- **Primary Strategies: Keep the spilled oil away from wildlife and their habitats** – Controlling the release and spread of spilled oil and removal of oiled debris, including oiled carcasses, from the environment.
- **Secondary Strategies: Keep wildlife away from spilled oil** – Hazing/deterring wildlife from oiled areas to clean areas, and pre-emptive capture, handling, transport, and release of unoiled wildlife.
- **Tertiary Strategies: Respond to impacted wildlife** – Capture, handling, transport, cleaning, rehabilitation, holding, and release of oiled or injured wildlife.

Primary response strategies for protecting wildlife emphasize controlling the release and spread of spilled oil to prevent or reduce contamination of wildlife and their habitats. Primary response strategies can include mechanical cleanup, protective booming, *in situ* burning, and dispersant use. Primary response strategies also include the removal of oiled debris, particularly contaminated food sources (such as oiled wildlife carcasses) in water and on land.

Secondary response strategies emphasize hazing or keeping wildlife away from oiled areas using deterrent techniques. Secondary response strategies also include the pre-emptive capture and subsequent handling, transportation, short-term holding, and release of unoiled wildlife.

Tertiary response strategies are “last resort” strategies, and include capture, handling, transporting, rehabilitating, and holding of oiled wildlife, and releasing rehabilitated wildlife.

Implementation of most wildlife response strategies will require permits.

The process for obtaining permits and authorizations is provided in [Section 3650 – Request for Wildlife Response Activities](#). Species-specific information for primary, secondary, and tertiary wildlife response strategies is in [Section 9740.2](#).

3640.2.1 – Primary Response Strategies

Primary response strategies may require permits or authorizations from wildlife agencies. Obtain or verify proper authorizations and permits ([Section 3640.2.1.2](#); [Table 3-4](#)) prior to strategy implementation.

3640.2.1.1 – Carcass Collection and Documentation

The grab-and-go *Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses* is in [Section 9740.3.3](#). It is the WBD’s and RP/PRP’s responsibility to understand and implement the necessary coordination with wildlife agencies ([Section 3650](#)) and obtain needed authorizations and permits ([Section 3640.2.1.2](#)).

Remove oiled and unoled carcasses in the spill area as soon as possible to avoid attracting or contaminating scavengers, such as eagles and bears. Oiled wildlife carcasses will need to be collected in a manner that preserves the carcass in its original state, or as close as possible, in order to properly document impacts to wildlife from the spill for law enforcement and NRDAR purposes. Procedures for proper documentation are outlined or referenced below. Carcasses may only be collected by wildlife agencies or parties permitted by those agencies; some species also require additional agency authorization ([Section 4610.4.1](#); [Figure 4-1](#)). Authorizations are given only on an incident-specific basis.

The *Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses* ([Section 9740.3.3](#)) is a generic protocol that can be adapted for specific incidents. A training video for the tactic, *Carcass Collection and Documentation during an Oil Spill Response*, can be found on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

Incident-specific carcass collection protocols may be developed through the Unified Command or NRDAR trustees, in coordination with wildlife agencies. Incident-specific protocols should be scaled appropriately for the size and location of the incident and should address species likely to be encountered and protected species. Completed protocols must be approved by wildlife agencies and the Federal and State OSCs, with concurrence of the NRDAR Trustees whose trust resources are proposed for collection.

Incident-specific carcass collection protocols must address, at minimum, the following information:

- How will oiled carcasses be reported to the Unified Command and wildlife agencies (e.g., are collection teams actively searching areas; will carcasses be reported through opportunistic field observations)?
- Have you included a photo documentation plan, including at least four photos of the animal taken while walking around the animal, and data log plan for numbering, filing, and backup of photos?

- Who will retrieve oiled carcasses (e.g., contractors, wildlife agency staff, oil spill removal organizations (OSROs)/primary response action contractors (PRACs)?)
- What equipment will be used; where is it stored; how will it get to the field?
- How will carcasses be transported from the field, and where will they be transported to?
- How and where will carcasses be stored until transferred to wildlife agencies (e.g., freezer space, refrigerator, coolers at staging area)?
- Where will a morgue be set up, and how will it be maintained?

Carcasses must be reported to supervisors and the Unified Command but not collected when:

- Carcass collection cannot be done safely.
- Field responders do not have permits, authorization, protocols, or supplies.
- It is not feasible given other, more immediate, job responsibilities.
- A carcass is too big to collect (e.g., large terrestrial or marine mammals).

To report a carcass, provide (at a minimum):

- Observer name, time, date, and location (latitude/longitude and location description).
- Number of individuals of each species or species group.
- Estimated degree of oiling and location of carcass relative to known oiled area.
- Photographs.

3640.2.1.1.1 – Collection and Documentation of Large Carcasses

Large carcasses (such as whales and bears) might not be feasible to remove from the field, but the collection or processing of all large carcasses, oiled or un-oiled, is important for an effective wildlife response and to determine the cause of death. The animal may be necropsied in the field and samples collected from the carcass. Wildlife agency representatives will make incident-specific decisions about sampling or collection of large carcasses. The decisions made will depend upon the species, degree of oiling, location relative to scavengers, proximity to transport, safety, size of carcass, and field disposal methods for oily waste.

The training video, *Carcass Collection and Documentation during an Oil Spill Response*, available on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage, provides additional information about the documentation of large carcasses. For detailed protocols, authorized marine mammal responders will refer to the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* or NMFS *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#). Sampling of other large carcasses during a spill will generally follow the same guidelines.

3640.2.1.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Carcass Collection

Incident-specific **authorization** to collect carcasses or samples from carcasses AND **permits** to possess carcasses are required before carcasses are collected ([Table 3-4](#)). If carcasses are expected to be found, obtain authorizations and permits early in a response rather than waiting until carcasses are observed. Agency authorizations for carcass collection will depend on factors, such as accessibility of the spill location, species impacted or likely to be impacted, availability of responders and agency staff, and the legal status of impacted species (e.g., ESA-listed). In general:

- **USFWS** Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) will provide incident-specific authorization for carcass collection of USFWS-managed species (migratory birds, ESA-listed birds, eagles, sea otters, walruses, and polar bears). This is coordinated by the USFWS Spill Response Coordinator or agency representative. USFWS will also issue permits to collect carcasses of the species under their management authority.
- **NMFS** will authorize members of the Marine Mammal Stranding Network to collect or sample carcasses whenever possible. If NMFS staff or the NMFS Stranding Response Program are unable to sample or collect carcasses, verbal or written approval from the NMFS Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (MMHSRP) Permit co-investigators is required for any other individual to collect or sample carcasses.
- **ADF&G** will issue permits for collecting carcasses of terrestrial mammals, non-migratory birds, fish, shellfish, and invertebrates.

Landowner permits, authorizations, or permission may be required to access upland areas and submerged lands or to cross property boundaries.

Responders may apply for authorization and permits to collect carcasses by completing a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submitting it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs for consideration.

Table 3-4: Wildlife Authorizations and Permits for Primary Response Strategies.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
ALL (e.g., mechanical recovery, boom deployment, on-water recovery, non-mechanical recovery, etc.)	If a federal agency (e.g., USCG, EPA) funds, authorizes, or conducts a response that includes activities that are potential stressors AND overlap in time and space with ESA-listed species.	NMFS – whales, seals, sea lions, and marine fish USFWS – birds, sea otters, and polar bears	<p style="text-align: center;">Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation</p> A federal action agency consults with NMFS and USFWS to mitigate and authorize take of ESA-listed species that may be impacted by spill response activities.	Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
	If marine mammals are likely to be present.	NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions (including ESA-listed species) USFWS – sea otters, walruses, and polar bears (including ESA-listed species)	<p style="text-align: center;">MMPA Authorization</p> MMPA section 109(h) allows federal, state, , or local government officials or employees to humanely take marine mammals in the course of his or her duties as an official or employee if such taking is for: 1) the protection or welfare of the mammal, 2) the protection of the public health and welfare, or 3) the nonlethal removal of nuisance animals (16 USC § 1379(h)). Non-government personnel can be authorized to humanely take marine mammals by NMFS and USFWS under the MMPA during an incident. <p style="text-align: center;">Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation</p> NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.	<p>Non-government personnel can be authorized by NMFS MMHSRP personnel to harass species under NMFS’s jurisdiction. That harassment must be approved on an incident-specific basis and reported.</p> MMPA LOA authorization for non-government personnel to take sea otters, walruses, and polar bears is required and can be obtained expeditiously from the USFWS via the USFWS Spill Response Coordinator during an incident or as part of the spill response planning process. Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
Boom in freshwater fish-bearing water bodies	If boom or anchors are placed in freshwater or above mean lower low tide elevation in anadromous water bodies, or if boom may impede fish passage.	ADF&G	Title 16 Fish Habitat Permit	ESA-listed species or other marine mammals may be feeding in streams and could be unintentionally harassed by deployment of, or become entangled in, boom. These possibilities may require an ESA section 7 consultation and MMPA authorization from NMFS and USFWS.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
Removal of oiled carcasses	Always	<p>ADF&G – terrestrial mammals, non-migratory birds, fish, invertebrates, aquatic plants</p> <p>NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, sea lions (including ESA-listed species)</p> <p>USFWS – migratory birds, sea otters, walruses, polar bears (including ESA-listed species)</p>	<p>ADF&G: Wildlife Response Permit.</p> <p>NMFS: The NMFS Stranding Response Program holds an existing permit that authorizes personnel to collect oiled carcasses. Authorized NMFS personnel (NMFS Regional Stranding Program Coordinator and associated co-investigators) can provide verbal authorization to others to collect oiled carcasses.</p> <p>USFWS: Incident-specific OLE Authorization for all USFWS species; Migratory Bird Salvage Permit for migratory birds; MMPA authorization for marine mammals (non-government personnel only).</p> <p>NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.</p>	<p>Carcasses must be recorded, reported, and collected or sampled according to protocols outlined in Section 3640.2.1.1 (Carcass Collection and Documentation) and Section 9740.3.3 (Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses), OR in accordance with an agency-approved incident-specific Startup or Comprehensive WRP or Carcass Collection Plan. Video training for carcass collection and documentation can be found on the ARRT Wildlife Protection Guidelines webpage.</p> <p>Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.</p>
Dispersants	Will be reviewed according to protocols outlined in the <i>Alaska RCP</i> (Part 3. A. Chemical Dispersants). ¹ NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.			Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
In situ burning	Will be reviewed according to protocols outlined in the <i>Alaska RCP</i> (Part 3. B. In Situ Burning of Spilled Oil). ¹ NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.			Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.

Acronyms: ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; ESA = Endangered Species; LOA = Letter of Authorization; MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act; NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service; OLE = Office of Law Enforcement; Alaska RCP = Alaska Regional Contingency Plan; USCG = U.S. Coast Guard; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; WRP = Wildlife Response Plan

¹ Available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage.

3640.2.2 – Secondary Response Strategies

Secondary response strategies may require permits or authorizations from wildlife agencies. Responders must obtain or verify proper authorizations and permits ([Table 3-5](#)) prior to strategy implementation.

3640.2.2.1 – Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence

Responders who wish to conduct wildlife deterrence activities will need to complete a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)). Requested activities may not be conducted until the appropriate authorizations and permits ([Table 3-5](#); [Figure 4-2](#)) have been received. Any wildlife deterrence activities for species that are listed under the MMPA or as threatened or endangered under the ESA will be addressed via FOSC consultation with USFWS and NMFS.

Only individuals trained and certified within the past three years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, in bird deterrence techniques will be authorized to conduct migratory bird deterrence activities. Additional individuals may be approved by ADF&G on a case-by-case basis based on a thorough review of training protocols, training records, individual and organization experience, and incident details. This information must be included in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP and approved by all wildlife agencies. Oversight for migratory bird deterrence activities will be conducted by USFWS or ADF&G. Only individuals trained and certified in wildlife deterrents by an ADF&G-approved training within the past three years will be authorized to conduct terrestrial mammal hazing activities, including bear hazing. This information should be included in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)) and approved by all agencies.

For detailed protocols and equipment lists, authorized marine mammal responders will refer to the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, or NMFS *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, both available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Hazing and deterrence of other species will be developed on an incident-specific basis. [Section 9740.2](#) provides information on deterrence activities for individual wildlife species or species groups.

It is essential for appropriately trained individuals to conduct hazing/deterrence activities not only for the safety of all responders, but also to minimize impacts to the animals being hazed/deterred and to prevent inadvertently disturbing non-target species. Wildlife can respond in unpredictable ways to disturbance; therefore, it is imperative that responders conducting hazing/deterrence activities are trained to understand animal behavior.

3640.2.2.1.1 – Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence

Permits or authorizations are required before hazing/deterrence activities may be conducted ([Table 3-5](#); [Figure 4-2](#)). Agency authorizations for hazing/deterrence activities will depend on factors such as species and life stages; location; availability, training, and experience of responders; and the presence of non-target species. Responders can apply for authorization to haze/deter wildlife by completing a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submitting it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs for consideration and approval.

After receiving the Startup or Comprehensive WRP, wildlife agencies will determine whether to issue the requested permits based on proposed tactics, species, life stages, personnel training and experience, and other submitted information. Completing either WRP does not guarantee permit issuance.

Responders who already have valid permits to conduct wildlife hazing/deterrence activities will need to:

1. Follow the terms of their permit.
2. Immediately notify the appropriate wildlife agency representatives to advise them of actions planned or taken.
3. Submit a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) to the wildlife agencies and OSCs within 24 hours following the initiation of wildlife hazing/deterrence activities.

3640.2.2.2 – Pre-emptive Capture

Pre-emptive capture is the capture, handling, transportation, short-term holding, and release of healthy, uncontaminated wildlife.

All responders who wish to conduct pre-emptive capture of any wildlife species should fill out a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650.2](#); [Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) and submit it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs. Any pre-emptive capture-related activities for species that are listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA will be addressed via FOSC ESA consultation with USFWS and NMFS. [Section 9740.2](#) provides species-specific information on pre-emptive capture. Possible organizations and equipment needed for handling marine mammals under NMFS’s jurisdiction can be found in the Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and NMFS *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

3640.2.2.2.1 – Authorizations and Permits for Pre-emptive Capture

Responders who wish to conduct pre-emptive capture of unoiled wildlife as part of a spill response need authorizations and permits from wildlife agencies and the OSCs prior to initiating activities ([Table 3-5](#)). Responders may apply for authorization to conduct pre-emptive capture of unoiled wildlife by completing a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650.2](#); [Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) and submitting it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs for consideration. A Startup WRP cannot be used to request pre-emptive capture activities.

After receiving the completed Comprehensive WRP, wildlife agencies will decide whether to issue the requested permits based on proposed tactics, species, life stages, personnel training and experience, and other submitted information. Completing the Comprehensive WRP does not guarantee permit issuance.

3640.2.2.3 – Authorizations and Permits for Secondary Response Strategies

Authorizations or permits are required before hazing/deterrence activities may be conducted ([Section 3640.2.2.1.1](#); [Table 3-5](#); [Figure 4-2](#)). Responders who wish to conduct wildlife deterrence activities will need to complete a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).

Responders who wish to conduct pre-emptive capture of unoiled wildlife as part of a spill response need authorizations and permits from wildlife agencies and the OSCs prior to initiating activities ([Section 3640.2.2.2.1](#); [Table 3-5](#)). Responders may apply for authorization to conduct pre-emptive capture of unoiled wildlife by completing a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650.2](#); [Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) and submitting it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs for consideration. A Startup WRP cannot be used to request pre-emptive capture activities.

Table 3-5: Wildlife Authorizations and Permits for Secondary Response Strategies.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed ...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
Any that may impact ESA-listed species	If a federal agency (e.g., USCG, EPA) funds, authorizes, or conducts a response that includes activities that are potential stressors AND overlap in time and space with ESA-listed species.	<p>NMFS – whales, seals, sea lions, and marine fish</p> <p>USFWS – birds, sea otters, and polar bears</p>	<p>Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation</p> <p>A federal action agency consults with NMFS and USFWS to mitigate and authorize take of ESA-listed species that may be impacted by spill response activities.</p>	Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
Any that may impact marine mammals	Always	<p>NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions (including ESA-listed species)</p> <p>USFWS – sea otters, walruses, and polar bears (including ESA-listed species)</p>	<p>MMPA Authorization</p> <p>The MMPA allows federal, state, or local government officials or employees to humanely take marine mammals in the course of his or her duties as an official or employee if such taking is for: 1) the protection or welfare of the mammal, 2) the protection of the public health and welfare, or 3) the nonlethal removal of nuisance animals (16 USC § 1379(h)).</p> <p>Non-government personnel can be authorized to humanely take marine mammals under the MMPA during an incident.</p> <p>NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.</p>	<p>Non-government personnel can be authorized by NMFS MMHSRP personnel to harass species under NMFS’s jurisdiction. That harassment must be approved on an incident-specific basis and reported.</p> <p>MMPA authorization for non-government personnel to take sea otters, walruses, and polar bears is required and can be obtained expeditiously from the USFWS via the USFWS Spill Response Coordinator during an incident or as part of the pre-spill planning process.</p> <p>Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.</p>
Bird hazing ¹ – passive (visual only)	If eagles may be present	USFWS – eagles	USFWS: Eagle Depredation Permit	All bird hazing activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent hazing/deterrence of non-target species.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed ...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
Bird hazing ¹ – active	Always	ADF&G – birds (migratory and non-migratory) USFWS – eagles, birds (ESA-listed)	ADF&G: Wildlife Response Permit USFWS: Eagle Depredation Permit; emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.	All bird hazing activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent hazing/deterrence of non-target species.
Terrestrial mammal hazing ¹	Always	ADF&G – all	ADF&G: Wildlife Response Permit	All hazing activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent hazing of non-target species.
Marine mammal deterrence ¹	Always	NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions (including ESA-listed species) USFWS – sea otters, walruses, polar bears (including ESA-listed species)	NMFS: Case-by case authorization through MMHSRP permit. USFWS: MMPA authorization is required for take of sea otters, walruses, and polar bears, even in emergencies. This can be obtained expeditiously from the USFWS or as part of the oil spill response planning process. NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.	MMHSRP = Request verbal case-by-case approval from the NMFS Regional Stranding Program Coordinator or associated co-investigator. All deterrence activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent deterrence of non-target species. Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed ...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
Pre-emptive capture ²	Always	<p>ADF&G – terrestrial mammals, furbearers, non-migratory birds</p> <p>NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions (including ESA-listed species)</p> <p>USFWS – migratory birds, sea otters, walruses, polar bears (including ESA-listed species)</p>	<p>ADF&G: Case-by-case authorization for transport or possession of wildlife</p> <p>NMFS: Case-by-case authorization through MMHSRP permit.</p> <p>USFWS: Migratory Bird permit; MMPA section 112(c) LOA is required for take of sea otters, walruses, and polar bears, even in emergencies. This can be obtained expeditiously from the USFWS or as part of the oil spill response planning process.</p> <p>NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.</p>	<p>MMHSRP = Request verbal case-by-case approval from the NMFS Regional Stranding Program Coordinator or associated co-investigator.</p> <p>Pre-emptive capture information should be addressed in the Comprehensive WRP.</p> <p>Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.</p>

Acronyms: ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; ESA = Endangered Species; LOA = Letter of Authorization; MMHSRP = Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program; MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act; NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service; USCG = U.S. Coast Guard; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

¹ See also [Section 3640.2.2.1.1](#) – Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence

² See also [Section 3640.2.2.2.1](#) – Authorizations and Permits for Pre-emptive Capture

3640.2.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies

Tertiary response is the capture, handling, transport, rehabilitation, and possible release of oiled or injured wildlife. Tertiary response strategies require permits or authorizations from wildlife agencies. Responders must ensure that all required permits or authorizations have been obtained prior to implementing any tertiary response strategies ([Table 3-6](#); [Figure 4-3](#)).

All responders who wish to capture, transport, stabilize, or rehabilitate any wildlife species should fill out a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submit it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs. Tertiary response activities for species that are listed under the MMPA or as threatened or endangered under the ESA will be addressed via FOSC consultation with USFWS and NMFS.

3640.2.3.1 – Tertiary Response Guidelines

Capture, transport, stabilization, rehabilitation, and release of oiled animals should follow these guidelines:

- For whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals, and sea lions, find equipment lists and facility criteria for handling, care, and rehabilitation in the:
 - *NMFS Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, and the *NMFS Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, including the Appendices, at the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).
- For polar bears, use:
 - Miller, S. (ed.). 2015. *Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska. 65 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
- For sea otters, use:
 - Williams, Terrie M., and Randall W. Davis (eds). 1995. *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters: A guide for oil spills involving fur bearing animals*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. 279 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
- For walruses, response protocols will be developed in coordination with USFWS on an incident-specific basis, generally following pinniped guidance developed by NMFS in the *NMFS Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).
- For birds, including equipment and materials for capture and stabilization kits and facilities, use:
 - Berg, C. (ed). 2003. *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage, Alaska, 82 pp. Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Additional references, information, and recommendations will be provided by wildlife agencies. Wildlife agency contact information is available in [Initial Emergency Contacts](#).

3640.2.3.2 – Authorizations and Permits for Tertiary Response Activities

Permits or authorizations are required before capture, transport, stabilization, or rehabilitation activities may be conducted ([Table 3-6](#); [Figure 4-3](#)). Agency authorizations for tertiary response activities will depend on factors such as species and life stages; location; availability, training, and experience of responders in capture and rehabilitation; sufficiency of cleaning and rehabilitation facilities; and release timelines and locations.

Responders can apply for authorization to capture, transport, stabilize, or rehabilitate wildlife by completing a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submitting it to the wildlife agencies and OSCs for consideration. After receiving either WRP, wildlife agencies will decide whether to issue the requested permits based on the information submitted to them, such as the species, life stages, personnel experience, and facility sufficiency. Completing the Startup or Comprehensive WRP does not guarantee permit issuance.

Responders who already have valid permits to conduct oiled wildlife capture, transport, stabilization, or rehabilitation activities will need to:

1. Follow the terms of their permit.
2. Immediately notify the appropriate wildlife agency to advise them of planned actions and to receive initial authorization.
3. Submit a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) to the wildlife agencies and OSCs within 24 hours following the initiation of oiled wildlife capture, transport, stabilization, or rehabilitation activities.

Table 3-6: Wildlife Authorizations and Permits for Tertiary Response Strategies.

Strategy or Tactic	Permit or Authorization Needed ...	Agency and Species	Permit or Authorization	Additional Considerations
Any that may impact ESA-listed species	If a federal agency (e.g., USCG, EPA) funds, authorizes, or conducts a response that includes activities that are potential stressors AND overlap in time and space with ESA-listed species.	NMFS – whales, seals, sea lions, and marine fish USFWS – birds, sea otters, and polar bears	Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation A federal action agency consults with NMFS and USFWS to mitigate and authorize take of ESA-listed species that may be impacted by spill response activities.	Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
Any that involve marine mammals	Always	NMFS – whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions (including ESA-listed species) USFWS – sea otters, walruses, and polar bears (including ESA-listed species)	NMFS: Case-by-case authorization through MMHSRP permit. USFWS: MMPA section 112(c) LOA is required for take of sea otters, walruses, and polar bears, even in emergencies. This can be obtained expeditiously from the USFWS or as part of the oil spill response planning process. NMFS and USFWS: Emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species.	All tertiary response activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent impacts to non-target species. Whenever possible, NMFS and USFWS will combine the initial emergency ESA section 7 consultations into one document for efficient incorporation into other response activities.
Any that involve birds	Always	USFWS – eagles, migratory birds, ESA-listed birds ADF&G – non-migratory birds	USFWS: Eagle Depredation Permit, Migratory Bird Permit, emergency ESA section 7 consultation for potential impacts to ESA-listed species ADF&G: Wildlife Response Permit	All tertiary response activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent impacts to non-target species.
Any that involve terrestrial mammals, furbearers, non-migratory birds	Always	ADF&G – terrestrial mammals, furbearers, non-migratory birds	Case-by-case authorization or Wildlife Response Permit (varies by species)	All tertiary response activities should be addressed in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP to prevent impacts to non-target species.

Acronyms: ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; ESA = Endangered Species; LOA = Letter of Authorization; MMHSRP = Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program; MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act; NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service; USCG = U.S. Coast Guard; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; WRP = Wildlife Response Plan

3650 – Request for Wildlife Response Activities

During an emergency oil spill response when wildlife is or could become oiled, some or portions of the wildlife response strategies may need to be implemented before all the details necessary to carry out entire strategies are available. A two-phase process allows initial wildlife response strategy implementation as soon as possible using the Startup WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.1](#)) and allows additional details to be added in the Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) as the spill response continues. This two-phase process allows time to:

- Scale the IMT wildlife sections (EU, WB) to the size appropriate for the incident.
- Mobilize wildlife responders.
- Conduct immediate authorized response activities for impacted wildlife.¹³
- Develop details necessary to complete the Comprehensive WRP.

Details about the Startup and Comprehensive WRPs can be found in Sections [3650.1](#) and [3650.2](#), respectively. The Startup and Comprehensive WRP forms are in [Section 9740.3.8](#). Both forms include requests to conduct primary, secondary, and tertiary response strategies, except for pre-emptive capture which is not included in the Startup WRP. The Startup WRP is an abbreviated version of the Comprehensive WRP ([Table 3-7](#)).

Table 3-7: Comparison of Startup and Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plans (WRPs) for Oil Spill Response in Alaska.

Startup WRP	Comprehensive WRP
Allows request and implementation of some strategies within the first 72 hours of an incident.	Allows longer-term response strategies to be developed and communicated to the Unified Command throughout the incident.
Need not be used if there are ample resources to complete the Comprehensive WRP before any proposed response strategies are initiated.	Must always be used either in lieu of, or (after 72 hours) in conjunction with, the Startup WRP when wildlife response strategies are requested or implemented.
Can be completed citing existing references (e.g., operations manual for a stabilization or rehabilitation facility).	Can cite existing references but should also include spill-specific information (e.g., specific personnel, staging areas, wildlife transportation procedures).

3650.1 – Startup Wildlife Response Plan (WRP)

The Startup WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.1](#)) is a request to begin the process of authorizing and implementing all or some portion of wildlife response strategies to be conducted for up to 72 hours after the start of a spill. Wildlife response activities approved in the Startup WRP (including carcass collection,

¹³ Responders may already possess a valid permit to conduct certain wildlife response activities, such as bird or terrestrial mammal hazing. If so, the permitted activities may be conducted if:

1. All conditions and terms of the permit are followed.
2. The appropriate wildlife agency representative is notified according to the terms of the permit and informed of actions taken and planned.
3. A Startup or Comprehensive WRP is submitted to the wildlife agencies within 24 hours of initiating the permitted activities.
4. The permitted activity does not also require incident-specific authorization (e.g., as carcass collection does).

hazing/deterrence, or capture and rehabilitation) will not be authorized beyond 72 hours after the start of the spill unless a Comprehensive WRP has been submitted to and approved by the wildlife agencies. Pre-emptive capture is uncommon in the early stages of a response and, therefore, is not included in the Startup WRP. Following approval by the wildlife agencies, the Startup WRP should be submitted to the OSCs for their approval and for inclusion in the next Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Agency approval of the Startup WRP does not negate the need for permits and other authorizations, which are required before wildlife response activities can begin (see [Table 4-1](#)). In some situations, agencies may provide emergency authorization (verbal or email approval) or an organization may already have a pre-issued permit or letter of authorization (LOA). When reviewing the Startup WRP, the wildlife agencies will indicate the status of required authorizations and permits in Section V of the form.

The Startup WRP will typically be filled out by the RP/PRP or someone contracted by them to fulfill this responsibility, such as an OSRO/PRAC, consultant, or wildlife contractor. However, if a response is led by the federal or state government, the OSCs may request portions of this form to be filled out by the wildlife agencies until an appropriate contractor or WBD is mobilized. ESA section 7 consultations occur between federal action agencies and the USFWS and NMFS; ESA consultations are not the RP/PRP’s responsibility to complete. However, because take of ESA-listed species is not authorized until a section 7 consultation has been initiated, “ESA section 7” is included on the Startup WRP to inform the IMT of the overall status of wildlife response activities. [Table 3-8](#) shows the organization or person responsible for each section of the Startup WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.1](#)).

Table 3-8: Organization or Person Responsible for Completing Sections of the Startup Wildlife Response Plan (WRP) for Oil Spill Response in Alaska.

Section	Organization or Person Responsible for Completion
I. Incident Summary	RP/PRP*
II. State and Federal On-Scene Coordinator Response to Request	OSCs
III. Wildlife Agency Response to Request	Wildlife Agencies
IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies	RP/PRP*
V. Wildlife Agency Permits and Authorizations for Proposed Response	Wildlife Agencies
VI. Additional Conditions	Wildlife Agencies
VII. Worksheet for Operations Section and Field Personnel	RP/PRP*

* “RP/PRP” includes any entity contracted by the RP/PRP (or their OSRO/PRAC for the response) and is intended to include the RP/PRP, their contractors, the permittee, or whomever is directly responsible for carrying out this plan.

3650.2 – Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan (WRP)

The Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) should be completed and approved by the wildlife agencies and the Unified Command before any carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture, or capture and rehabilitation activities begin or before the Startup WRP expires. The Comprehensive WRP can be amended if substantially new wildlife response activities are proposed.

Wildlife response activities approved in the Startup WRP will not be authorized beyond 72 hours after the start of the spill unless a Comprehensive WRP has been submitted, reviewed, and approved by the wildlife agencies. This includes carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, or capture and rehabilitation. If a NRDAR Liaison has been appointed for an incident, the Carcass Collection Plan (Section VI of the Comprehensive WRP) should be coordinated with them ([Section 2510](#)). Pre-emptive capture may only be requested using a Comprehensive WRP (i.e., a Startup WRP may not be used to request pre-emptive capture). A Comprehensive WRP may be submitted and approved by the wildlife agencies and OSCs for certain activities (e.g., carcass collection and hazing of birds) and amended later if additional response actions are warranted (e.g., deterrence of marine mammals or capture and rehabilitation of birds). Following approval by the wildlife agencies, the Comprehensive WRP should then be submitted to the Federal and State OSCs for their approval and inclusion in the next IAP.

The Comprehensive WRP includes expanded or additional sections compared to the Startup WRP (see [Table 3-7](#) and [Table 3-9](#)):

- Section IV includes tables to provide detailed species information based on actual field observations or input from the best data sources available (e.g., NOAA's [Arctic Environmental Response Management Application \(Arctic ERMA\)](#) online mapping tool, Environmental Sensitivity Index maps, input from wildlife agencies).
- Section V requests information on primary response strategies undertaken or planned.
- Section VIII includes information to request pre-emptive capture of oiled wildlife.
- Sections VI – IX request detailed information necessary to successfully implement the proposed primary, secondary, and tertiary response strategies.

Authorizations and permits are required before wildlife response activities can begin ([Table 4-1](#)), even with an agency-approved Comprehensive WRP. In some situations, agencies may provide emergency authorization (verbal or email approval), or an organization may already have a pre-issued permit or LOA. The status of required authorizations and permits will be documented by wildlife agency representatives in Section X of the Comprehensive WRP.

Comprehensive WRPs are typically filled out by the RP/PRP or someone contracted by them to fulfill this responsibility, such as an OSRO/PRAC, consultant, or wildlife contractor. However, if a response is led by the federal or state government, the Federal or State OSC may request portions of this form be filled out by the wildlife agencies until an appropriate contractor or WBD is mobilized. ESA section 7 consultations occur between federal action agencies and the USFWS and NMFS; ESA consultations are not the RP/PRP's responsibility to complete. However, because take of ESA-listed species is not authorized until the ESA section 7 consultation has been initiated, "ESA section 7 consultation" is included on the Comprehensive WRP to help inform the IMT of the overall status of wildlife response activities. [Table 3-9](#) shows the organization or person responsible for completing each section of the Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.2](#)).

Table 3-9: Organization or Persons Responsible for Completing Sections of the Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan (WRP) for Oil Spill Response in Alaska.

Section	Organization or Person Responsible for Completion
I. Incident Summary	RP/PRP*
II. State and Federal On-Scene Coordinator Response to Request	OSCs
III. Wildlife Agency Response to Request	Wildlife Agencies
IV. Wildlife Information and Proposed Response Strategies: Part A – Non-ESA-listed Species Groups Part B – ESA-listed Species	RP/PRP*
V. Other Primary Response Actions	RP/PRP*
VI. Carcass Collection Plan	RP/PRP* (with wildlife agency/NRDAR Trustee input)
VII. Hazing/Deterrence Plan	RP/PRP* (with wildlife agency input)
VIII. Pre-emptive Capture Plan	RP/PRP* (with wildlife agency input)
IX. Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation, and Release Plan	RP/PRP* (with wildlife agency input)
X. Wildlife Agency Permits and Authorizations for Proposed Response	Wildlife Agencies
XI. Additional Conditions	Wildlife Agencies
XII. Worksheet for Operations Section and Field Personnel	RP/PRP*

* “RP/PRP” includes any entity contracted by the RP/PRP (or their ORSO/PRAC for the response) and is intended to include the RP/PRP, their contractors, the permittee, or whomever is directly responsible for carrying out this plan.

3650.3 – Inadvertent Impacts of Wildlife Response Activities

Response activities, even those designed to assist wildlife, may result in anticipated inadvertent impacts to other species. For example, authorized hazing or deterrence of waterfowl conducted near a Steller sea lion rookery could cause the Steller sea lions to flush into the water, become oiled, or crush pups. Responders must have a full understanding of authorized AND unauthorized activities (and any conditions attached to authorizations) to minimize secondary or inadvertent impacts. Restrictions or other conditions may come from stipulations in permits or LOAs, protection measures from ESA section 7 consultations, and information provided in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP. The EU Lead should be proactive about compiling this information and providing it to the WB and other field responders. In turn, field responders should relay important information and observations to both the IMT and wildlife agency representatives regarding the presence of wildlife and secondary or inadvertent impacts to wildlife from response activities.

4000 – PLANNING

4600 – ENVIRONMENTAL UNIT (EU)

Within the Planning Section, the EU is responsible for wildlife considerations during the planning of spill response activities.

Additional information on wildlife response issues as they relate to the Operations Section can be found in [Section 3600](#).

4610 – Planning Activities for Fish and Wildlife Protection

The following sections provide information on the following wildlife response planning considerations, relevant to the EU within the Planning Section:

[4610.1 – Resources at Risk \(RAR\) Summary](#)

[4610.2 – General Wildlife Protection Considerations](#)

[4610.3 – Wildlife Standards of Response](#)

[4610.4 – Wildlife Response Strategies](#)

Information related to the correspondence, permits, and consultation to implement wildlife response strategies can be found in [Section 4800](#).

4610.1 – Resources at Risk (RAR) Summary

The RAR Summary (form ICS 232-CG; available on the USCG [CG-612 Directives and Publications Division](#) webpage) provides information about species, ecosystem services, and sites in the incident area that are sensitive due to environmental, archaeological, cultural, or socio-economic resource concerns, and it identifies incident-specific priorities and issues. The RAR Summary is prepared by the EU Leader with input from natural and cultural resource agencies. This form should be reviewed and updated prior to the Tactics Meeting for each Operational Period. For prolonged responses or those that span multiple seasons, it is important to update the RAR Summary to include season changes such as critical life stages for species (e.g., migration, breeding, or nesting) and harvest opportunities (e.g., commercial, sport, subsistence, or personal use fishing and hunting).

This process is scalable. For smaller incidents, a virtual EU may be established with natural and cultural resource management agencies working collectively to prepare this summary. Resource and land management agencies may include the NMFS, NOAA, USFWS, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (cultural resources), or other agencies such as the USGS or Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

4610.1.1 – Sources for RAR Summary

The *Alaska Sensitive Areas Compendium* (referenced by all four ACPs and hosted on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage) and additional resources listed at the end of this section can be used to compile information for the RAR Summary (form ICS 232-CG; available on the USCG [CG-612 Directives and Publications Division](#) webpage). Natural resource agencies are an excellent source for information on environmentally sensitive areas, as well as areas of public concern, and are typically responsible for

filling out the RAR Summary when the RP is not able to, such as during incidents involving vessel groundings or sinkings.

The *Alaska Sensitive Areas Compendium* is a compilation of the Sensitive Area Sections from the 10 former subarea contingency plans, and information is organized by geographic zone ([Figure 9-1](#)). Personnel from multiple state and federal agencies are responsible for updating both the *Alaska Sensitive Areas Compendium* and the WPG, and due to limited time, the WPG was prioritized for updating first. The *Alaska Sensitive Areas Compendium* will be the next priority, but until it is completed, some general guidance for preparing the RAR Summary is included here.

The two major sections of the RAR Summary are: 1) Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Wildlife Issues and 2) Archaeological, Cultural, and Socio-Economic Issues. The latter may be directly related to wildlife response (e.g., important subsistence harvest areas and commercial fisheries). Each section has a Narrative box to provide detailed information and a table for site names and locations, the issues specific to each site, a prioritization of the sites for protection, and a site number if available. In the past, the RAR Summary often included only Geographic Response Strategies (GRSs), but additional information on wildlife (and other resources) will provide more information for the IMT. The wildlife agencies strongly recommend including a more complete overview of RAR in the RAR Summary, including species likely to be present and their use of habitats that may be impacted by the spill. Sites can be described at a broad scale (e.g., nearshore waters of Cook Inlet) or be specific (e.g., Ship Creek), depending on the size of the spill and the number of resources that are at risk. For example, multiple species of marine mammals, birds, and fish may concentrate in the nearshore waters of Cook Inlet, and using this broad site location allows its importance as wildlife habitat to be identified and will help inform the EU of potential wildlife response strategies and permitting needs. Similarly, specific locations, such as streams or seabird colonies, allow for more site-specific protection strategies to be identified. Site prioritization is typically a collaborative effort between the RP/PRP and the natural resource agencies in the EU.

A list of potential considerations to include in both sections of the RAR Summary (form ICS-232-CG) is found below. This is not a comprehensive or prescriptive list – each incident will vary based on location, product, amount spilled, trajectories, habitat, species and life stages present, and what could be impacted by the spill. Much of this information can be found in digital format on NOAA's [Arctic ERMA](#). However, some of this information may exist on a more local scale and can be obtained during incident-specific coordination with the natural resource agencies.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas and Wildlife Issues:

- ESA-listed species and Critical Habitat
- Anadromous water bodies
 - Eggs and larvae or spawning areas
 - Rearing habitat
 - Migration corridor (adults and smolts)
- Marine mammals – sea otters, polar bears, walrus, whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, sea lions
 - Haulouts and rookeries
 - Migration corridors
 - Dens or lairs
 - Pupping areas
 - Biologically Important Areas (NMFS-designated areas for certain cetaceans)

- Birds
 - Migratory birds – waterfowl, seabirds (& colonies), shorebirds
 - Migration or staging areas, overwintering habitat, or high concentration areas (e.g., tidal flats, clam feeding areas)
 - Nests or fledglings
 - Molting waterfowl
 - Active eagle nests
 - Upland (game) birds, passerines, songbirds
 - Audubon Important Bird Areas
- Terrestrial mammals
 - Big game
 - Dens
 - Migration corridors
 - Calving or lambing areas
 - Insect relief areas
 - Furbearers
- Shoreline types
- Essential Fish Habitat
- Habitat Areas of Particular Concern
- GRSs

Archaeological, Cultural, and Socio-economic Issues:

- Communities – public health and access
 - Health advisories, safety zones, road closures, limited access, cultural sites, etc.
- Subsistence activities
 - People and access
- High use recreational areas
- Fisheries – commercial, sport, subsistence, personal use
 - Effort, locations, access, closures
- Hunting – sport, subsistence, personal use
 - People and access
- Hatcheries and aquaculture or mariculture sites
- Cultural resources and historic properties
 - Historic, prehistoric, archeological, and cultural resources, etc.
- Land ownership or management
 - Includes tidelands and submerged lands
 - Native allotments and townsites
- Protected areas

- National park lands, refuges, forests, and wilderness areas
 - State special areas and parks
 - Critical habitats
- Infrastructure
 - Oil platforms, pipelines, roads, docks, boat ramps, etc.
- Water use
 - Drinking water
 - Seafood processor intakes

4610.2 – General Wildlife Protection Considerations

Wildlife agency representatives can provide recommendations to the Federal and State OSCs on how response activities can be performed in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on wildlife.

Recommendations include, but are not limited to, actions to prevent:

- The introduction of rats to rat-free islands ([Section 4610.2.1](#)).
- Unnecessary or illegal disturbance to sensitive species and habitats, such as nesting raptors, seabird rookeries, and marine mammal haulouts and pupping areas ([Section 4610.2.2](#)).
- Potential injury or disturbance of bears by response personnel ([Section 4610.2.3](#)).
- Illegal collection of wildlife parts by response personnel ([Section 4610.2.4](#)).
- Wildlife exposure to cleaning agents and bioremediation substances used for shoreline rehabilitation ([Section 4610.2.5](#)).

General wildlife protections considerations as they relate to the Operation Section can be found in [Section 3620](#).

4610.2.1 – Preventing Rat Introduction to Rat-Free Islands

Many of Alaska’s remote islands have no rats. Invasive rats are a significant concern for islands in the Alaska Maritime NWR and the Pribilof Islands because of the devastation introduced rats can have on island ecosystems, including direct predation of nesting seabirds and endemic songbirds as well as the introduction of disease to hauled-out marine mammals and terrestrial mammals. Once rats are established on an island or at a remote location, they are extremely difficult and expensive to eradicate.

Grounded vessels, or vessels sinking close to shore, allow rats to access the shore. Rats can also drift to shore on vessel debris. In addition, response vessels or aircraft could inadvertently transport rats to rat-free areas. Response personnel can use the *Checklist: Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response* in [Section 9740.3.5](#) as an aid to protect wildlife during vessel groundings and sinkings.

All vessels operating in Alaska should follow the *Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels* ([Section 9740.3.6](#)). Stricken vessels should be examined for rats, if possible and safe to do so. Vessels associated with spill response activities should also be examined for rats. The USFWS and ADF&G can provide additional guidance and assistance in finding resources to examine boats and planes for rats.

If it is not possible to conduct onboard rat inspection and prevention activities for a stricken or response vessel, USFWS and ADF&G representatives will develop an incident-specific rat prevention plan for approval by the OSCs. The plan will include, but not be limited to, the deployment of rat trap and poison bait stations in appropriate locations on the vessel and the island, names of individuals authorized to deploy and monitor the stations, and a station monitoring plan.

See [Section 3630.1](#) for additional information about keeping rats off rat-free islands.

4610.2.2 – Preventing Unnecessary or Illegal Disturbance to Sensitive Species and Habitats

Field activities associated with oil spills (particularly those using on-site work crews, helicopters, low-flying aircraft, and vessels) can cause unnecessary and potentially illegal disturbance to sensitive species and habitats. This disturbance can cause wildlife to expend energy to move away from the disturbance, can drive wildlife into oiled areas, and can affect the survival of young wildlife.

The BGEPA specifically prohibits the disturbance of eagles. Actions that cause harassment or death of migratory birds are prohibited under the MBTA (16 USC § 703). The MMPA prohibits the take¹⁴ of sea otters, polar bears, seals, sea lions, walruses, whales, dolphins, and porpoises (16 USC § 1372). Section 109(h) of the MMPA allows take by a federal or state governmental official during their official duties, provided the take is for the welfare and protection of the animal. Therefore, the FOSC will need to consult with USFWS and NMFS representatives to determine the potential impacts of response actions on eagles, other migratory birds, and marine mammals. The USFWS and NMFS will assist the FOSC in identifying potential impacts, mitigating or avoiding those impacts, and determining if take has occurred as the result of response activities.

The ESA provides protective measures for species listed as threatened or endangered and their designated critical habitats. The ESA prohibits unauthorized take¹⁵ of ESA-listed species (16 USC § 1538). Section 7 of the ESA requires any federal agency that authorizes, funds, or carries out activities that may affect listed species or designated critical habitat to consult with DOI (through USFWS) and DOC (through NMFS). The ESA and its implementing regulations provide special provisions for consultation during emergencies such as an oil spill. In addition, the “Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities Under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act’s National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Endangered Species Act,”¹⁶ signed in 2001, provides special provisions for “emergency consultation” during an oil spill that may (or has) affected listed species or their designated critical habitat. The USFWS and NMFS can make recommendations to the FOSC to avoid the taking of listed species and reduce response-related impacts. If take of ESA-listed species does occur because of response activities, formal section 7 consultation between the FOSC and USFWS and NMFS will need to be conducted immediately after the incident. See [Section 4810](#) for additional information about emergency ESA section 7 consultation.

To prevent unnecessary disturbance to wildlife, USFWS, NMFS, or ADF&G representatives may provide notices, through the Federal Aviation Administration and the FOSC, to aircraft and mariners operating in areas affected by a spill to remain a certain distance from wildlife concentration areas and designated critical habitats. Such areas include, but are not limited to, marine mammal haulouts and pupping areas, migratory bird concentration areas, seabird rookeries, raptor nests, and bear dens. The Federal and State OSCs will provide copies of the notices to appropriate response personnel through the Unified Command. In addition, this information should be in news releases prepared by the OSCs or the Unified Command’s JIC.

During a spill response, wildlife agency representatives may recommend to the Federal and State OSCs that response activities should not occur during critical biological periods (e.g., nesting, breeding, pupping) in or near sensitive areas. If response activities during these periods cannot be avoided, wildlife agency representatives can authorize take and will recommend on-site agency personnel or contractors monitor response activities to minimize disturbance and record take. See [Section 3610](#) for more information on BMPs to minimize impacts to wildlife during a response.

¹⁴ Take, as defined under the MMPA, means “to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal,” (16 USC § 1362(13)).

¹⁵ Take, as defined under the ESA, means “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct,” (16 USC § 1532(19)).

¹⁶ Available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

4610.2.3 – Preventing Injury and Disturbance to Bears

On-shore responders may have interactions with brown, black, and polar bears; polar bears may also be present offshore, in frozen or broken ice conditions, or in open water. To minimize the potential for injuries to both response personnel and bears, wildlife agency representatives will coordinate with the Unified Command to determine if bear guards (i.e., individuals with expertise in avoiding bear-human conflicts) should accompany work crews. Bear guards will need to have specialized training in bear behavior, moving crews from an area (to eliminate having to shoot a bear), and shooting a bear if it poses a threat to human life. Activities affecting polar bears will also be addressed via FOSC ESA section 7 consultation with USFWS and USFWS-provided authorizations under the MMPA. If bear hazing is proposed, a Startup or Comprehensive WRP should be submitted to wildlife agencies (Sections [3650](#) and [9740.3.8](#)). Authorizations and permits are required by ADF&G (for brown or black bears) or USFWS (for polar bears) prior to implementing bear hazing activities. See [Section 3640.2.2.1](#) for more information on wildlife hazing.

4610.2.4 – Preventing the Collection of Wildlife Parts for Personal Use

Policies for response personnel must include prohibitions on the collection of whole or partial remains (parts) of wildlife for personal use. Wildlife parts include, but are not limited to, bones, feathers, teeth, claws, ivory, and pelts. Wildlife agencies will provide information on prohibitions on the collection of whole or partial wildlife remains for personal use to the Federal and State OSCs. The Federal and State OSCs can then incorporate this information into response policies and provide it to all response parties.

4610.2.5 – Preventing Wildlife Exposure to Shoreline Treatment Chemicals

Wildlife can be exposed to cleaning agents and bioremediation substances used for shoreline treatment. Wildlife agency representatives will evaluate potential wildlife exposure and subsequent irritation, injury, or death. Wildlife agency representatives will provide recommendations to the Federal and State OSCs on appropriate avoidance and deterrent measures that should be included in shoreline treatment plans and procedures. In addition to OSC approval, the use of these agents must have the concurrence of the ARRT representatives from the EPA and State of Alaska. This concurrence should be obtained in consultation with DOC and DOI agencies when practical.

4610.3 – Wildlife Standards of Response

To ensure oiled wildlife is responded to appropriately, standards have been developed for wildlife response. The following sections provide the standards of response for:

- Migratory birds and eagles ([Section 4610.3.1](#))
- Whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals, and sea lions ([Section 4610.3.2](#))
- Sea otters in Alaska ([Section 4610.3.3](#))
- Polar bears in Alaska ([Section 4610.3.4](#))

4610.3.1 – Standards of Response for Migratory Birds and Eagles¹⁷

At a minimum, migratory bird responders must:

- Hold all necessary permits for bird-related response activities.
- Have experience in the capture, treatment, and care of oiled birds.
- Have experience conducting bird-related response activities within the ICS structure.
- Have sufficiently trained, equipped, and experienced staff as well as the ability to train and equip personnel and volunteers for bird-related response during an emergency response.
- Be able to quickly mobilize (within several days) to perform bird capture, field evaluation, and stabilization and transport, including to remote locations.
- Have access to appropriate facilities adequate for treating and housing oiled birds:
 - Be able to establish and operate bird intake, holding, and isolation areas within 12 to 24 hours of wildlife response activation.
 - Be able to establish and operate bird cleaning and pre-release areas within 48 hours of wildlife response activation.
- Hold an agreement with a licensed veterinarian, experienced in the treatment of oiled birds, to provide any necessary veterinary medical care.
- Use best practices as outlined in *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

4610.3.2 – Standards of Response for Whales, Dolphins, Porpoises, Seals, and Sea Lions

The NMFS Alaska Region Protected Resources Division developed preparedness standards for responders to assist with emergency response for marine mammals under NMFS's jurisdiction in Alaska. They can be found in the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and NMFS *Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Additionally, the NMFS *Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#) provide a foundation for coordination and communication between local, state, and federal oil spill response agencies and the marine mammal conservation, research, and welfare communities (including marine mammal stranding networks and research scientists). More specifically, these guidelines provide key information to, and standardize activities of, marine mammal responders to build and maintain oiled wildlife response readiness.

4610.3.3 – Standards of Response for Sea Otters in Alaska

At a minimum, sea otter responders must:

- Hold all necessary permits for sea otter-related response activities.
- Have sufficient numbers of extensively trained, proficient, and experienced sea otter response personnel, so as to not cause undue injury or death to oiled or unoled sea otters.

¹⁷ Adapted from *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

- Lists of trained and proficient personnel should be provided to USFWS as part of spill planning.
- Have experience conducting sea otter-related response activities within the ICS structure.
- Be sufficiently equipped for oiled sea otter response.
- Be able to quickly mobilize (within several days) personnel and equipment, including to remote locations, to perform sea otter capture, field evaluation, stabilization, and transport.
- Have access to facilities adequate for treating and housing oiled and unoled sea otters. Treatment facilities must include at a minimum:
 - Areas for triage/sedation;
 - Areas for cleaning/rinsing/drying;
 - Areas for recovery/holding (in quarantine) with access to heat, shade, and water;
 - A veterinary laboratory and equipment storage area; and
 - Staffing accommodations, including restrooms, sleeping, and dining areas.
- The treatment facility must be in an area where large quantities of water are available, with disposal capacity for oily, medical, and animal husbandry (food and fecal) waste.
- Medical care of oiled sea otters must be under the direction of a licensed veterinarian with experience or in-depth training in treating oiled sea otters.
- Use best practices as outlined in *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

4610.3.4 – Standards of Response for Polar Bears in Alaska

At a minimum, polar bear responders must:

- Hold all necessary permits for polar bear-related response activities.
- Have sufficient numbers of extensively trained, proficient, and experienced polar bear response personnel, so as to not cause undue injury or death to oiled or unoled polar bears.
 - Lists of trained and proficient personnel should be provided to USFWS as part of spill planning.
- Have experience conducting polar bear-related response activities within the ICS structure.
- Be sufficiently equipped for oiled polar bear response.
- Be able to quickly mobilize (within several days; within 8 hours for bear hazing/deterrence) personnel and equipment, including to remote locations, to perform polar bear hazing/deterrence, capture, field evaluation, stabilization, and transport.
- Have access to appropriate facilities adequate for treating and housing oiled and unoled polar bears. Treatment facilities must include at a minimum:
 1. Portable bear cages of a minimum size that equals twice the length of the animal (and the mechanics/trailers to move them);
 2. Areas for triage/sedation;
 3. Areas for cleaning/rinsing/drying;
 4. Areas for recovery/holding (in quarantine) with access to heat, shade, and water;
 5. A veterinary laboratory and equipment storage area; and
 6. Staffing accommodations, including restrooms, sleeping, and dining areas.

- The treatment facility must be in an area where large quantities of water are available, with disposal capacity for oily, medical, and animal husbandry (food and fecal) waste.
- All medical care of polar bears must be under the direction of a licensed veterinarian experienced or trained in polar bear medicine.
- Use best practices, protocols, and procedures in *USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

4610.4 – Wildlife Response Strategies

In an actual or potential oil spill, Federal and State OSCs will receive input from wildlife agency representatives to protect wildlife RAR, including sensitive species and their habitats and wildlife concentration areas. Because wildlife distribution can change with weather and seasons, this input can require on-scene observations by appropriate trained personnel, such as wildlife agency representatives or other contracted wildlife professionals. If *in situ* burning or dispersant use is considered, wildlife agency representatives will provide input to the Federal and State OSCs via the process outlined in Appendices III and VI of the *Alaska RCP*, available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage.

Though wildlife protection strategies are discussed in-depth in *Operations* ([Section 3000](#)), it is important that both Operations and Planning/EU staff are familiar with these strategies. The following sections provide information on:

[4610.4.1 – Primary Response Strategies](#)

[4610.4.2 – Secondary Response Strategies](#)

[4610.4.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies](#)

Information on primary, secondary, and tertiary response strategies for wildlife species (or species group) not addressed elsewhere in the WPG is provided in [Section 9740.2](#).

4610.4.1 – Primary Response Strategies

Primary response strategies emphasize controlling the release and spread of spilled oil at the source to prevent or reduce contamination of potentially affected species and their habitats. Primary response includes strategies such as mechanical cleanup, on-water recovery, protective booming, *in situ* burning, and dispersant use. The removal of oiled debris and oiled wildlife carcasses, both in water and on land, are also primary response strategies. See *Primary Response Strategies* ([Section 3640.2.1](#)) for detailed information.

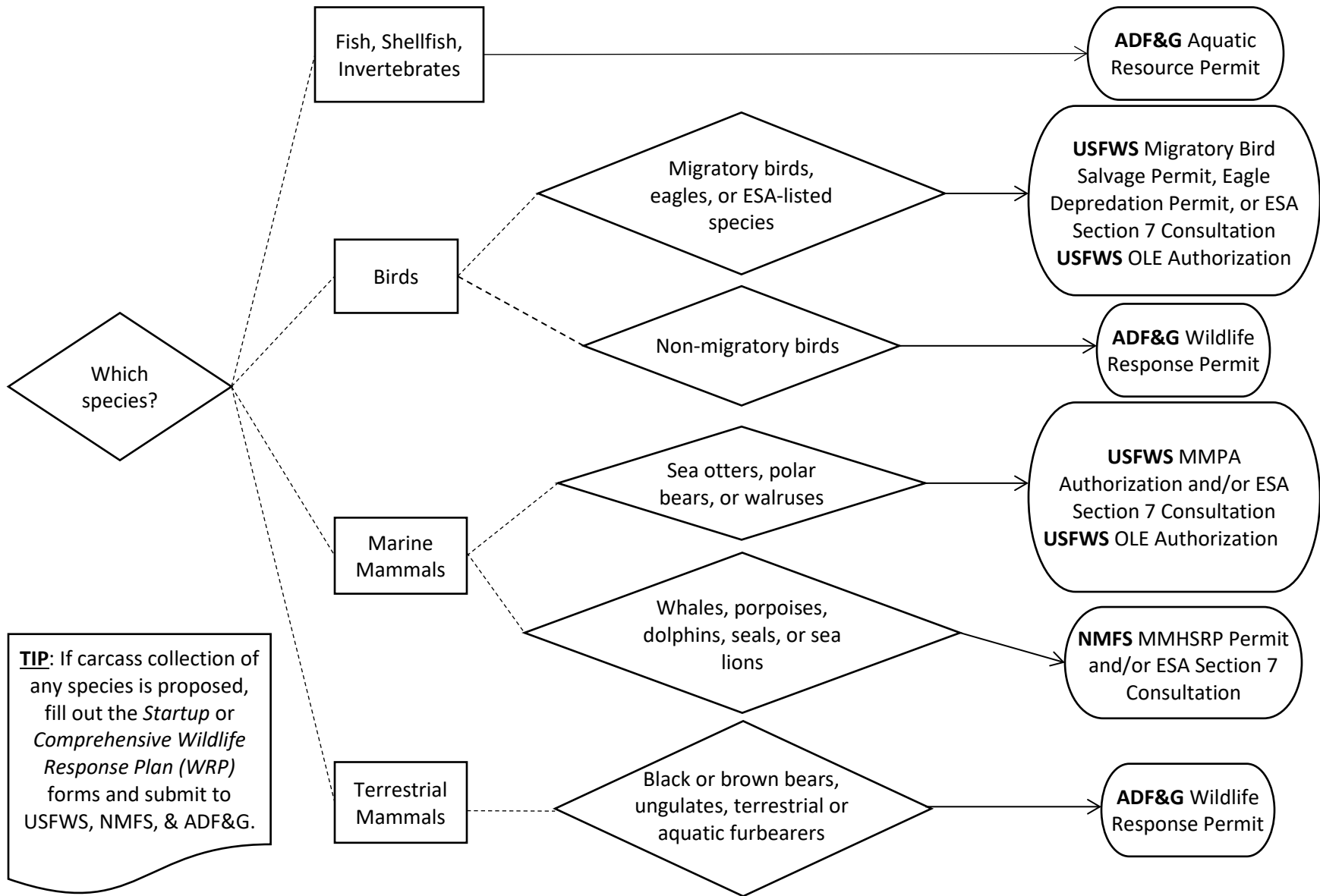
Both oiled and unoiled carcasses in the vicinity of a spill will need to be removed from the environment as soon as possible to minimize, or prevent, secondary contamination of scavengers, such as raptors, bears, and small terrestrial mammals. The collection of oiled wildlife carcasses will need to be performed, as described in [Section 3630.2.1.1](#), to document impacts to wildlife from a spill, and for law enforcement and NRDAR purposes. Wildlife agency representatives overseeing wildlife response activities will develop, when appropriate, incident-specific protocols for carcass collection in conjunction with appropriate wildlife agency investigative or law enforcement personnel, federal and state NRDAR Trustees, and wildlife agency scientists.

See [Figure 4-1](#) and [Table 3-4](#) for authorizations and permit requirements for primary response strategies, including for removal of oiled carcasses; for FOSC consultation with USFWS and NMFS for

species listed under the ESA or MMPA; and for compliance with other wildlife statutes (Sections [1600](#), [1700](#), and [4800](#)).

To request approval for the collection of carcasses, responders should fill out a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submit it to the wildlife agencies.

Figure 4-1: Carcass Collection Permits Flow Chart. See also [Table 3-4](#) for specific authorization and permit information.



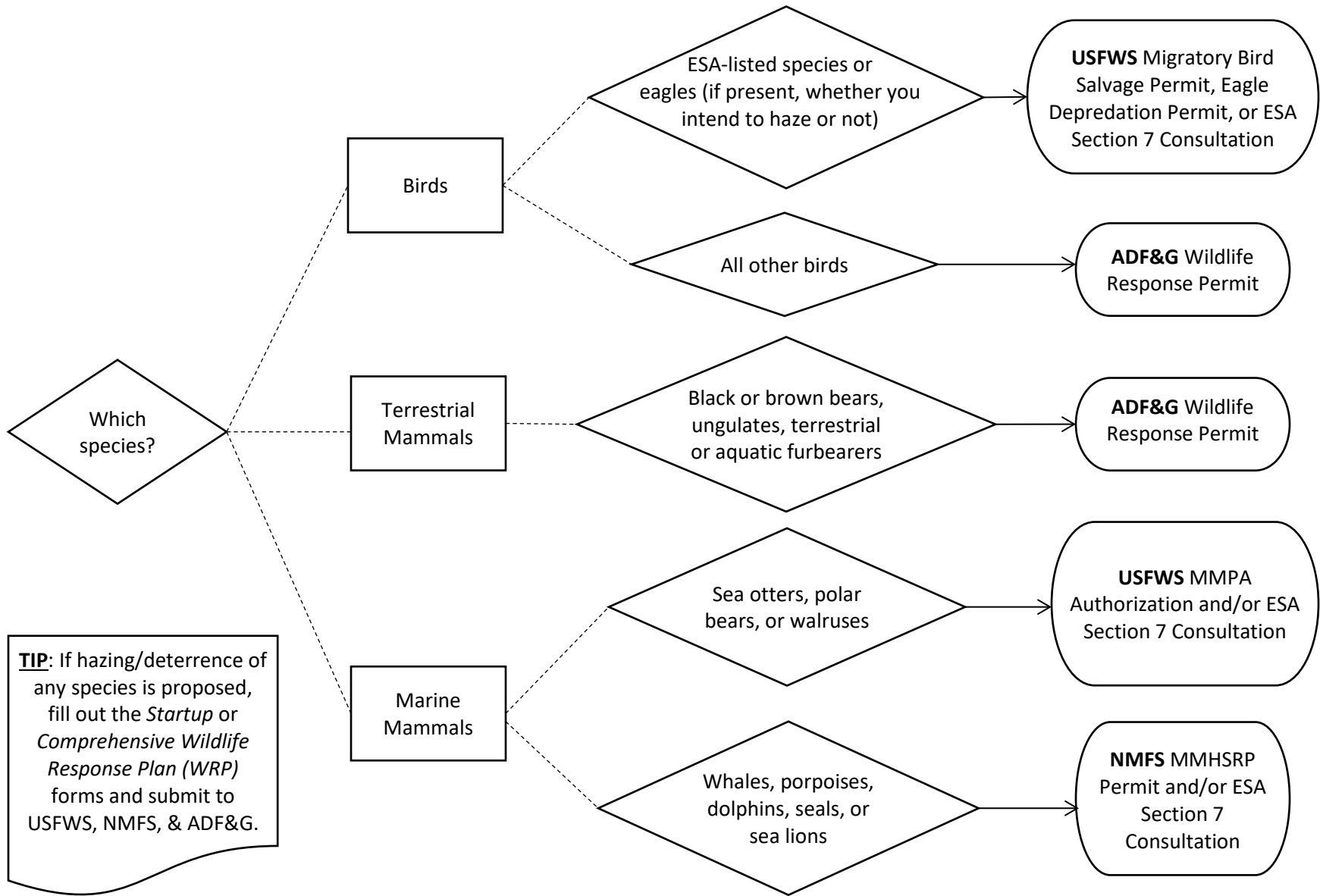
4610.4.2 – Secondary Response Strategies

Secondary response strategies for protecting wildlife emphasize keeping wildlife away from oiled areas. These strategies include passive hazing and deterrence techniques, such as visual methods (e.g., floating or stationary human effigies, streamers, or helium-filled balloons) or physical barriers (e.g., fencing and netting), and active techniques, such as auditory deterrence (e.g., propane cannons and audio-visual alarms). Secondary response strategies also include the pre-emptive capture, handling, transportation, short-term holding, and release of unoiled wildlife.

Only authorized and trained personnel may conduct these activities. See *Secondary Response Strategies* ([Section 3640.2.2](#)) for detailed information. See [Figure 4-2](#) and [Table 3-5](#) for authorizations and permit requirements, including for FOSC consultation with USFWS and NMFS for species listed under the ESA or MMPA as well as for compliance with other wildlife statutes ([Sections 1600, 1700, and 4800](#)).

To request approval for wildlife hazing/deterrence, fill out a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650; Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submit to the wildlife agencies. To request approval for pre-emptive capture, fill out and submit a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650.2; Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) to the wildlife agencies.

Figure 4-2: Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence Permits Flow Chart. See also [Table 3-5](#) for specific authorization and permit information.

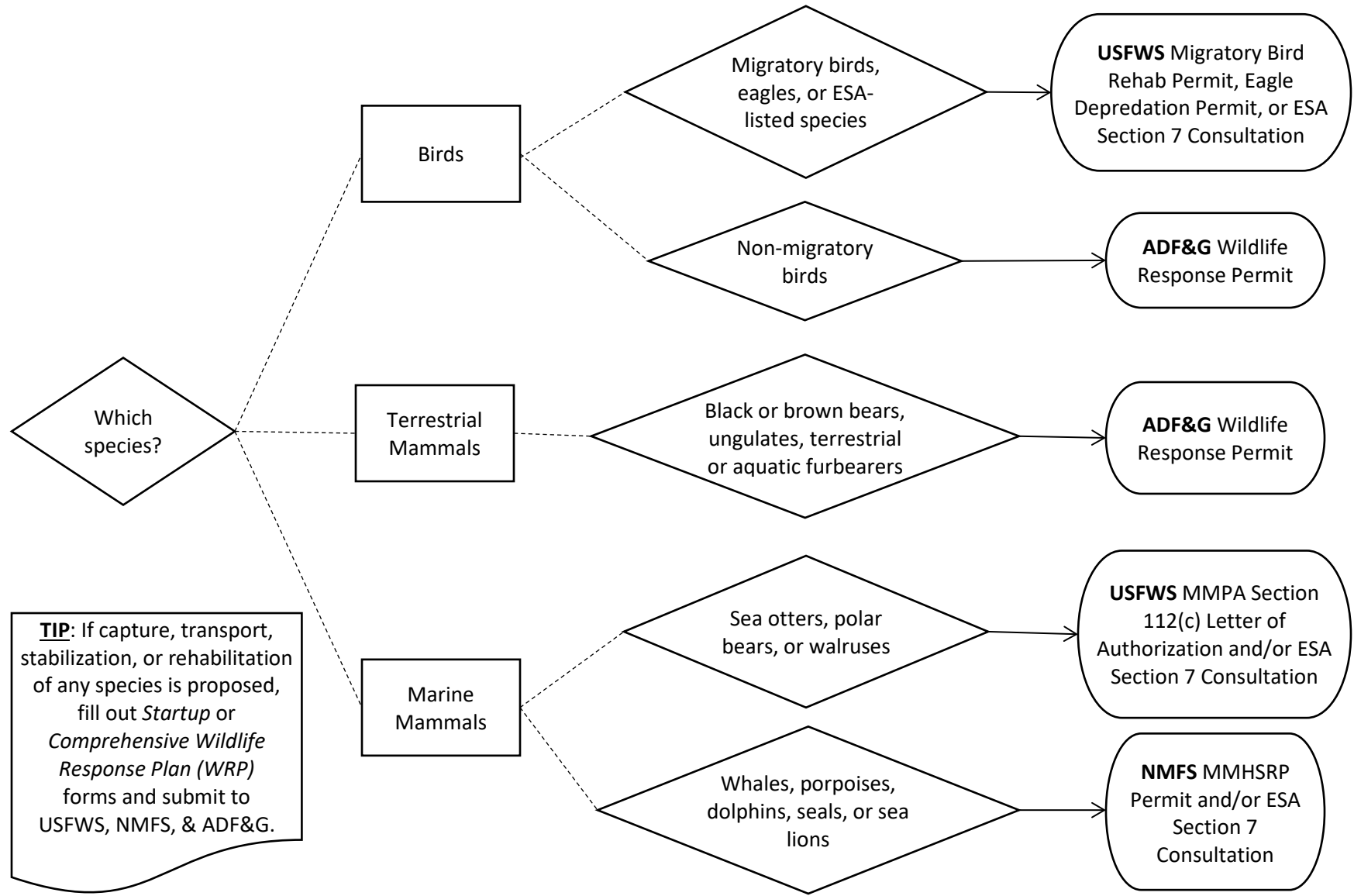


4610.4.3 – Tertiary Response Strategies

Tertiary response strategies for protecting wildlife include capturing, handling, transporting, rehabilitating, holding, and releasing oiled or injured wildlife. They are detailed in *Tertiary Response Strategies* ([Section 3640.2.3](#)). See [Table 3-6](#) and [Figure 4-3](#) for more information about required authorizations and permits.

To request approval for any tertiary response activities, fill out a Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)) and submit to the wildlife agencies.

Figure 4-3: Wildlife Capture, Transport, Stabilization, or Rehabilitation Permits Flow Chart. See also [Table 3-6](#) for specific authorization and permit information.



4800 – REQUIRED CORRESPONDENCE, PERMITS & CONSULTATION

Implementation of wildlife response activities may require specific authorizations, permits, or consultation. The following sections summarize these requirements:

[4810 – Emergency Endangered Species Act \(ESA\) Consultations](#)

[4820 – Permits](#)

[4820.1 – Fish and Wildlife Permit Tools](#)

4810 – Emergency Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultations

The ESA provides a means to protect threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA requires each federal agency to ensure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize ESA-listed species or adversely modify their designated critical habitats. Regulations for conducting section 7 consultation are set forth in 50 CFR Part 402. Where emergency¹⁸ actions in response to an actual or potential spill (such as overflights or spill response tactics) may affect ESA-listed species or their designated critical habitats, the federal agency conducting, authorizing, or funding the response (i.e., action agency; typically, the USCG or EPA for spill response) will need to consult with the USFWS and NMFS regarding potential impacts to species under their respective jurisdictions.¹⁹

ESA regulations recognize that an emergency may require expedited consultation (50 CFR §402.05). Emergency consultation procedures allow action agencies to avoid violating ESA prohibitions and incorporate ESA-listed species concerns during their response to an emergency. [Figure 4-4](#) summarizes the emergency section 7 consultation process.

The initial stages of emergency consultations usually are done by email or telephone, followed as soon as possible (within 48 hours) by written correspondence (typically e-mail) from the USFWS and NMFS, using the forms developed for Alaska ([Section 9740.3.7](#)). The written record establishes a timeline and provides the action agency with formal documentation of commitments made during the initial contact. As soon as possible, the USFWS and NMFS will offer recommendations to minimize the effects of the emergency response actions on listed species or their designated critical habitats. If this initial review indicates the action may result in jeopardy to the species or adverse modification to designated critical habitat, with no apparent means of reducing or avoiding the effects, the action agency must be notified and USFWS's and NMFS's conclusions documented. The NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC) may serve as a liaison between the action agency and USFWS and NMFS.

¹⁸ An emergency is a situation involving an act of God, disasters, casualties, national defense, or security emergencies, etc., and includes response activities that must be taken to prevent imminent loss of human life or property. Under no circumstances should a Services [USFWS and NMFS] representative obstruct an emergency response decision made by the action agency where human life is at stake (March 1998 USFWS and NMFS Endangered Species Consultation Handbook, available on the USFWS [Endangered Species Consultation Handbook](#) webpage).

¹⁹ The USEPA and USCG, as lead action agencies for the ARRT, jointly completed formal consultation under ESA section 7 with the USFWS and NMFS in 2015 on a programmatic biological assessment of implementation of the Alaska Regional Contingency Plan (then referred to as the Alaska Unified Plan; see [Section 9740.1.3](#)). The USFWS and NMFS each issued a biological opinion of that assessment. Implementation of the conservation recommendations, reasonable and prudent measures, and terms and conditions from those biological opinions occurs through the emergency ESA section 7 consultation process outlined in the WPG.

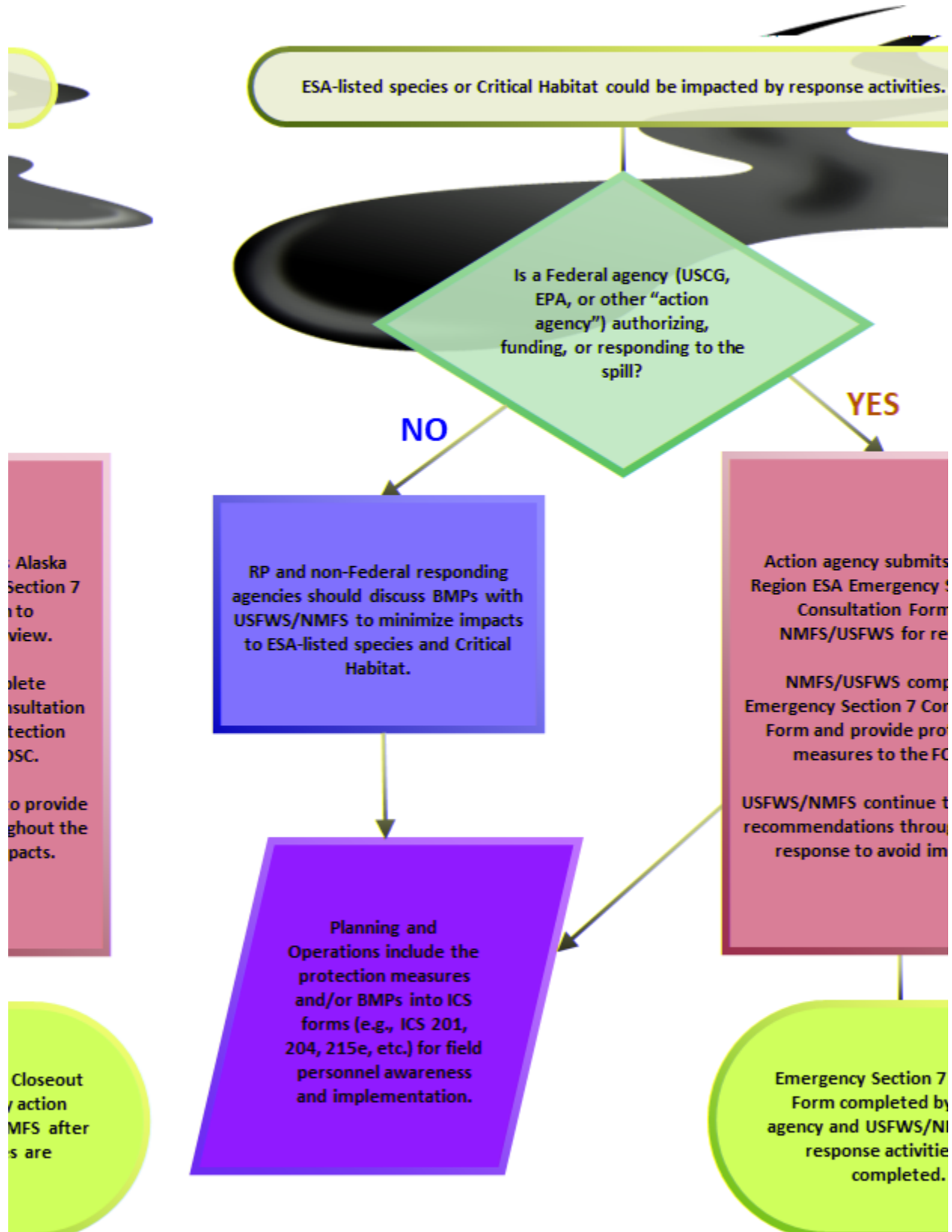
In Alaska, the USFWS and NMFS will work directly with the action agency and the SSC to provide ESA protection measures (which may include Mitigation Measures, Reasonable and Prudent Measures, Terms and Conditions, and Conservation Recommendations, as defined under the ESA) and integrate them into the IAP. Integration into the IAP informs all responders about their responsibilities. ESA protection measures shall be added or modified as the response effort changes (e.g., for new or modified tactics) to reduce impacts to ESA-listed species. All interactions with listed species during a response must be documented and reported.

After an emergency response is complete, the action agency is responsible for compiling wildlife observation data (collected on the *Wildlife Observation Form* ([Section 9740.3.2](#))) and assessing possible effects. The USFWS and NMFS can work closely with the action agency or the SSC to provide expertise and support prior to issuing the final section 7 documentation. Final section 7 documentation may include a letter of concurrence for an incident where no take is expected to have occurred or a biological opinion for an incident where take is likely to have occurred.

Template forms used by the USCG, NMFS, and USFWS in Alaska for initiating and closing-out the emergency ESA section 7 consultation for incident response actions are in [Section 9740.3.7](#). The USCG should contact NMFS and USFWS (see [Initial Emergency Contacts](#)) to request incident-specific emergency ESA section 7 consultation as soon as possible.

While the timing of emergencies is unpredictable, the types of emergencies that may affect listed species or designated critical habitat can be determined in advance. It is essential that during the ACP planning process, Area Committees engage with USFWS and NMFS to develop or modify the ACP and response strategies. By anticipating potential effects prior to implementing response actions, decisions can be made rapidly during a spill, impacts to ESA-listed species from response actions can be minimized, and implementation of response strategies specifically designed to protect listed species and designated critical habitat can be achieved.

Figure 4-4: Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation Flow Chart.



4820 – Permits

Implementation of wildlife response activities may require specific authorizations, permits, or consultation. See [Section 4820.1](#) for permitting tools for wildlife response.

4820.1 – Fish and Wildlife Permit Tools

Information on fish and wildlife permits can be found in [Table 4-1](#), below, and throughout [Section 3000](#) and [Section 4000](#), notably:

- *Authorizations and Permits for Carcass Collection* ([Section 3640.2.1.2](#))
 - [Table 3-4](#): Wildlife authorizations and permits for primary response strategies.
- *Authorizations and Permits for Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence* ([Section 3640.2.2.1.1](#))
- *Authorizations and Permits for Pre-emptive Capture* ([Section 3640.2.2.2.1](#))
- *Authorizations and Permits for Secondary Response Strategies* ([Section 3640.2.2.3](#))
 - [Table 3-5](#): Wildlife authorizations and permits for secondary response strategies.
- *Authorizations and Permits for Tertiary Response Activities* ([Section 3640.2.3.2](#))
 - [Table 3-6](#): Wildlife authorizations and permits for tertiary response strategies.
- [Figure 4-1](#): Carcass Collection Permits Flow Chart.
- [Figure 4-2](#): Wildlife Hazing/Deterrence Permits Flow Chart.
- [Figure 4-3](#): Wildlife Capture, Transport, Stabilization, or Rehabilitation Permits Flow Chart.
- [Figure 4-4](#): Emergency ESA Section 7 Consultation Flow Chart.

A summary of permits and authorization required during spill response activities can be found on the ADEC [Permits Tool](#) page.

Table 4-1: Wildlife Authorizations and Permits Required for Collecting, Hazing/Deterring, or Holding Wildlife.

Activity	Migratory birds	Sea otters, walrus, and polar bears	Whales, porpoises, dolphins, seals, and sea lions	Terrestrial mammals, furbearers, and non-migratory birds	Fish, shellfish, and invertebrates	Bald or golden eagles	Threatened or endangered species ¹
Carcass Collection	USFWS Migratory Bird Salvage Permit & OLE Authorization ²	USFWS Permit & OLE Authorization ²	NMFS MMHSRP Permit ³	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	USFWS Permit & OLE Authorization ²	NMFS/USFWS ESA section 7 consultation ⁴ & USFWS OLE Authorization ²
Haze/Deter	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	USFWS MMPA Authorization	NMFS MMHSRP Permit ³	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	N/A	USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit	NMFS/USFWS ESA section 7 consultation ⁴
Capture, Transport, Stabilize, or Rehabilitate	USFWS Migratory Bird Rehab Permit	USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	NMFS MMHSRP Permit ³	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	N/A	USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit	NMFS/USFWS ESA section 7 consultation ⁴

Acronyms: ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; ESA = Endangered Species; LOA = Letter of Authorization; MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act; MMHSRP = Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (NMFS); NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service; OLE = Office of Law Enforcement (USFWS); USCG = U.S. Coast Guard; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Note: See [Initial Emergency Contacts](#) for a list of agency personnel to contact for appropriate authorizations and permits.

¹ An ADF&G permit is required to deter, collect, or hold any species on the state endangered species list that is not on the federal endangered species list.

² For species managed by USFWS (i.e., migratory birds, eagles, sea otters, walrus, and polar bears).

³ Request verbal case-by-case authorization from the NMFS Regional Stranding Program Coordinator or associated co-investigator.

⁴ ESA section 7 consultation between federal action agencies (i.e., USCG or EPA) and consulting agencies (USFWS and NMFS).

9000 – APPENDICES

9700 – RESPONSE REFERENCES

9740 – Environmental, Fish & Wildlife Protection Plans

The WPG is incorporated by reference into the *Alaska RCP* and the four Alaska ACPS as Appendices. The following sections are appendices of the WPG and include:

[9740.1 – Wildlife Protection Guidelines History & Revision Process](#)

[9740.2 – Species Information](#)

[9740.2.1 – Migratory Birds](#)

[9740.2.2 – Marine Mammals](#)

[9740.2.3 – Terrestrial Mammals](#)

[9740.3 – Wildlife Response Tactics, Guidelines, and Forms](#)

[9740.3.1 – Wildlife Response Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#)

[9740.3.2 – Tactic: Wildlife Reconnaissance \(Recon\)](#)

[9740.3.3 – Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses](#)

[9740.3.4 – Wildlife Capture Forms](#)

[9740.3.5 – Checklist: Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response](#)

[9740.3.6 – Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels](#)

[9740.3.7 – Initiation and Close-Out Forms for Section 7 Consultation](#)

[9740.3.8 – Wildlife Response Plans \(WRPs\)](#)

[9740.3.8.1 – Startup WRP](#)

[9740.3.8.2 – Comprehensive WRP](#)

9740.1 – Wildlife Protection Guidelines History & Revision Process

In 1987, neither the National Oil and Hazardous Substance Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) nor the *Alaska Region Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (Alaska Region Contingency Plan)* included guidance for responding to oiled wildlife. The ARRT established the Oiled Wildlife Working Group in September 1987 to develop guidelines that FOSCs could use during a federally funded oil spill response. The Oiled Wildlife Working Group was renamed the Wildlife Protection Working Group, then the Wildlife Protection Committee (WPC), in 1999 and 2012, respectively.

9740.1.1 – WPC Organization and WPG Versions

The WPC initially included six representatives from federal and state agencies, including the ADF&G; DOC, NOAA; USCG; DOI, USFWS; and the DOI Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC), whose representative chairs the WPC. Representatives from NMFS and ADEC were added in 1989 and 2010, respectively. Because of outreach conducted in 1988, the WPC invited one representative from each of three stakeholder groups (environmental organizations, Native groups, and the oil industry) to provide input. In 1992 and 2009, respectively, the Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet Regional Citizens' Advisory Councils (RCACs) and each of the 229 federally recognized tribes were invited to identify representatives to the WPC, as were Alaska-based OSROs and wildlife rehabilitation organizations.

The ARRT adopted its first charter in 2010; the WPC’s ARRT-approved charter followed in 2012. The current WPC is chaired by OEPC and includes the USFWS, NMFS, and ADF&G, with support from representatives of Alaska Native groups, the environmental community, RCACs, the oil industry, OSROs, wildlife rehabilitators, and ARRT member agencies (USCG, EPA, ADEC, USFS, and NOAA).

The first WPG was adopted by the ARRT on December 13, 1988. These were prepared after extensive background research, discussions with 45 representatives from Alaska Native organizations, environmental groups, and the oil industry; consultation with technical experts with relevant knowledge; and consultation of secondary sources. These WPG also incorporated public and agency review comments.

Revisions of the WPG were approved by the ARRT in 1991, 1993, 1997, 2002, and 2012. In 2020 the WPG was removed as an annex to the superseded Unified Plan and reformatted as a standalone document incorporated by reference as Appendix IV of the *Alaska RCP* and the four Alaska ACPs. The revised WPG was released for public comment in August (version 2020.1). This seventh revision of the WPG (version 2020.2; September, 2023) is an administrative update to version 2020.1. See [Record of Changes](#) for details about the updates in this version of the WPG.

Future substantive revisions of the WPG will also be made available for public comment and will incorporate current knowledge, procedures, and best practices for wildlife spill response.

9740.1.2 – Objectives

Initial objectives of the WPG were focused on procedures and protocols for capturing and treating oiled wildlife. The objectives evolved into three strategies to protect wildlife during a discharge or potential discharge of petroleum products: keeping oil away from wildlife, keeping wildlife away from oil, and caring for oiled wildlife. Those wildlife protection strategies are summarized and described in more detail in Sections [3620-3650](#), [4610](#), and [9740.2](#).

Based on experiences during (but not limited to) the 1989 T/V *Exxon Valdez*, 1996 M/V *Citrus*, and 2004 M/V *Selendang Ayu* oil spills, additional general wildlife protection considerations were added to the WPG to ensure that all incident response activities minimized or prevented (to the extent possible) adverse effects to wildlife in Alaska. These included:

1. Introduction of rats to rat-free islands ([Section 4610.2.1](#));
2. Unnecessary or illegal disturbance to sensitive species and habitats such as nesting raptors, seabird rookeries, and marine mammal haulouts and pupping areas ([Section 4610.2.2](#));
3. Potential injury or disturbance of bears by spill response personnel ([Section 4610.2.3](#));
4. Illegal collection of wildlife parts by spill response personnel ([Section 4610.2.4](#)); and
5. Exposure of wildlife to cleaning agents or bioremediation substances used for shoreline treatment ([Section 4610.2.5](#)).

9740.1.3 – WPG and Contingency Planning in Alaska

Plans for oil spill response in Alaska included the 1994 *Alaska Federal/State Preparedness Plan for Response to Oil and Hazardous Substance Discharges/Releases (Unified Plan)*, with 10 subarea plans,

which fulfilled the requirements of the *Alaska RCP*, available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage, as set forth by the NCP. At that time, the WPG was included in the *Unified Plan*. A USCG-directed transition from the *Unified Plan* to clearly delineate USCG and EPA jurisdiction within area plans resulted in the 2018 *Alaska RCP* and four ACPs. Because of the nationally directed content limitations of the *Alaska RCP* and the logistical challenges of inclusion in four ACPs, the WPG was not incorporated into these planning documents. Instead, the WPG is organized and numbered to match the structure of the four ACPs and is incorporated by reference into the *Alaska RCP* and four ACPs.

9740.1.4 – Related Wildlife Plans

The Pribilof Islands Wildlife Protection Subgroup developed specific protection guidelines for migratory birds and fur seals in the Pribilof Islands in 1998. The *Pribilof Islands Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response* (PI WPG) can be found on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

In 1999, a joint Canada-U.S. Dixon Entrance (CANUSDIX) Wildlife Response Working Group (including U.S. and Canadian federal, state, and provincial wildlife agency representatives) was formed. In 2003, they developed the guidance document, *Canada-United States Marine Spill Pollution Contingency Plan CANUSDIX Annex-Operation Appendix: Wildlife Response Guidelines*. This guidance is consistent with the WPG and is focused on wildlife in the Dixon Entrance trans-boundary area between Alaska and British Columbia.

9740.2 – Species Information

The following sections include protection priorities and response strategies for migratory birds, marine mammals, and terrestrial mammals. Species-specific information is also provided for marine and terrestrial animals:

[9740.2.1 – Migratory Birds](#)

[9740.2.1.1 – Migratory Bird Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.1.2 – Migratory Bird Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.2 – Marine Mammals](#)

[9740.2.2.1 – Marine Mammal Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.2.2 – Marine Mammal Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.2.3 – Marine Mammal Information by Species](#)

[9740.2.3 – Terrestrial Mammals](#)

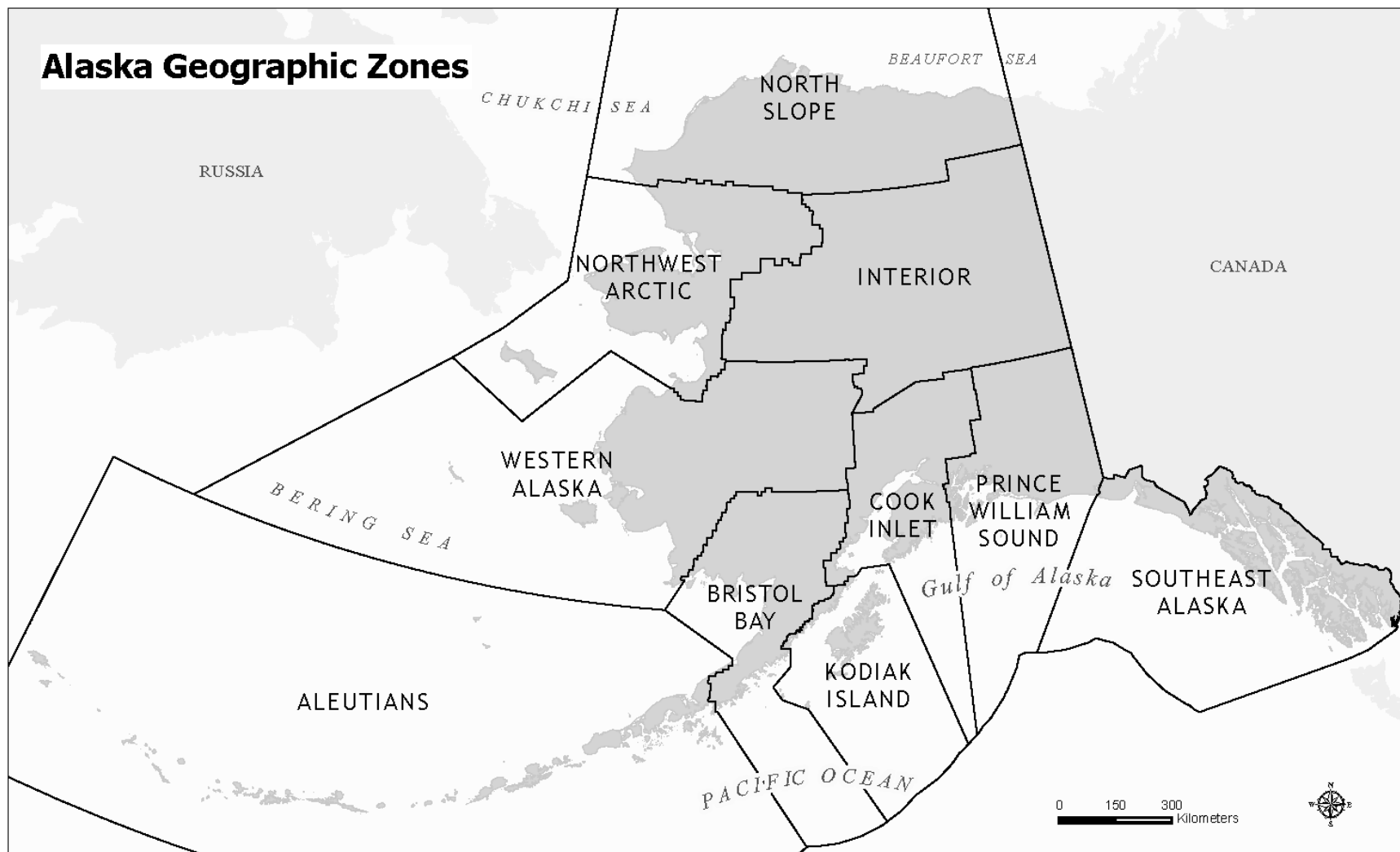
[9740.2.3.1 – Terrestrial Mammal Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.3.2 – Terrestrial Mammal Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3 – Terrestrial Mammal Information by Species](#)

For ease of use in planning and response, the information presented for migratory birds and marine and terrestrial mammals is grouped by geographic zone ([Figure 9-1](#)), which follow the regional boundaries defined by state regulation 18 AAC 75.495. The geographic zones also correspond to the organization of the *Alaska Sensitive Areas Compendium*, August 2019 version, available on the ADEC [Area Plan](#) [References and Tools](#) webpage.

Figure 9-1: Geographic Zones in Alaska.



9740.2.1 – Migratory Birds

There are over 160 species of marine birds in Alaska (loons and grebes, seabirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl). Many of these marine birds also spend time on inland waters, particularly during the breeding season.

The following sections provide information on migratory bird protection priorities and response strategies:

[9740.2.1.1 – Migratory Bird Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.1.2 – Migratory Bird Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.1.2.1 – Primary Response](#)

[9740.2.1.2.2 – Secondary Response](#)

[9740.2.1.2.2.1 – Deterrence Activities](#)

[9740.2.1.2.2.2 – Pre-emptive Capture](#)

[9740.2.1.3 – Tertiary Response](#)

9740.2.1.1 – Migratory Bird Protection Priorities

Prioritized response strategies for different species or species groups may be established on an incident-specific basis.

Species may be prioritized in the planning area based on whether:

1. The species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to impacts from an oil spill ([Table 9-1](#)). In general, vulnerability to oil spills correlates with time spent in nearshore waters and coastal habitats. For example:
 - a. Seabirds (such as puffins, murres, auklets, petrels, shearwaters, kittiwakes, cormorants, albatrosses, and gulls) are found on oceans from coast to the high seas; most are on shore only during nesting season, but adults continue to feed at sea.
 - b. Waterfowl (geese, swans, and ducks) and diving birds (loons and grebes) are often in nearshore waters; both groups use shores for nesting and waterfowl use shores for resting.
 - c. Shorebirds (such as sandpipers and turnstones) are generally found on shore (tidal mudflats and rocks).
 - d. Raptors (such as bald eagles and peregrine falcons) are generally not considered susceptible, except when feeding on marine birds or scavenging oiled carcasses.
2. The species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population.
3. The species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies (e.g., ESA-listed).
4. The species is an important subsistence resource.
5. The species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

Specific habitats may also be prioritized ([Table 9-2](#)).

Priority bird species by geographic zone ([Figure 9-1](#)) are shown in [Table 9-3](#).

Table 9-1: Bird Species Group Susceptibility to Oiling.

Species Group	Susceptibility to Oiling
Alcids (murre, puffins)	
Ducks, geese, and swans	
Sea and bay ducks	High
Loons and Grebes	
Raptors (feeding in coastal environments)	
Cormorants	
Gulls	Medium
Waders (herons, egrets, bitterns)	
Cranes	
Plovers, sandpipers	
Songbirds	Low
Raptors	
Pelagic birds (albatross, petrels, fulmars)	

Table 9-2: Important Bird Habitats that Are High Priority Protection Areas, Depending on Season.

Habitat	Characteristics and Specific Locations	Seasons Used
Staging Areas	<p>Birds congregate in migration stopover areas in immense flocks during spring and fall migrations. Shorebirds and waterfowl gather at lagoons and estuaries to feed and rest.</p> <p>Critical areas in the spring include: Copper River Delta, Izembek Lagoon, Kachemak Bay, parts of Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound, Bristol Bay estuaries, and the Stikine River Delta. Critical areas in the fall include: Izembek Lagoon, Bristol Bay estuaries, parts of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and Cook Inlet, and lagoons of the Beaufort and Chukchi Sea coasts.</p> <p>In addition, migrating seabirds are concentrated at Unimak Pass and waterfowl (e.g., spectacled eiders) are concentrated in Ledyard Bay during the spring and fall.</p>	Spring, Fall
Seabird Colonies	<p>Alaska seabirds nest in over 1,300 colonies in the spring and summer. The number of seabirds in these colonies ranges from a few dozen to several million birds.</p> <p>Birds are vulnerable to oil contamination when they are in large flocks on the water near the colony. Highest priority should be given to colonies containing rare species, the largest colonies in a region, and those with higher species diversity.</p>	Summer
Pelagic Seabird Feeding Areas	<p>Most seabirds obtain their food at sea away from land. While they may feed in areas that are close to land or more than 100 miles offshore, they are often concentrated in small areas. As a result, the presence of oil in some feeding areas could negatively affect the majority of seabirds in the region.</p> <p>Feeding areas shift with the tides and seasons.</p>	All year
Wintering Areas	<p>These include the sheltered ice-free inlets of southern Alaska, especially around Kodiak Island, Prince William Sound, and southeastern Alaska; localized parts of the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea; and the edge of the ice pack as well as open leads in the pack ice.</p> <p>Other important coastal habitats such as marshes, estuaries, and lagoons are sensitive to oil contamination and will need to be protected even when no birds are present.</p>	Winter; all year

Table 9-3: Status¹ of Avian Species of Concern by Geographic Zone in Alaska. Criteria for inclusion are: The population of the species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population; the species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to impacts from an oil spill; the species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies; the species is an important subsistence resource; or the species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

Species (Species Group) ²	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope	Interior
Yellow-billed Loon (DB)	P	P	P	P	--	P	--	P	P	--
Loons (other) (DB)	P	P / S	P / S	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P
Grebes (DB)	P	P	P	P	P	P	--	P / S	A	P
Trumpeter Swans (WF)	U	P / S	P / S	A	A	A	A	R	--	P / S
Tundra Swans (WF)	P	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Greater White-fronted Goose (WF)	U	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Snow Goose (WF)	U	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Emperor Goose (WF)	A	U	U	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	R / S	P / S
Black Brant (WF)	U	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	A
Canada Goose (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Aleutian Canada Goose (WF)	--	--	--	--	--	P	--	--	--	--
Cackling Canada Goose (WF)	--	--	--	--	S	S	P / S	--	--	P / S
Dusky Canada Goose (WF)	--	P	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Long-tailed Duck (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Greater Scaup (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	U / S	P / S
Common Merganser (WF)	P	P / S	P / S	P	P	P	R	R	--	R
Red-breasted Merganser (WF)	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	R / S	R
Northern Pintail (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Bufflehead (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	R / S	R / S	A	P / S
Goldeneye (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	U / S	U / S	A	P / S

¹ A = Accidental; O = Pelagic (offshore); P = Present; R = Rare; S = Subsistence Species; U = Uncommon; CS = Candidate Species; ES = Endangered Species; ES? = Thought to be extinct; TS = Threatened Species; SES = State Endangered Species

² DB = Other Diving Bird; RA = Raptor; SE = Seabird; SH= Shorebird; UB = Upland Bird; WF = Waterfowl; DPS = Distinct Population Segment

Species (Species Group) ²	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope	Interior
Northern Shoveler (WF)	U	P	P	R	R	R	U / S	U	R	P / S
Canvasback (WF)	U	U / S	U	R	R	R	R	R	A	P / S
Spectacled Eider (WF)	A (TS)	A (TS)	A (TS)	R (TS)	P (TS)	R (TS)	P (TS)	P (TS)	U / S (TS)	--
Steller's Eider (WF)	R (TS)	R (TS)	P (TS)	P (TS)	P (TS)	P (TS)	U (TS)	U (TS)	U / S (TS)	--
King Eider (WF)	R	U	U	P	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	--
Common Eider (WF)	R	U	U	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	--
Harlequin Duck (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	U / S	U / S	R	U
American Widgeon (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	U / S	P / S
Green-winged Teal (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	U / S	P / S
Scoter (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	U / S	P / S
Mallard (WF)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	R / S	P / S
Bald Eagles (RA)	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	R	A	P
Northern Goshawk (RA)	U	U	U	U	U	U	R	R	--	P
Queen Charlotte Goshawk (Southeast DPS RA)	U	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Osprey (RA)	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	A	R
American Peregrine Falcon (RA)	P	P	P	P	U	P	P	--	--	P
Arctic Peregrine Falcon (RA)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Peale's Peregrine Falcon (RA)	P	P	P	P	--	P	--	--	--	--
Snowy Owl (RA)	R	U	U	U	U	U	U	U	U / S	R
Sandhill Crane (SH)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	U / S	P / S
Wandering Tattler (SH)	U	P	P	U	U	U	U	U	A	U
Bristle-thighed Curlew (SH)	A	A	A	R	R	R	U	U	R	A
Eskimo Curlew (SH)	--	--	--	--	--	--	ES? / SES	--	--	ES? / SES

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² DB = Other Diving Bird; RA = Raptor; SE = Seabird; SH= Shorebird; UB = Upland Bird; WF = Waterfowl; DPS = Distinct Population Segment

Species (Species Group) ²	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope	Interior
American Golden Plover (SH)	U	P	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P	P
Oystercatcher (SH)	P	P / S	P	P	P / S	P / S	/S	--	--	--
Semipalmated Plover (SH)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	U	P
Aleutian Tern (SE)	A	U	U	U	U	R	U	U	A	--
Arctic Tern (SE)	P / S	P / S	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	U	P
Gulls (SE)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P
Murres (SE)	P	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	A
Guillemots (SE)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	U	A
Murrelets (SE)	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	U / S	U	R	--
Marbled Murrelet (SE)	P	P	P	U	U	U	A	A	--	--
Kittlitz's Murrelet (SE)	U / CS	P / CS	P / CS	U / CS	U / CS	U / CS	U / CS	U / CS	R / CS	--
Auklets (SE)	U	U	U	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	--	--
Puffins (SE)	U	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	R	--
Northern Fulmar (SE)	U	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	--
Red-legged Kittiwake (SE)	--	R	R	P	P	P / S	R	R	--	A
Black-legged Kittiwake (SE)	U / S	P	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	A
Cormorants (SE)	P	P / S	P	P	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	R	A
Short-tailed Albatross (SE)	A / O / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES / SES	A / ES	--	--
Grouse (UB)	P	U / S	U / S	R	R / S	R	R / S	R / S	--	P / S
Ptarmigan (UB)	P	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S

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9740.2.1.2 – Migratory Bird Response Strategies

Untreated oiled birds often die. Feather oiling results in compromised ability to thermoregulate and subsequent hypothermia, which can prove deadly in the cold waters of Alaska. Depending on the type of oil and its toxicity, birds can also suffer toxic effects through dermal contact with oil, ingestion of oiled prey, or ingestion of oil during preening of oiled feathers.

Birds exhibit obvious immediate behavioral changes in response to exposure to oil. In particular, they preen excessively to clean oil from their feathers. Excessive preening may cause them to abandon normal feeding, nesting, and movement, resulting in weakness and increased vulnerability to hypothermia and predation. Marine birds may move to land and become more vulnerable to predation. Oil on breeding birds' feathers can be transferred to eggs and result in embryo death. Dermal contact with oil can cause burns and lesions. These burns and lesions may become infected or alter feather structure in growing feathers. Ingested oil can affect birds' metabolic processes, potentially resulting in long-term, chronic effects even after no apparent oil is present.

The severity of oiling impacts on birds will depend on many factors including, but not limited to:

- Degree of oiling and length of exposure.
- Health of the birds prior to exposure.
- Toxicity of the product spilled.
- Distribution of the spilled product in the environment.

9740.2.1.2.1 – Primary Response

Primary response strategies emphasize preventing oil from reaching birds or their concentration areas through mechanical cleanup, on-water recovery (skimming), booms, *in situ* burning, or chemical use (e.g., herders and dispersants). Mechanical cleanup and recovery are preferable to avoid air quality issues associated with *in situ* burning, and exposure to additional chemicals including dispersants or dispersed oil. (Additional information on effects of dispersants on birds can be found in the Coastal Response Research Center (CRRRC) publication *2018 State of the Science of Dispersants and Dispersed Oil (DDO) in U.S. Arctic Waters: Ecotoxicity and Sublethal Impacts*, available on the [University of New Hampshire Coastal Response Research Center](#) webpage.) *In situ* burning and dispersant use will be used under procedures outlined in the *Alaska RCP*, Parts 3. A. (Chemical Dispersants) and 3.B. (*In Situ* Burning), available on the ADEC [Regional Contingency Plan](#) webpage.

Oiled debris and oiled wildlife carcasses should be removed from the environment as soon as possible to prevent secondary contamination of scavengers, including raptors. Secondary contamination can occur through 1) ingestion of oily carcasses and, 2) physical contact with oil on carcasses or other oiled debris. See [Section 3640.2.1.1](#) and the *Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses* ([Section 9740.3.3](#)) for additional information on carcass collection.

9740.2.1.2.2 – Secondary Response

Secondary response strategies emphasize keeping birds away from oiled areas by deterrence, moving birds from oiled areas using hazing, and pre-emptive capture, holding, and release of unoiled birds.

Sections [9740.2.1.2.2.1](#) and [9740.2.1.2.2.2](#) provide additional information about deterrence activities for and pre-emptive capture of birds, respectively.

9740.2.1.2.2.1 – Deterrence Activities

Deterrent techniques can be used to discourage birds from landing in or near oil-contaminated areas. If warranted, deterrence activities should be initiated as soon as possible following an oil spill to prevent birds from establishing or continuing regular use patterns within a contaminated area. The choice of an appropriate method will depend on incident-specific considerations, such as: the type of oil spilled, time of year, species in the area, and availability of appropriate equipment, materials, and trained personnel. A summary of deterrent methods, including a discussion of their effectiveness and their limitations, can be found in *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Any deterrence activity should ensure there is nearby clean, safe habitat to which birds may move. Because many deterrence techniques work by startling or frightening birds, they may acclimate, with effectiveness declining over time. The effectiveness of deterrence tactics and potential unintended effects to non-target species should be considered and assessed frequently.

Bird deterrence includes passive and active hazing methods, as well as the use of physical barriers to separate wildlife from spilled oil. [Table 9-4](#) shows the different methods and considerations for the use of each type. The examples provided include some of the most common methods but are not exhaustive.

Table 9-4. Bird deterrence and hazing methods, examples, and considerations.

Type	Method	Examples	Considerations
Passive hazing	Devices using wind-generated movement to create visual disturbances.	Human effigies Predator models Flags Balloons Reflective tape	Can be deployed and left unattended for short periods of time. Should be checked at least once per day and during and after high wind or wave events.
Active hazing	Noise-generating devices.	Gas-operated exploders, pyrotechnics, electronic sound generators Boats, aircraft, all-terrain vehicles	Requires periodic or continuous on-site attendance, depending on method used.
Physical barriers	Structures to minimize or prevent contact with oil.	Netting Fencing	May require periodic checks. May be effective for terrestrial incidents affecting wetlands and oil storage pits.

Only individuals trained and certified in bird deterrence techniques by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service within the last three years will be authorized to conduct migratory bird deterrence activities. Additional individuals may be approved by ADF&G on a case-by-case basis based on a thorough review of training protocols, training records, individual and organization experience, and incident details. This information must be included in the Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)). Oversight for migratory bird deterrence activities will be conducted by ADF&G and USFWS.

9740.2.1.2.2.1.1 – Bird Deterrence Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct bird deterrence in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting bird deterrence activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Deterrence activities for ESA-listed birds will be addressed via FOSC ESA consultation with USFWS ([Section 4810](#)).
- *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

9740.2.1.2.2.2 – Pre-emptive Capture

Pre-emptive capture includes the capturing, handling, transporting, short-term holding, and releasing of healthy, uncontaminated (uniled) wildlife. The greatest utility of pre-emptive capture for birds may be during migration (when large flocks of birds are present) and during flightless (molting) periods (when bird deterrence is not likely to be successful). When conducting pre-emptive capture, considerations should be made for human safety, bird safety, and minimizing transportation and holding times. Appropriate release location(s) should be identified and approved prior to beginning a pre-emptive capture.

9740.2.1.2.2.2.1 – Bird Pre-Emptive Capture Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct pre-emptive capture in a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 3650.2](#); [Section 9740.3.8.2](#)).
- Permits required for conducting pre-emptive capture are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Any pre-emptive capture of ESA-listed birds will be addressed via FOSC ESA consultation with USFWS ([Section 4810](#)).
- *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

9740.2.1.2.3 – Tertiary Response

Tertiary response strategies will be considered when birds become oiled. Tertiary response includes the capturing, handling, transporting, rehabilitating, holding, and releasing of oiled birds. The USFWS policy document *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage, provides detailed information for tertiary response activities. When oiled birds are captured alive, stabilized, and taken to rehabilitation centers, they can often be cleaned and released back into their natural habitat. Initiating a capture, stabilization, and rehabilitation program as soon as possible after a spill occurs may reduce the severity of impact to birds from oiling and increase survival for oiled birds.

Tertiary response effectiveness will be influenced by time of year, type and amount of material spilled, species involved, local terrain, tides, availability of trained personnel, and weather. A variety of capture methods and techniques (e.g., including dip nets, net guns, mist nets, foot traps, and spotlighting) may be used to maximize capture success. Captured birds will need to be stabilized and receive medical evaluation and preliminary treatment as quickly as possible. Stabilization will likely occur at a remote location prior to transporting birds to a central rehabilitation center.

The goal of rehabilitating oiled birds is the release of a healthy bird back into its natural environment. Release will likely involve transporting birds from the rehabilitation center to a location near the initial capture site. Rehabilitated oiled birds of species that may be harvested for subsistence purposes will have an “OILED-TREATED” leg band placed on them prior to release.

9740.2.1.2.3.1 – Oiled Bird Capture, Stabilization, Rehabilitation, and Release Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct oiled bird capture in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 3650](#); [Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting capture are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Any capture of ESA-listed birds will be addressed via FOSC ESA consultation with USFWS ([Section 4810](#)).
- *Best Practices for Migratory Bird Care during Oil Spill Response*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
- Released rehabilitated oiled birds of species that may be harvested for subsistence purposes will have an “OILED-TREATED” leg band placed on them prior to release.

9740.2.2 – Marine Mammals

The following sections provide information on marine mammal protection priorities and response strategies:

[9740.2.2.1 – Marine Mammal Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.2.2 – Marine Mammal Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.2.2.1 – Primary Response](#)

[9740.2.2.2.2 – Secondary Response](#)

[9740.2.2.2.3 – Tertiary Response](#)

[9740.2.2.3 – Marine Mammal Information by Species](#)

9740.2.2.1 – Marine Mammal Protection Priorities

Spill response activities – including carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, capture, and cleaning – of marine mammals are complicated by the large size of marine mammals, mammalian zoonotic diseases (e.g., diseases that can be transmitted between animals and humans), and heightened safety concerns for response personnel working in the marine environment.

Marine mammals can exhibit highly variable responses to spilled oil due to differences among marine mammal species, age classes, and habitats. For example, direct exposure to oil can result in irritation, inflammation, or necrosis of skin, as well as chemical burns of skin and mucous membranes from dermal contact. Types of dermal contact include oiling of whale baleen, fur on sea otters, oiling of skin, eyes, and conjunctive membranes (resulting in eye irritation or inflammation), and cetacean blowholes. Hypothermia due to compromised fur, inflammation, ulcers, bleeding, and damage to organs from ingestion of oil (and dispersants) directly or via contaminated prey may also occur. Ingestion of oil is of greater concern for species with fur that groom themselves with their mouths, such as polar bears and sea otters. Inhalation of hydrocarbon volatiles (fumes) can result in short- and long-term respiratory effects, nerve damage, and behavioral abnormalities. Short- and long-term impacts to reproductive success are also possible due to habitat degradation and disruption of social groups.

Prioritized response strategies for different species or species groups may be established on an incident-specific basis. Species may be prioritized in the planning area based on whether:

1. The species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to oil impacts.
2. The species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population.
3. The species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies (e.g., ESA-listed).
4. The species is an important subsistence resource.
5. The species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

Specific habitats may also be prioritized. [Table 9-5](#) shows priority species by geographic zone ([Figure 9-1](#)).

Table 9-5: Status¹ of Marine Mammals by Geographic Zone in Alaska. Criteria for inclusion are: The population of the species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population; the species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to impacts from an oil spill; the species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies; or the species is an important subsistence resource; or the species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

Species ²	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope
Polar Bear	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P / S / TS	P / S / TS
Sea Otter	P / S	P / S	P / S / TS	P / S / TS	P / S / TS	P / S / TS	--	--	--
Pacific Walrus	--	--	--	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
California Sea Lion	U	R	--	R	--	--	--	--	--
Steller Sea Lion	P / S / ES	P / S / ES	P / S / ES	P / S / ES	P / S / ES	P / S / ES	U / S / ES	U / S / ES	--
Northern Elephant Seal	U	O	O	O	--	P (nearshore) / O	--	--	--
Northern Fur Seal	O	O	O	U (nearshore) / O	O	P / S	O	--	--
Bearded Seal	--	--	--	--	U / S / TS	R / S / TS	P / S / TS	P / S / TS	P / S / TS
Harbor Seal	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	U / S	--	--
Ribbon Seal	--	--	--	--	--	O	O	P (pack ice) / S	P (pack ice) / S
Ringed Seal	--	--	--	--	U / S / TS	R / S / TS	P / TS / S	P / TS / S	P / TS / S
Spotted Seal	--	--	--	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S

¹ P = Present; U = Uncommon; R = Rare; O = Pelagic (offshore); S = Subsistence Species; A = Accidental; CS = Candidate Species; TS = Threatened Species; ES = Endangered Species; SES = State Endangered Species

² USFWS manages polar bears, sea otters, and walruses; all other marine mammals are managed by NMFS.

Species ²	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope
Pacific White-Sided Dolphin	O	O	O	U (nearshore) / O	--	U (nearshore) / O	--	--	--
Dall's Porpoise	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	--
Harbor Porpoise	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Baird's Beaked Whale	O	O	O	O	--	P	--	--	--
Cuvier's Beaked Whale	O	O	O	O	--	P	--	--	--
Stejneger's Beaked Whale	O	O	O	P	--	P	--	--	--
North Pacific Right Whale	O / R / ES / SES	O / R / ES / SES	O / R / ES / SES	U / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	R / ES / SES	R / ES / SES	--
Beluga Whale	R	A	P / S / ES	--	P / S	R	P / S	P / S	P / S
Blue Whale	U / ES / SES	O / ES / SES	O / ES / SES	O / ES / SES	--	P / ES / SES	U / ES / SES	--	--
Bowhead Whale	--	--	--	--	--	U / ES	P / ES	P / S / ES	P / S / ES
Fin Whale	P / ES	P / ES	O / ES	P / ES	R / ES	P / ES	P / ES	U / ES	U / ES
Gray Whale	U / ES	P / ES	P / ES	P / ES	P / ES	P / ES	P / ES	P	P
Humpback Whale	P / TS / SES	P / TS / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	P / ES / SES	U / ES
Killer Whale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Minke Whale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	U
Sei Whale	O / ES	P / ES	O / ES	P / ES	--	P / ES	--	--	--
Sperm Whale	P / ES	P / ES	O / ES	P / ES	--	P / ES	P / ES	O / R / ES	--

¹ P = Present; U = Uncommon; R = Rare; O = Pelagic (offshore); S = Subsistence Species; A = Accidental; CS = Candidate Species; TS = Threatened Species; ES = Endangered Species; SES = State Endangered Species

² USFWS manages polar bears, sea otters, and walruses; all other marine mammals are managed by NMFS.

9740.2.2.2 – Marine Mammal Response Strategies

Response strategies for marine mammals are summarized in the following sections:

[9740.2.2.2.1 – Primary Response](#)

[9740.2.2.2.2 – Secondary Response](#)

[9740.2.2.2.3 – Tertiary Response](#)

Species-specific response strategies are detailed in [Section 9740.2.2.3](#).

9740.2.2.2.1 – Primary Response

Primary response strategies, especially controlling and containing the oil release, is of utmost importance to marine mammals and their habitats. Priority protection areas include pinniped haulout and rookery beaches, particularly for species, such as Northern fur seals and Steller sea lions, which form male-harem bonds and have strong territorial attachment to specific rookery sites. For those species, using secondary or tertiary response strategies is probably not feasible during specific periods, such as the breeding season, when territorial bonding is strong.

Species of pinnipeds that do not form male-harem bonds often haul-out in more protected, lower-energy shoreline areas or on ice, which could be more susceptible to oiling and less likely to be cleaned by natural forces. Haulout shorelines and ice areas for these species should also be given priority protection and high priority for cleaning activities if those areas become oiled. Consideration should also be given to the timing of pupping and molting.

All primary response activities should avoid marine mammals to prevent disturbance to them, especially at pinniped haulout and rookery beaches. Disturbance of haulout and rookery beaches can result in mass stampedes of the animals, particularly into the ocean. Stampedes can result in severe impacts, including direct physical injury and death of pups or weak animals; separation of mothers and pups; disturbance of established social hierarchies; movement to areas with less favorable conditions; or beach abandonment. The distance at which animals are disturbed depends on the type and intensity of response activities, local visibility, and the species. Wildlife agencies can provide guidance regarding species-specific responses to disturbance and recommended buffers around sensitive areas.

Primary response strategies also include removal of oiled carcasses from the environment to prevent predators (such as polar bears) from ingesting oil as they scavenge for food.

If primary response strategies are proposed in locations where marine mammals are or may be present, the FOSC will need to immediately consult with NMFS and USFWS regarding the proposed response strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA and ESA ([Section 4810](#)). Information on wildlife agency permits required for conducting response activities affecting marine mammals is in [Table 4-1](#).

9740.2.2.2.2 – Secondary Response

Secondary response strategies emphasize keeping potentially affected wildlife away from oiled areas using deterrent techniques. For marine mammals, this includes herding animals away from oil on the water or from oil-contaminated near shore and beach areas. This is most feasible for pinnipeds at haulout and rookery areas during the period when territorial bonding is weakest (i.e., before pupping and after weaning). It is challenging to effectively deter many marine mammal species because they may

habituate to some deterrence tactics or may be attracted to novel equipment, noise, and activity in their environment.

Secondary response strategies also include the pre-emptive capture and subsequent handling, transportation, short-term holding, and release of oiled wildlife. This response strategy may be used for small numbers of marine mammals. Secondary response strategies must be performed only by people with experience in capturing and handling the subject species. These activities should not be undertaken lightly because the danger of shock and stress to an animal from being captured and relocated, and danger to responders, may far outweigh the potential for an animal to become oiled. Existing facilities in Alaska could accommodate a few marine mammals for a short amount of time.

Responders should work under an approved Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)) to conduct deterrence, or a Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8.2](#)) to conduct pre-emptive capture of marine mammals. Information on wildlife agency permits required for conducting marine mammal pre-emptive capture is found in [Table 4-1](#). Any pre-emptive capture-related activities for marine mammals that are ESA-listed will be addressed via FOOSC ESA consultation with USFWS and NMFS.

9740.2.2.2.3 – Tertiary Response

Tertiary response strategies include the capturing, handling, transporting, stabilizing, rehabilitating, and releasing of oiled animals. This must be performed only by people with experience in capturing and handling the subject species. Due to the size and the remoteness of many areas in Alaska, capture and cleaning of marine mammals may not be practical or beneficial due to a lack of equipment, trained personnel, and facilities. Safety of the animals and the human handlers is of utmost importance. Only after primary and secondary strategies have been employed should tertiary response strategies be considered. Tertiary response strategies should only be considered if it is determined that the probable survival of the oiled marine mammals is very low and the likelihood of successful rehabilitation is high. For adult marine mammals that have undergone successful rehabilitation, release to the wild may be possible. In some cases, rehabilitated young marine mammals will be placed in authorized zoos or aquaria.

Due to the size and the remoteness of many areas in Alaska, in some instances capture and cleaning of marine mammals may not be practical or beneficial due to a lack of equipment, trained personnel, facilities, and availability of suitable release sites. Additionally, the potential for disease transmission from animals that have been held captive to populations of wild animals may be a concern. While some guidance exists (e.g., webpage NMFS 1) *Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines*, 2) *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, and 3) *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, all available on the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#)), decisions regarding release of rehabilitated wildlife will be species- and incident-specific. These release decisions will be made by the wildlife agencies with trust responsibility for that species, in consultation with rehabilitation experts and veterinarians.

Responders should work under an approved Startup or Comprehensive WRP ([Section 9740.3.8](#)) to conduct tertiary response strategies for oiled marine mammals. Information on wildlife agency permits required for conducting oiled marine mammal capture and related activities is found in [Table 4-1](#). Any capture-related activities for marine mammals that are ESA-listed will be addressed via FOOSC ESA consultation with USFWS and NMFS, and all marine mammals are protected under the MMPA.

Additional information on spill response for pinnipeds and cetaceans can be found in NMFS 1) *Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines*, 2) *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, and 3) *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, all available on [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Additional information on spill response for polar bears can be found in the USFWS *Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

The USFWS is currently updating the USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Sea Otters in Alaska. It will be available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage when finalized.

9740.2.2.3 – Marine Mammal Information by Species

Species-specific information and response strategies for marine mammals are provided in the following sections:

[9740.2.2.3.1 – Sea Otters](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2 – Pinnipeds](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.1 – Northern Fur Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.2 – Steller Sea Lions](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.3 – Ringed Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.4 – Harbor Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.5 – Spotted Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.6 – Bearded Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.7 – Ribbon Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.8 – Pacific Walruses](#)

[9740.2.2.3.3 – Cetaceans \(Baleen and Toothed Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises\)](#)

[9740.2.2.3.4 – Polar Bears](#)

9740.2.2.3.1 – Sea Otters

Sea otters are extremely vulnerable to oil spills, regardless of age, because of their small size, dependence on fur rather than blubber for insulation, and heavy use of nearshore habitats. The southwest Alaska distinct population segment (DPS) of the northern sea otter was listed as threatened under the ESA in 2005 ([70 FR 46365](#); August 9, 2005). All sea otters in Alaska are also protected under the MMPA.

Oiling of sea otter fur can result in death of the animal from hypothermia. If fur oiling is not severe enough to cause death from hypothermia, sea otters will spend a great deal of time grooming to remove the oil and maintain their fur. Sea otters have high metabolic requirements; the additional time spent grooming can increase metabolic needs, reduce foraging time, and lead to lowered metabolic efficiency. If unresolved, this condition could result in starvation and death. Ingestion of hydrocarbons during the grooming process or through feeding on oiled prey items can result in digestive tract irritation, neurological effects, and physiological changes; in turn, these effects can lead to organ injury, dysfunction, and death. Aromatic hydrocarbons can cause inhalation injury and death before either hypothermia or ingestion affects the animals.

Primary response strategies – preventing oil from reaching sea otter pupping, feeding, and other sea otter concentration or sensitive areas – should be emphasized because of sea otters’ vulnerability to oiling.

Sea otters use a variety of terrain (including ice) to haul-out. Haulouts may be used to escape predators or rough weather; or may be established near rich prey areas. Protection strategies will be based on the terrain on which haulouts are identified.

Pupping areas are difficult to define and protect because most sea otters give birth in either open water or near kelp beds, which have undefined boundaries. If pupping areas are identified, booms should be placed far enough away to minimize disturbance and prevent driving sea otters into oiled areas.

Sea otters forage in rocky substrate and soft bottom communities, as well as in and around kelp. Special emphasis should be placed on feeding areas containing intertidal and shallow subtidal prey species used by sea otters. Any low- to moderate-energy beaches with mussel beds or prey resources used by sea otters should receive priority protection.

Sea otters are highly variable in their response to disturbance, including exhibiting curiosity to something new in their environment. Response-related disturbance may drive sea otters into oiled areas. Sea otter response to all response activities should be monitored by Wildlife Observers.

Primary response strategies may also include sea otter carcass collection.

Secondary Response Activities. The use of deterrence (e.g., auditory, visual, olfactory, and herding) to either attract or disperse sea otters has been found to be ineffective because sea otters habituate readily to noise and other distractions associated with human activity. Although slight behavioral modifications have been observed in response to deterrence activities, the modification and duration of the effect were inadequate for protecting sea otters from potential impacts of an oil spill. Of the possible deterrent techniques, auditory deterrence such as propane cannons may have some application for short-term attempts to keep sea otters off oiled haulouts. In general, sea otter hazing from oiled areas will not be authorized unless the hazing will be conducted by someone familiar with sea otter behavior that can judge the effectiveness of the hazing/deterrence technique in real time.

Pre-emptive capture may be a viable strategy for moving sea otters away from areas contaminated by oil, especially if small numbers of sea otters have a high potential for being oiled. Principal concerns when capturing and handling sea otters are minimizing transportation and holding times and clear communication between capture teams and receiving facility staff. Sea otters in captivity should be regarded as dangerous to response personnel; therefore, sea otters should be handled as little as possible during response operations. Handling should be conducted by qualified personnel with documented experience in sea otter capture.

Sea otter safety during capture and holding should focus on stress reduction, by:

- Having the equipment necessary to handle and transport animals as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Reducing the number of vessels used to capture animals in a given area.
- Avoiding unnecessary noise and disturbance.

- Never pursuing a sea otter to the point of exhaustion.
- Providing thermoregulatory monitoring and ambient temperatures.
- Minimizing contact with animals.
- Providing veterinary care.

Tertiary Response Strategies. Capturing, handling, transporting, stabilizing, rehabilitating, and releasing oiled animals must be performed only by people with documented experience in capturing and handling oiled sea otters. This response strategy was first initiated in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska following the March 24, 1989, T/V *Exxon Valdez* spill and other spills along the Pacific coast. Procedures and protocols may be found in *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

9740.2.2.3.1.2 – Sea Otter Response Forms and Tools

Sea Otter Primary Response Strategies Forms and Tools:

- Request authorization to conduct sea otter carcass collection in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting primary response activities that may affect otters are shown in [Table 4-1](#).

Sea Otter Secondary Response Strategies Forms and Tools:

- Request authorization to conduct sea otter deterrence and pre-emptive capture and holding in Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8.2](#)).
- Permits required for conducting sea otter deterrence or pre-emptive capture and holding are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Procedures and protocols in *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Sea Otter Tertiary Response Strategies Forms and Tools:

- Request authorization to conduct oiled sea otter capture, transport, stabilization, rehabilitation, release, or relocation in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting oiled sea otter capture and related activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Procedures and protocols in *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where northern sea otters are or may be present, the FOSC should immediately consult with USFWS regarding the proposed response strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA and ESA ([Section 4810](#)). Information on wildlife agency permits required for conducting response activities affecting sea otters is in [Table 4-1](#).

9740.2.2.3.2 – Pinnipeds

In general, capture and rehabilitation of oiled pinnipeds must only be attempted by trained handlers. Adult male pinnipeds, especially Steller sea lions, Northern fur seals, and Pacific walruses, may be too aggressive to safely capture and clean. While cleaning shorelines or beaches of pinniped rookeries is not recommended during the pupping and breeding seasons, appropriate wildlife agencies may recommend cleaning of heavily oiled haul-out beaches to help prevent pinniped oiling.

Species-specific information and response strategies for pinnipeds are provided in the following sections:

[9740.2.2.3.2.1 – Northern Fur Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.2 – Steller Sea Lions](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.3 – Ringed Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.4 – Harbor Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.5 – Spotted Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.6 – Bearded Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.7 – Ribbon Seals](#)

[9740.2.2.3.2.8 – Pacific Walruses](#)

Northern elephant seals are reported occasionally in Alaska’s waters during the summer, primarily from Southeast Alaska to Kenai Peninsula. Northern elephant seals do not breed in Alaska. Therefore, because of its limited presence in Alaska and the very low probability of the species being threatened by oil spills in Alaska’s waters, Northern elephant seals are not discussed in the following sections.

9740.2.2.3.2.1 – Northern Fur Seals

The Pribilofs provide breeding grounds for approximately 50 percent of the world’s population of northern fur seals. Hundreds of thousands of these animals return to the Pribilofs each summer to give birth, breed, rest, and molt before departing on their winter migration in December. The world population of northern fur seals is currently (2022) estimated at 1.1 million. The Pribilof Islands portion of the US population of northern fur seals declined by over 60 percent in recent decades from more than 2 million in the 1970s to an estimated 626,618 seals in 2019. The species is currently listed as depleted under the MMPA. The Pribilof Islands fur seal population declined about 3-5 percent annually from 2010 to 2022. Northern fur seals are an important subsistence food source to the Unangan communities on Saint Paul and St. George Islands.

Northern fur seals are highly migratory and range along a broad arc across the north Pacific from the Sea of Japan through the southern Bering Sea to the Channel Islands (i.e., San Miguel Island) off southern California. Fur seals spend the winter and spring at sea in the Pacific Ocean and southern Bering Sea and return to their Bering Sea and North Pacific islands for pupping, breeding, resting, and molting. Each year, most of these animals use several discrete shoreline locations on the Pribilof Islands for mating and pupping (rookeries) and non-breeding landing sites (haulouts).

Northern fur seals rely on the water-repellent quality of their fur rather than a thick layer of blubber to provide insulation from the cold temperatures of the Bering Sea and North Pacific Ocean. For this reason, fur seals are particularly vulnerable to oil exposure. Oiling of their fur diminishes the insulating capacity and can result in death from hypothermia. Other impacts of direct exposure to hydrocarbons in

pinnipeds include injury to the skin, eyes, and mucous membranes. In addition to effects of external oiling, inhalation of petroleum product vapors may result in increased levels of toxic hydrocarbon volatiles in blood and tissues of northern fur seals. The toxic effect of inhalation may be lethal, particularly during the first few hours of a spill when volatile fractions are released, or for significant spills of refined products (i.e., gasoline or diesel fuel), which contain higher percentages of these compounds. Possible effects include lethargy, sickness, destruction of the central nervous system and respiratory system. Exposure to high concentrations of volatiles may result in fur seal mortality. Ingestion of oil via grooming of oiled pelage, or indirectly through consumption of oiled prey, may also have deleterious effects via absorption into the blood across stomach and intestinal lining. Ingestion of oil can cause nausea, gastrointestinal tract irritation, and vomiting. Vomiting can result in aspirating oil into the lungs, leading to respiratory impacts.

More detailed information on the characteristics of Northern fur seals, potential oil spill impacts, and additional protection measures specific to the Pribilof Islands can be found in the PI WPG on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

9740.2.2.3.2.1.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response Strategies. Specific primary response strategy information for Northern fur seals in the Pribilof Islands is found in the PI WPG on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

Primary response strategies will be emphasized for this species, since both secondary and tertiary responses are generally not feasible during most of the period when the animals are present on rookeries or are hauled-out.

Secondary Response Strategies. No attempts should be made to drive breeding bulls, breeding females, or nursing pups during mid-May through mid-September. Territorial bulls cannot be driven during this time, and their belligerent behavior could result in great risk to individuals trying to drive them. In addition, disturbance of rookeries during this period can result in pup mortality due to pup abandonment and trampling.

Driving Northern fur seals away from an oiled beach would be feasible only for non-territorial, non-breeding juvenile males (i.e., 2- to 6-year old animals may be driven from one beach area to another or they may be driven from a low beach area to higher ground and held for a period of time); and all animals before the breeding season begins (i.e., before mid-May) or after the breeding season ends (i.e., after mid-September).

Pre-emptive capturing and relocation may be feasible, if only a small number of fur seals are in danger of being oiled. However, the potential for Northern fur seals to be oiled will need to be high before this technique is used.

Specific secondary response strategy information for Northern fur seals in the Pribilof Islands is found in the PI WPG on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

Tertiary Response Strategies. Capturing and cleaning oiled Northern fur seals is generally not feasible. From June through November females spend one to two days nursing their young onshore and five to 10 days foraging at sea. This behavior increases their chance of contacting oil, particularly if it is near a rookery. Pups are most vulnerable to oiling when returning females transfer oil they have picked up to their young or when oil is washed onto rookery beaches. Since females nurse only their own pup, a

cleaned pup would have to be returned to the rookery for its mother to find, which could expose the pup to re-oiling. Capturing and rehabilitating oiled pups is only practical after early September when they begin to spend increasing amounts of time away from the breeding areas. Tertiary response is not recommended from June through August because of the danger to personnel from territorial bulls and problems associated with separating a pup from its mother. Oiled adult Northern fur seals are extremely dangerous to handle even if they are partially debilitated.

Specific tertiary response strategy information for Northern fur seals in the Pribilof Islands is found in the PI WPG on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

9740.2.2.3.2.1.2 – Northern Fur Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct Northern fur seal response activities (hazing/deterrence or pre-emptive capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting Northern fur seal deterrence or pre-emptive capture are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- PI WPG on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.
- Appendices for the *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where Northern fur seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA and the Fur Seal Act.

9740.2.2.3.2.2 – Steller Sea Lions

The Steller sea lion is the largest member of the family Otariidae, which includes sea lions and fur seals. Steller sea lion distribution extends along the Pacific Rim with its center of abundance in the Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska where, historically, nearly three-quarters of all Steller sea lions in U.S. were found. Steller sea lions haul-out on land to mate, bear their young, nurse, rest, and avoid predators and disturbance. Steller sea lions are generally considered non-migratory although some individuals, particularly juveniles and adult males, disperse widely outside the summer breeding season. Pupping occurs at discrete sites (rookeries) from mid-May through mid-July. Sites classified as haulouts may also be used throughout the year. Molting periods normally extend from June through September, during which time Steller sea lions may remain out of water for extended periods.

Under the ESA, the species is described by two DPSs; the western DPS (primarily west of 144°W longitude) is listed as an endangered species ([62 FR 24345](#), May 5, 1997). The western DPS has shown dramatic declines in the last several decades. At many sites, the number of Steller sea lions has declined by more than 80 percent since the mid- to late 1970s, and at some sites in the western Aleutians, sea lions have all but disappeared. By contrast, the eastern DPS has been increasing in abundance at over 3 percent overall for about 30 years, more than doubling in Southeast Alaska, British Columbia, and Oregon. Steller sea lions are an important subsistence food source for many Alaska Native Peoples.

Spills (depending on many variables such as amount and type of product spilled) can affect the health, survival, and reproduction of exposed Steller sea lions. Steller sea lions can also be impacted by response activities, such as helicopter and vessel activity. Steller sea lions are highly susceptible to

disturbance when on haulouts and rookeries. The marked sexual dimorphism in size within the species and the large size of adults, especially adult males, are both features of Steller sea lion morphology that are important to consider when evaluating their vulnerability to disturbance when the animals are hauled out on land. Smaller animals are vulnerable to injury and death if trampled by adults, especially by large males. The large size of Steller sea lion adults also makes the capture, handling, and salvage of this species more challenging than many other pinnipeds. Capture of subadult and adult Steller sea lions is typically conducted by an experienced team using remote sedation.

Inhalation of volatile components of crude oil can damage mucous membranes including the airways, which can lead to lung congestion and can cause hemorrhagic bronchopneumonia and pulmonary edema. Ingestion of crude oil can lead to diarrhea, increased passage time of food through the intestinal tract, and decreased nutritional value of food. Skin irritation and conjunctivitis could result from prolonged exposure to oil. Such conditions can increase an individual's physiological stress and increase the likelihood of death of individuals that are highly contaminated or already weakened.

Steller sea lions are more easily disturbed when on haulouts and rookeries than northern fur seals. However, Steller sea lions are less susceptible to adverse effects of external oiling than are northern fur seals. Unlike northern fur seals, adult Steller sea lions have a thick layer of fat, and do not rely on their fur for insulation. Oil could be ingested through mouth grooming, from oiled food, or by pups during nursing. Within the Steller sea lion population, females and pups have the greatest risk of oiling. During the pupping and breeding season, females spend part of their time on the rookery and part of their time feeding at sea. Steller sea lion pups, which are generally weaned one to two years after birth, have less subcutaneous fat than adults and are likely to be more sensitive to the effects of oiling.

9740.2.2.3.2.2.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies, which prevent Steller sea lions and/or their habitat from becoming oiled, should be emphasized. Because some sea lion haulouts and rookeries are seasonally occupied, it may be possible to access all or portions of those areas to remove surface oil prior to the arrival of Steller sea lions. However, since many of these sites may be occupied year-round, it will be important to coordinate closely with NMFS to avoid or minimize effects from response activities. To avoid causing disturbance related-injury or death, aircraft, especially helicopters, should avoid flying near Steller sea lion terrestrial sites. Responders will need input from NMFS on whether removal efforts would be appropriate for unoccupied sites, since many of those sites are exposed to significant wave action and may not retain oil. Whenever Steller sea lions are present on a haulout or rookery, efforts to remove oil from the site are likely to harass the animals, leading to possible injury or death. In those cases, deflection booming (if possible) or other primary response strategies will be considered to prevent oil from reaching the site. Responders will need to work in close consultation with NMFS to ensure response actions do not unintentionally harass sea lions. It will likely be necessary to establish minimum approach distances for response personnel and equipment.

Secondary response strategies. Deterrence of Steller sea lions, in the water or on land, has mixed results. In-water acoustic deterrence has not proven to be more than temporarily effective, and can actually attract Steller sea lions. Likewise, the use of boats for deterrence is ineffective. Any attempt to deter Steller sea lions from a rookery or haulout can create panic or a stampede that may result in Steller sea lion injury or death, particularly to pups. It can also result in pup mortalities due to abandonment by their mothers. In addition, territorial Steller sea lions, particularly bulls, are large and dangerous animals that can pose a significant risk to personnel. It should also be noted that Steller sea

lions, which are by nature inquisitive, may haul-out on floats, vessels, or other response-related equipment. In those cases, it may be necessary to deter the animal(s) in close consultation with NMFS.

Tertiary response strategies. Capturing and cleaning oiled adult Steller sea lions may not be feasible due to concerns for both the safety of the animals and the human handler. Unless the probability of survival for an oiled animal was considered very low, and the likelihood of successful rehabilitation was very high, tertiary response strategies will not be used. Capture and rehabilitation of adult sea lions could require administering anesthesia in the field, logistical challenges in collection and transport of the animal to a suitable facility (with attendant danger to response personnel), rehabilitation, and release. Pups and juveniles can be small enough to capture and rehabilitate.

9740.2.2.3.2.2 – Steller Sea Lion Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct Steller sea lion response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting Steller sea lion deterrence or pre-emptive capture are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Appendices for the *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where Steller sea lions are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA. Because of their status under the ESA, any response-related activities for Steller sea lions will be addressed by the FOSC via ESA consultation with NMFS.

9740.2.2.3.2.3 – Ringed Seals

Arctic ringed seals are listed as threatened under the ESA ([77 FR 76706](#), December 12, 2012) due to projected loss of sea ice habitat. Ringed seals have a thick blubber layer for insulation, and little grooming behavior, which lessens the chance of ingesting oil. However, pre-weaned pups probably are much more sensitive to the effects of oiling because they rely primarily on lanugo (i.e., a thick layer of white hair) for insulation and have little or no blubber layer at birth. Therefore, oiling of lanugo could result in the loss of insulation, which could be fatal to pre-weaned pups. March to June is the critical period for pups, which are born in March and April and are weaned by June. By the time the pups are weaned, they have a well-developed blubber layer for insulation.

Ringed seals do not establish breeding rookeries, and males do not form harems. Rather, pups are born and reared in subnivean (under snow) lairs constructed by their mothers. These lairs are scattered over the shorefast ice and stable pack ice where sufficient snow has accumulated, minimizing the threat of a single oil spill to large proportions of the ringed seal population. During the breeding season, breeding adults are thought to dominate the shorefast ice zone; non-breeding sub-adults apparently dominate the flow zone; and all ages of ringed seals occur in the pack ice.

The most immediate threat to ringed seals would be direct oil contamination of subnivean lairs and pre-weaned pups, or indirect oil contamination resulting from the transport of oil into lairs by adults. The extent of injury could be determined by locating and opening lairs. It is possible to locate ringed seal lairs using specially trained dogs.

9740.2.2.3.2.3.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies are emphasized for ringed seals. During the most sensitive period (i.e., the breeding period), the application of secondary and tertiary response techniques would be challenging.

Secondary response strategies. This response would be feasible only during periods when animals are using ice floes for hauling out and conditions are not suitable for construction and occupation of lairs. It probably is not possible to catch ringed seals on ice floes and chasing them into the water would likely result in negative, rather than positive, effects.

Tertiary response strategies. There are challenges to consider in attempting to capture and rehabilitate oiled pre-weaned ringed seals. Pre-weaned pups may not be able to be returned to the wild. After cleaning, pups returned to their subnivean lair so their mothers could provide nourishment might be re-contaminated with oil, or their mothers may have abandoned the lair. Attempting to capture and rehabilitate post-weaned ringed seal pups would be more feasible, however, if an animal, regardless of age, moves into the water when approached, it could be exposed to oil.

It may not be possible to return treated ice seals, including ringed seals, back into the wild following capture and treatment, due to subsistence and disease concerns.

9740.2.2.3.2.3.2 – Ringed Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct ringed seal response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting ringed seal response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where ringed seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA. Because of their status under the ESA, any response-related activities for ringed seals will be addressed by the FOSC via ESA consultation with NMFS.

9740.2.2.3.2.4 – Harbor Seals

Harbor seals inhabit coastal and estuarine waters from Baja California, Mexico, north along the western coasts of the United States, British Columbia, and Southeast Alaska, west through the Gulf of Alaska and Aleutian Islands, and into the Bering Sea north to Cape Newenham and the Pribilofs. They haul out on rocks, reefs, beaches, and drifting glacial ice, and feed in marine, estuarine, and occasionally fresh waters. Harbor seals generally are non-migratory, and local movements are associated with such factors as tides, weather, season, food availability, and reproduction. Strong fidelity of individuals for haulout sites during the breeding season has been documented in some regions in Alaska. In 2010, NMFS and their co-management partners, the Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission, identified 12 separate stocks of harbor seals based largely on genetic differences as well as population trends, observed harbor seal movements, and traditional Alaska Native use areas.

Harbor seals have a thick blubber layer for insulation and little grooming behavior, which lessens the chance of oil ingestion. However, pre-weaned pups are probably much more sensitive to the effects of oiling because they rely primarily on a fur coat for insulation and also because oiling could result in a pup's loss of insulation. Pups have little or no blubber layer at birth.

Harbor seals do not exhibit the bull harem territorial behavior characteristic of fur seals and sea lions. Furthermore, pup production does not appear to be restricted to a few major rookeries, as is the case for sea lions and fur seals.

Hauled-out harbor seals are easily disturbed. Adults and pups haul-out on tidal rocks and lower portions of beaches near the water's edge, thus making them particularly likely to contact oil that comes ashore after a spill. Adult females readily enter the water when disturbed, leaving pups on the shore. Oil cleanup crews should not pick up what appear to be abandoned pups because females probably will return; however, prolonged cleanup in harbor seal rookeries can result in permanent pup abandonment by females. Pups that appear to be in distress or without their mother should be reported to the WB and EU to ensure monitoring and response.

9740.2.2.3.2.4.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies, which prevent harbor seals from becoming oiled, should be emphasized.

Secondary response strategies. This response is feasible for swimming harbor seals and known harbor seal haulout and rookery beach areas. Response activities may attract curious harbor seals. In areas of oiled beaches frequented by hauled out harbor seals, it may be feasible to use noisemaking devices (such as propane cannons) to deter seals for a short amount of time. Deterring with predator or companion sounds may be effective. Any deterrence strategies will need to be monitored for effectiveness.

Tertiary response strategies. Attempting to capture and clean harbor seals may be possible. If a harbor seal is ill and does not try to escape when approached, it is likely feasible to capture the animal and attempt to treat it. Only if it is determined that the probable survival of the oiled marine mammal is very low and the likelihood of successful rehabilitation is high, should tertiary response strategies be considered.

9740.2.2.3.2.4.2 – Harbor Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct harbor seal response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting harbor seal response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Appendices for the *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and Appendices, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where harbor seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA.

9740.2.2.3.2.5 – Spotted Seals

Spotted seals have a thick blubber layer for insulation and little grooming behavior, which lessens the chance of oil ingestion. Pre-weaned pups are probably the most sensitive to the effects of oiling because they rely primarily on hair for insulation and have little blubber and also because oiled hair could result in the loss of a pup's insulation. The most critical period for this species is when pupping begins in late March and until weaning ends in June.

Spotted seals are similar in appearance and behavior to harbor seals, hauling out on ice floes in the spring and early summer and coastal beaches during ice free months. Response techniques that apply to ringed and harbor seals also should apply to hauled-out spotted seals.

From late fall through spring, spotted seal habitat use is closely associated with sea ice. Spotted seals use sea ice starting with its formation in the fall, and often concentrate in large numbers on the early ice that forms near river mouths and estuaries. In winter, as the ice thickens and becomes shorefast along the coasts, spotted seals move seaward to areas near the ice front with broken floes. As spring approaches in the Bering Sea, spotted seals mainly inhabit the southern margin of the sea ice, where beginning in late March, sea ice floes are used for pupping, nursing, and weaning. Male female, male female pup, and female pup groups usually are distributed over ice floes. While non-breeding animals usually are clumped into large groups, these groups of spotted seals typically are spread over relatively large areas.

9740.2.2.3.2.5.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies will be emphasized for spotted seals.

Secondary response strategies. During ice free periods, spotted seals move into coastal haulout areas. In areas of oiled beaches frequented by hauled-out spotted seals, it may be feasible to use noisemaking devices (such as propane cannons) to deter animals for a short amount of time. Using deterrence during ice seasons may or may not be feasible depending on logistical access to the ice front. Deterrence with predator or companion sounds may be effective. Any deterrence strategies will need to be monitored for effectiveness.

Tertiary response strategies. Attempting to capture and rehabilitate spotted seals may be feasible. If an animal, regardless of its age, takes to the water when approached, it should be left alone. If the spotted seal is ill and does not try to escape when approached, it may be feasible to pick up the animal and attempt to treat it.

It may not be possible to return treated ice seals, including spotted seals, back into the wild following capture and treatment, due to subsistence and disease concerns.

9740.2.2.3.2.5.2 – Spotted Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct spotted seal response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting spotted seal response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).

- Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where spotted seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA.

9740.2.2.3.2.6 – Bearded Seals

The Beringia DPS of bearded seals, which includes Alaska, is listed as threatened under the ESA ([77 FR 76740](#), December 28, 2012) due to projected loss of sea ice habitat. Bearded seals have thick blubber layers for insulation and little grooming behavior, which lessens their chance of ingesting oil. Pre-weaned pups are probably much more sensitive to the effects of oiling because they rely primarily on hair for insulation and have little blubber and also because oiled hair could result in the loss of a pup's insulation.

Unlike most of Alaska's pinnipeds, bearded seals are benthic foragers. Thus, their distribution is limited to shallow areas, where water depth does not exceed approximately 200 meters. Bearded seals are closely associated with sea ice; and their seasonal movements are generally related to sea ice advance and retreat. Bearded seals typically avoid areas of continuous, thick, shorefast ice. During winter and spring, bearded seals in Alaska are widely distributed in the broken, drifting pack ice ranging from the Chukchi Sea south to the ice front in the Bering Sea. As the ice retreats in mid-April through June, most adults are thought to move into the Chukchi and Beaufort seas where they spend the summer and early fall near the wide, fragmented margin of multiyear ice. A small number of mostly immature individuals remain near the coasts, and can be found in bays, river mouths, and traveling up some rivers.

Most bearded seal pups are born on ice floes in the Bering Sea from mid-March through early May, with peak pupping occurring in the Bering Strait and northward during the last one third of April and southward typically earlier in April. Wintering and pupping bearded seals are also known to occupy coastal leads in the Bering and Chukchi seas, and low densities of pupping females also occupy intermittent shore leads deep into the winter pack ice of these seas.

Bearded seal pups are most vulnerable to the effects of oiling from mid-March through June. Research suggests an extended lactation period of about 24 days. Among Arctic phocid seals, bearded seal newborns are relatively large and grow comparatively quickly.

9740.2.2.3.2.6.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies will be emphasized for bearded seals.

Secondary response strategies. The use of deterrents may or may not be feasible depending on logistical access to the ice front. Detering with predator or companion sounds may be effective. Any deterrence strategies will need to be monitored for effectiveness.

Tertiary response strategies. The bearded seal is the largest phocid seal in Alaska. Capture and treatment of adults may be difficult due to safety concerns for both the animals and the human handlers. In some situations, capture and cleaning may be possible; however, if an animal, regardless of age, moves into the water when approached, it should be left alone. If the bearded seal is ill and does not try to escape when approached, it would be feasible to pick up the animal and attempt to treat it.

It may not be possible to return treated ice seals, including bearded seals, back into the wild following capture and treatment, due to subsistence and disease concerns.

9740.2.2.3.2.6.2 – Bearded Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct bearded seal response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting bearded seal response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where bearded seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA. Because of their status under the ESA, any response-related activities for bearded seals will be addressed by the FOSC via ESA consultation with NMFS.

9740.2.2.3.2.7 – Ribbon Seals

Ribbon seals are a pelagic species, have a thick blubber layer for insulation and little grooming behavior, which lessens the chance of oil ingestion. Pre-weaned pups probably are much more sensitive to the effects of oiling because they rely primarily on hair for insulation and have little blubber, and also because oiled hair could result in the loss of a pup's insulation.

Ribbon seals are associated with the Bering Sea ice front during the winter and spring. It has been observed that ribbon seals tend to be most abundant in the northern part of the ice front. As the ice melts in the spring, ribbon seals become more concentrated with at least part of the Bering Sea population moving towards the Bering Sea Strait and the southern part of the Chukchi Sea. Unlike bearded seals, individual ribbon seals do not appear to follow the ice front as it retreats northward during the summer; they instead remain widely distributed offshore during the summer in the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort seas.

Ribbon seals do not haul out on land; rather they use ice floes for haulout and pupping areas. However, due to the scattered distribution of ribbon seals, an oil spill threat to a large proportion of the population is rather remote. The period before pups are weaned, when ribbon seals are most vulnerable, is late March through early June. The period between birth and weaning is approximately three to six weeks.

9740.2.2.3.2.7.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies will be emphasized for ribbon seals.

Secondary response strategies. The use of deterrents may or may not be feasible depending upon logistical access to ice fronts. Detering with predator or companion sounds may be effective. Any deterrence strategies will need to be monitored for effectiveness.

Tertiary response strategies. If they can be reached, capturing and cleaning ribbon seals may be feasible. If an animal, regardless of age, takes to the water when approached, it should be left alone. If a

ribbon seal pup is ill and does not try to escape when approached, it may be feasible to pick up the animal and attempt to treat it.

It may not be possible to return treated ice seals, including ribbon seals, back into the wild following capture and treatment, due to subsistence and disease concerns.

9740.2.2.3.2.7.2 – Ribbon Seal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct ribbon seal response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting ribbon seal response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where ribbon seals are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA.

9740.2.2.3.2.8 – Pacific Walruses

Walruses are nearly circumpolar with the Pacific walrus inhabiting the shelf waters of the Bering and Chukchi seas and extending into the eastern East Siberian and western Beaufort Seas. Alaska's population of Pacific walruses has increased steadily from the 1950s through the 1970s to near historic population levels.

In January, February and March, Pacific walruses are usually found southwest of St. Lawrence Island and in outer Bristol Bay. From late March until December/January, walruses move north, then south, following ice reduction and growth. Walruses are very gregarious and occur as small groups at sea or haul-out in groups up to several thousand. Walruses haul-out and give birth on ice and broken ice. Like fur seals and sea lions, Pacific walruses are extremely susceptible to disturbance at haul-out areas. Stampeding can result in the injury or death by trampling of the pups and, to a lesser extent, juveniles and adults.

Since the record loss of sea ice in the Chukchi Sea in September 2007, walruses have been hauling out in large numbers in Alaska along the coast. Haul-outs were reported from several areas in 2007 with estimates of several hundred to thousands of animals depending on the location. In 2008, enough remnant ice persisted through the summer and fall that large haul-outs did not occur in Alaska. However, in 2009, a haul-out of about 3,000 animals formed at Icy Cape. Moreover, a haul-out formed just north of the village of Point Lay on the barrier island in 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011. This haul-out numbered from a few hundred to a few thousand walruses in 2007 and 2009, peaking at more than 30,000 walruses in 2010, and decreasing to an estimated 20,000 animals in 2011. (Note that estimates are from aerial overflights, rather than from formal counts.) Haul-outs have formed earlier each year and persist for about four to six weeks. Walrus movement studies by the U.S. Geological Survey indicate that the animals along the Alaska coast eventually make their way to the Russian coast and then move south with the advancing sea ice in the fall.

These animals have thick skin and blubber layers for insulation and no grooming behavior, which lessens their chance of ingesting oil. However, nursing pups will be at risk due to ingestion of oil from contaminated teats. Heat loss in adult walrus is controlled by peripheral blood flow through the animal's skin and blubber, so it is unknown if oil affects their thermoregulation. There is evidence that short-term oil-induced irritation to the eyes (i.e., conjunctivitis) is reversible.

There can be long-term chronic effects because of exposure during migration through oil-contaminated waters or hauling out onto oil-contaminated land and ice, and there may be the possibility of consuming contaminated prey items. Adult walrus may not be severely affected by the oil spill through direct contact; however, they are extremely sensitive to any habitat disturbance by response activities.

9740.2.2.3.2.8.1 – Response Strategies

Primary response strategies will be emphasized for Pacific walrus.

Secondary response strategies. Herding animals away from an oil spill site using boats may be feasible for Pacific walrus already in the water, although it will not be authorized unless done by someone very familiar with walrus behavior, who can judge the effectiveness of the technique in real time. Hauled-out animals should be left alone due to the risk of trampling if stampeding occurs.

There are no data indicating that visual deterrence methods are effective for keeping walrus away from a specific site. The use of propane cannons and other firearms may be effective for short-term deterrence of walrus that are already in the water; however, this method will not be used in the vicinity of haul-out sites.

Tertiary response strategies. Attempting to capture and rehabilitate Pacific walrus generally is not feasible because of their sensitivity to disturbance and the potential danger to personnel posed by the walrus' large size and belligerent behavior. However, young oiled walrus may be feasible to capture, clean, rehabilitate, and release. Because of walrus' relative insensitivity to oil, any benefit should be weighed against the risks to humans and other walrus, especially at haul-out sites, of this response activity.

9740.2.2.3.2.8.2 – Pacific Walrus Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct Pacific walrus response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting Pacific walrus response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Procedures and protocols for Pacific walrus response activities would be created in conjunction with USFWS Marine Mammals Management Office, and may be similar to those outlined for other pinnipeds in NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where Pacific walrus are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with USFWS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA.

9740.2.2.3.3 – Cetaceans (Baleen and Toothed Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises)

Research on the susceptibility and sensitivity of small, warm water cetaceans to oil indicates that if directly exposed to oil for short periods of time, transient effects to the skin will occur. In addition, short term effects on feeding by baleen whales may occur but would be reversed within a few days after the whales moved into clean waters. Furthermore, bioaccumulation of petroleum hydrocarbons may occur, but its long-term effects are unknown.

The above considerations would apply in areas of open ocean where exposure would be relatively short term. However, oil trapped within an ice lead could lead to an increased duration of exposure and associated effects for whales (such as bowheads or belugas) that use the ice lead as a migration pathway.

9740.2.2.3.3.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and secondary response strategies are generally the only feasible response strategies for this group of marine mammals. Some species, particularly large whales (such as bowheads), could possibly be steered away from a spill site. Other species, such as Dall's porpoise, are attracted to ship traffic and human activity and might be attracted to a spill.

If primary response strategies are proposed in locations where cetaceans are (or may be) present, the FOSC will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA and ESA.

9740.2.2.3.3.2 – Cetacean Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct cetacean response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting cetacean response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Deterrence techniques have been developed for killer whales in Washington State and may be appropriate for killer whales or other cetacean species in Alaska:
 - *Supporting Information for the Killer Whale section of the Northwest Wildlife Response Plan*, Chapter 9970 of the *Northwest Area Contingency Plan*, available from the NOAA Office of Response and Restoration [Oil Spill Response and Killer Whales](#) webpage.
- Norris, Kenneth S., and Roger L. Gentry. 1974. Capture and Harnessing of Young California Gray Whales, *Eschrichtius robustus*. *Marine Fisheries Review* 36(4):58-64. Available from the [NOAA Scientific Publications Office](#).
- Mate, Bruce R. and James T. Harvey, eds. 1987. Acoustical Deterrence in Marine Mammal Conflicts with Fisheries. Proceedings of a February 17-18, 1986, Workshop in Newport, Oregon. Oregon State University Sea Grant College Program, Corvallis, Oregon. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).
- Appendices for the NMFS *Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines* and *Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where killer whales are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with NMFS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the MMPA.

9740.2.2.3.4 – Polar Bears

Two subpopulations of polar bears occur in Alaska: (1) the Southern Beaufort Sea subpopulation which is shared with Canada, and (2) the Chukchi/Bering seas population, which is shared with Russia. Based on mark-recapture studies, the Southern Beaufort Sea subpopulation has approximately 900 bears and is currently thought to be declining. The Chukchi/Bering seas subpopulation is estimated to be approximately 3,000 bears and the subpopulation is currently believed to be stable. In 2008, the polar bear was listed throughout its range as a threatened species under the ESA ([73 FR 28212](#), May 15, 2008), primarily due to sea ice loss. The polar bear is also protected under the MMPA.

Polar bears are migratory in that they move in association with the arctic ice pack. Polar bears tend to occur in low densities over large areas and generally do not concentrate, except in areas of exceptional food resources, such as whale carcasses, or whale butchering sites at villages (e.g., at Kaktovik). They tend to be solitary animals or family groups following the annual variations in seal distributions, which are associated with fluctuations in the ice conditions and water depth. Polar bears' preferred prey are ringed seals (*Phoca hispida*), whose populations may be more at risk to oil contamination than polar bears. Polar bears along the North Slope of Alaska tend to occur in areas where ringed seal pups occur during the spring. They are also frequently encountered in or near villages, especially along the Beaufort Sea coast during the open water period. When on land polar bears generally occur within 25 miles of the coast.

There is no single critical period for polar bears, although bears are most sensitive to disturbance during denning. Only pregnant females den. All other bears, including females with dependent cubs, may be encountered year-round. Denning is initiated by late November with family groups emerging during late March and early April. Dens may be located on sea ice, shorefast ice, or on land. A high density of dens is known to occur in the 1002 Area of the Arctic NWR and on Wrangell Island in Russia.

Poor nutritional status and presence of dependent cubs with female bears may create great energy demands on polar bears which could lead to a highly stressed physiological state, if they coincide with an oil spill. Cleanup operations that disturb a den could result in death of cubs through abandonment, and perhaps death of the sow as well. In spring, females with cubs of the year that denned near or on land and migrate to offshore areas may encounter oil. Other family groups with yearlings or two-year-old cubs and other sex or age classes may also be exposed if feeding or traveling near shore.

Oil spills occurring in areas where polar bears are concentrated, such as feeding areas, can correspondingly affect a greater proportion of the population. Areas of open water, such as leads or polynyas, and areas where beachcast marine mammal carcasses occur may concentrate polar bears. Offshore barrier islands are preferred habitat for resting and travelling. Coastlines are also frequently used as travel routes. An oil spill in an area where polar bears are concentrated could have negative population effects.

Polar bears rely on blubber, guard hair, and a dense under fur for insulation. When the fur of a polar bear is contaminated with oil, the animal will vigorously and continuously groom itself, ingesting oil in the process. The ingestion of oil can result in renal failure and dysfunction of red blood cell production. Only a few milliliters of aspirated oil are fatal.

9740.2.2.3.4.1 – Response Strategies

All polar bears, especially nutritionally stressed bears, pose a significant safety risk to response personnel. The USFWS will be the lead agency for all polar bear response activities; ADF&G will assist on a case-by-case basis. Additional information on spill response for polar bears can be found in the *USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Primary Response. Primary response strategies will be emphasized for polar bears. The goal is to prevent the oil from reaching sensitive areas such as denning sites, feeding sites, or areas where polar bears are concentrated. Cleanup methods that disturb a den would probably result in the death of a cub, and perhaps the sow. Areas where dens are located should always be avoided by all personnel.

Oiled carcasses and other debris along the shoreline will need to be collected regularly. Debris removal will minimize the potential for oiling of polar bears through scavenging or contact with contaminated flotsam. To prevent oil from getting into the food chain, all polar bear carcasses will need to be retrieved and delivered to collection or morgue sites in accordance with an incident-specific carcass collection plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

Secondary Response. Secondary response strategies focus on deterring polar bears from areas contaminated by an oil spill. This response is appropriate under all circumstances and can be incorporated with primary response strategies. The degree of risk associated with the animal contacting oil before secondary response strategies are initiated need to be considered. If the spill occurs when polar bears are believed to be present, an aerial survey should be conducted to locate potentially affected animals. A polar bear monitor may need to be posted because polar bears may readily approach humans and human activity, especially on land, and pose a significant safety risk to response personnel.

A deterrent is any method or device used to keep bears away from a particular location. To be effective, the best deterrence requires early detection. Detection methods, which may be used in conjunction with deterrents, can include bear monitors, trained dogs, trip wires, and motion sensors. If polar bears are detected near a spill area or response operation, all personnel in the area will need to move to a designated safe location. Procedures for retreating and designated safe places will need to be established as soon as the response operation is initiated.

There are no data indicating that visual or olfactory deterrent methods are effective in keeping polar bears away from specific sites. Artificial light, such as the electric lighting system at industry sites, may deter some bears at night but may not be effective in fog or white out conditions and should not be relied on solely as a deterrence. Auditory and physical stimuli, especially in combination, have been successfully used to deter bears, although bears may acclimate to auditory deterrence alone. Herding or hazing (dispersal of) polar bears with vehicles, boats, and aircraft has been successfully demonstrated. These methods may be effective when oil is confined to a small area and can be regularly patrolled.

Pre-emptive capture should only be initiated if all other methods under the secondary response strategy are ineffective in deterring bears from a spill site, and is only feasible if small numbers of animals are in danger of being oiled and suitable relocation sites are available. The potential for polar bears to be oiled will need to be high before this technique is initiated. Human safety, as with all spill response operations, is the top priority during all polar bear response activities.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies include capturing, handling, transporting, rehabilitating, holding, and releasing polar bears. While this response may be feasible on a small scale, little is known about the potential effects of capturing oiled polar bears. However, rehabilitation of individual animals may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases if the treated bear is considered a candidate for being released back into the wild.

9740.2.2.3.4.2 – Polar Bear Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct Polar bear response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting Polar bear response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Procedures and protocols for Polar bear response activities are in in the *USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where polar bears are or may be present, the OSCs will need to immediately consult with USFWS regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with the ESA and MMPA.

9740.2.3 – Terrestrial Mammals

The following sections provide information on terrestrial mammal protection priorities and response strategies:

[9740.2.3.1 – Terrestrial Mammal Protection Priorities](#)

[9740.2.3.2 – Terrestrial Mammal Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.2.1 – Primary Response](#)

[9740.2.3.2.2 – Secondary Response](#)

[9740.2.3.2.3 – Tertiary Response](#)

[9740.2.3.3 – Terrestrial Mammal Information by Species](#)

9740.2.3.1 – Terrestrial Mammal Protection Priorities

Terrestrial mammal species may be prioritized in the planning area based on whether:

1. The species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to impacts from an oil spill.
2. The population of the species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population.
3. The species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies.
4. The species is an important subsistence resource.
5. The species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

[Table 9-6](#) shows priority species by geographic zone ([Figure 9-1](#)).

Table 9-6: Status¹ of Terrestrial Mammal Species of Concern by Geographic Zone in Alaska. Criteria for inclusion are: The population of the species in the planning area represents a significant proportion of the species' total world population; the species, or species group, is known to be particularly vulnerable to impacts from an oil spill; the species has been given a special status by state or federal agencies; the species is an important subsistence resource; or the species, or species group, is known to have an important breeding site in the planning area.

Species	Southeast Alaska	Prince William Sound	Cook Inlet	Kodiak Island	Bristol Bay	Aleutians	Western Alaska	Northwest Arctic	North Slope	Interior
Brown Bear	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Black Bear	P / S	P / S	P / S	--	P / S	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Caribou/Reindeer	--	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Moose	P	P / S	P / S	--	P / S	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Muskoxen	--	--	--	--	--	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	--
Bison	--	P	--	--	--	--	P	--	--	--
Mountain Goat	P / S	P / S	P / S	P	--	--	--	--	--	--
Dall Sheep	--	P / S	P / S	--	P / S	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Sitka Black-tailed Deer	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	--	--	--	--	--	--
Wolf	P	P / S	P / S	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Arctic Fox	--	--	--	--	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	--
Red Fox	P	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S
Aquatic Furbearers (e.g., beavers, muskrats, and river otters)	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S	P / S

¹ P = Present; S = Subsistence Species

9740.2.3.2 – Terrestrial Mammal Response Strategies

Little research has been done on the effects of oil on terrestrial mammals or on their susceptibility to oiling in the wild. However, it is possible to extrapolate potential oil spill impacts based on existing studies and observations of the behavior, food preferences, and habitat requirements of individual species.

Given that marine oil spills are statistically the most likely source of wildlife contamination, terrestrial species that spend a great deal of time feeding or traveling in intertidal areas and shorelines are at the greatest risk of being oiled. Bears, foxes, wolves, marten, and wolverines commonly scavenge for carcasses in intertidal areas. Mink and river otters also frequent coastal habitats. While ungulates tend to spend a smaller percentage of their time in coastal areas, certain deer and caribou are seasonally consistent users. Intertidal areas are used throughout the year, especially during winter and early spring since beaches often provide the easiest routes for travel as well as food when other sources are scarce.

Inland oil spills into water (e.g., along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline) may affect wildlife using rivers, streams, and wetlands. In addition to the species mentioned above, beavers, muskrats, and moose spend considerable time in or around inland waters. Muskoxen, bison, Dall sheep and mountain goats are also present in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor and could be affected by terrestrial spills or cleanup activities.

Oil-related mortalities generally occur due to internal injury resulting from ingestion of oil, dermal absorption of oil, or because of hypothermia caused by oiling and matting of fur. Animals spending a great deal of time in the water will frequently groom to maintain insulating properties of their fur and therefore can be expected to encounter problems due to both ingestion and hypothermia. Experience with oiled sea otters supports this. Injuries associated with ingestion of oiled food will probably be the primary impact to scavenging bears, foxes, wolves, marten, and wolverines, which feed in intertidal areas but do not commonly swim in the water.

Young animals may have lower tolerances to the toxic effects of oil. In addition to coming into direct contact with oil, young animals still being fed by parents could potentially be contaminated by parents bringing oil back to the nest or den on their fur or on food. Parents can also expose nursing young to petroleum hydrocarbons passed on in their milk.

The ADF&G will be the lead agency for all terrestrial mammal response activities on state and private lands. On federally managed lands, ADF&G will be the co-lead with the federal land manager.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where terrestrial mammals are or may be present, response personnel must consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.2.1 – Primary Response

Primary response strategies emphasize keeping oil away from wildlife by controlling the source and spread of spilled oil. Primary response strategies can include mechanical cleanup, protective booming, *in situ* burning, and dispersant use. In many cases of oil spilled into water, shoreline protection may be the only viable response strategy.

Removal of oiled carcasses from beaches minimizes opportunistic feeding by scavengers. Similarly, removal of oiled kelp from intertidal areas, especially during the winter and spring, would eliminate a source of oil contamination for foraging Sitka black-tailed deer. However, removal of live seaweed from intertidal zones should be undertaken only after careful consideration of potential negative impacts on the intertidal community. If a decision is made to remove live oiled algae, only the upper portion of the oiled leaves should be removed. The stem and basal portion of algae leaves should be left to regenerate.

9740.2.3.2.2 – Secondary Response

Secondary response strategies involve keeping animals away from oiled areas. These strategies will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, since they are likely to be labor intensive, stressful, dangerous to the animals (and potentially humans), and may only be effective for a short time.

Techniques for deterring birds may be applicable to terrestrial mammals in some cases. This could include the use of visual and auditory deterrence such as aircraft and ground vehicles. Various species will respond and habituate differently.

9740.2.3.2.3 – Tertiary Response

Tertiary response strategies involve capturing, handling, transporting, stabilizing, rehabilitating, and releasing oiled animals. This option is often not recommended as a viable response strategy for terrestrial mammals. The effects of drugging or physically restraining animals and handling-induced stress can actually increase mortalities. Another important consideration is the disease transmission potential among closely housed, stressed animals and back into wild populations if animals are released. Therefore, severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)). In some cases, however, rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons, including orphaned young, or aquatic furbearers for whom experience with sea otters may be applicable.

9740.2.3.3 – Terrestrial Mammal Information by Species

The following sections focus on terrestrial mammals that frequent coastal or inland aquatic habitats:

[9740.2.3.3.1 – Ungulates](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.1 – Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.2 – Ungulate Response Forms and Tools](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3 – Species Information](#)

[9740.2.3.3.2 – Brown and Black Bears](#)

[9740.2.3.3.2.1 – Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3.2.2 – Black and Brown Bear Response Forms and Tools](#)

[9740.2.3.3.3 – Wolves](#)

[9740.2.3.3.3.1 – Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3.3.2 – Wolf Response Forms and Tools](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4 – Furbearers](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.1 – Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.2 – Furbearer Response Forms and Tools](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3 – Species Information](#)

[9740.2.3.3.5 – Miscellaneous Small Mammals](#)

[9740.2.3.3.5.1 – Response Strategies](#)

[9740.2.3.3.5.2 – Small Mammal Response Forms and Tools](#)

9740.2.3.3.1 – Ungulates

Ungulates – caribou, muskoxen, moose, Sitka black-tailed deer, bison, mountain goats, and Dall sheep – are less frequently seen in intertidal and nearshore habitats compared to bears, wolves, and furbearers. However, Sitka black-tailed deer frequently forage on the beach during the winter and spring and will occasionally swim short distances. Arctic and Alaska Peninsula caribou also frequent coastal areas during the summer for insect relief. Muskoxen occasionally feed in coastal areas. All ungulates could be impacted by inland spills and response strategies along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, especially if the oil spill enters rivers and streams.

Deer, moose, and caribou could potentially swim or wade through oil and subsequently ingest oil by licking it off their fur. All ungulates are subject to ingesting contaminated vegetation. Ingestion of oil would probably be more harmful than external oiling alone since hypothermia resulting from oiled fur is unlikely to occur. Potential internal injuries include those to the liver, kidneys, lungs, tissues around the eyes and nose, and the lining of the digestive tract. Internal injuries would be difficult to impossible to treat effectively. Response activities may also disturb ungulates, causing displacement from important habitats or into oiled areas.

9740.2.3.3.1.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from ungulate habitat.

Secondary Response strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, since they are likely to be labor intensive, stressful, dangerous to the animals and humans, and may only be effective for a short time.

Tertiary Response strategies, including capturing and rehabilitating ungulates, are not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals (especially orphaned calves) can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for disease spread.

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where ungulates are or may be present, response personnel must consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.3.1.2 – Ungulate Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct ungulate response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Carcass collection information (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

9740.2.3.3.1.3 – Species Information

The following sections provide additional information for the following ungulates:

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.1 – Caribou](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.2 – Muskoxen](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.3 – Moose](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.4 – Sitka Black-Tailed Deer](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.5 – Bison](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.6 – Mountain Goats](#)

[9740.2.3.3.1.3.7 – Dall Sheep](#)

9740.2.3.3.1.3.1 – Caribou

Several caribou herds are found throughout Alaska. All four Alaskan Arctic herds (Western Arctic, Teshekpuk Lake, Central Arctic, and Porcupine), the North and South Alaska Peninsula herds, and caribou on Unimak and Adak islands could potentially encounter oil in coastal areas. On the Arctic Slope and Alaska Peninsula, during the post-calving/insect relief season (mid-June to early August), thousands of caribou may be distributed along the coast, especially on river deltas, points, and other promontories to seek relief from mosquitoes and flies. Arctic caribou also commonly wade or swim to barrier islands for the same reason.

Herds that could potentially encounter oil spilled in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor include the Western and Central Arctic herds, and the Ray Mountains and Nelchina herds. The Kenai Lowlands herd could also potentially encounter inland spills resulting from Kenai area industrial operations or the Swanson River field.

Ingestion of oil can result from animals licking oil off their fur or eating oiled food. However, laboratory evidence indicates that reindeer will eat foods contaminated with oil, especially if the food is of a preferred type, such as lichen. Caribou are also potentially subject to disturbance from oil spill response and cleanup operations.

Caribou seeking insect relief commonly aggregate in large groups on the windward side of deltas and promontories, which is also where oil can accumulate. During periods of insect harassment, caribou responses to hazing or herding are likely to be unpredictable. Pregnant cows moving to calving areas may be difficult to deter.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.2 – Muskoxen

Muskoxen occur most commonly around Cape Thompson, in and west of the Arctic NWR, and on Nunivak Island. Small herds are also present in the Sagavanirktok River corridor on a year-round basis. These animals can be affected by an oil spill from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

Individual or small numbers of muskoxen may occasionally frequent coastal areas, especially river deltas, apparently to feed on salt-rich coastal terrestrial plants. Storms could potentially bring oil into these areas where it could contaminate vegetation and then be ingested.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.3 – Moose

Moose are present throughout most of Alaska, except for Kodiak Island, the Aleutian Islands, and islands in Southeast Alaska. Moose are generally found in inland habitats and do not often venture into intertidal areas. They prefer marshy areas, streams, and lakes and are commonly concentrated along river corridors on a year-round basis.

While moose are found all along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor (except at the higher elevations in the Brooks, Alaska, and Chugach Ranges) they are most abundant between Pump Stations 7 and 12. As a result, moose are susceptible to ingesting aquatic vegetation contaminated by inland spills from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Since moose also enter fresh water to seek relief from insects during the summer, they could become externally oiled by contaminated water.

At the end of severe winters, many moose may be starving. When moose are in a weakened state, every effort should be made to avoid forcing them to move because of cleanup and response activities.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.4 – Sitka Black-Tailed Deer

Sitka black-tailed deer are present on the Kodiak Archipelago, throughout Prince William Sound, and in Southeast Alaska. They tend to be found closer to the shoreline during the winter and early spring and to follow the receding snow line to higher elevations in the summer.

Sitka black-tailed deer are susceptible to oil ingestion and external oiling. They often forage for kelp and beach grasses in intertidal areas during the winter and spring when other food sources are scarce. This behavior probably poses the greatest risk of mortality, especially since deer are often in poor physical condition at that time of the year. Deer have also been observed to swim short distances and could become externally oiled, if there is oil in the water.

Response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from deer habitat. Removal of oiled algae from beaches should be considered during winter and spring months. However, care should be taken to determine whether the removal of live algae will result in a net ecological benefit. If algae is removed, only the upper portion of the oiled leaves should be removed. The stem and basal portion of algae leaves should be left to regenerate.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.5 – Bison

While several herds of bison are found throughout the state, only the Delta herd is likely to encounter spilled oil since it is present year-round in the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor between Big Delta and Pump Station 10. Bison are migratory and generally graze on grasses and forbs.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.6 – Mountain Goats

Mountain goats are found throughout Southeast Alaska and in rugged terrain of the Chugach, Wrangell, and Alaska Ranges. They are, however, most likely to encounter oil spills along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor where it passes through the Chugach Mountains.

Disturbance created by spill cleanup operations would probably be of more concern than any actual contact with oil. Mountain goats are particularly subject to disturbance when kids are born (late May to

early June) and during breeding season (November and December). Kids are especially vulnerable to injury when panicked in rough terrain.

9740.2.3.3.1.3.7 – Dall Sheep

Dall sheep occur in many of the mountainous areas above 2,500 feet along the Trans-Alaska Pipeline corridor. In particular, they are found from Slope Mountain through the upper Dietrich River in the Brooks Range; near Black Rapids, south of Delta, in the Alaska Range; and in the area around Pump Station 12 in the Chugach Range. They prefer ridges, steep slopes, and alpine meadows and are rarely found below the treeline. Sheep also gather at mineral licks which occur near the pipeline at Slope, Table, and Snowden Mountains and Snowden Creek.

Dall sheep could potentially be oiled by an oil spill originating from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, although the disturbance created by spill cleanup operations would probably be of more concern than any actual contact with oil. Dall sheep are particularly subject to disturbance during lambing season (late May to early June) and breeding season (late November to early December). Lambs are especially vulnerable to injury when panicked in rough terrain.

9740.2.3.3.2 – Brown and Black Bears

While "brown" and "grizzly" bears are classified as the same species, in popular usage, "brown bear" refers to those individuals living along the coast, while "grizzly bear" refers to individuals living in interior areas. "Brown bear" will be used here to refer to both coastal and inland populations.

Brown and black bears can be found in coastal and inland areas throughout most of the state. Brown bears are present in many riparian corridors, such as the Sagavanirktok Valley, and are therefore subject to encountering oil spilled from the Trans-Alaska Pipeline into those areas. Brown bears are not found on islands south of Frederick Sound in Southeast Alaska, the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak Island, and are rare on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. While black bears are distributed throughout most of the forested areas of the state, they are not generally found in areas covered by tundra or muskeg (e.g., in areas north of the Brooks Range or on the Seward Peninsula). Moreover, black bears do not occur on Kodiak, Montague, or Hinchinbrook Islands or on the Alaska Peninsula beyond Lake Iliamna. Black bears are present in Southeast Alaska, except on Admiralty, Baranof, Chichagof, and Kruzof Islands.

Most brown and black bear activity along the coast occurs during the spring and summer and consists of scavenging for carcasses and feeding on intertidal invertebrates, such as razor clams. Brown bears have been observed to feed on beached carcasses of marine mammals, especially in the northern areas of the state. Brown bears would also be likely to feed on large terrestrial animals, such as caribou and moose that were disabled or killed by oiling. It is important, therefore, to locate and safely dispose of all oiled carcasses.

Bears are especially active during the salmon season and will congregate along salmon streams throughout the state to feed on live and dead fish. In the early spring, they also forage for emergent vegetation in wetland areas. Therefore, they can ingest oil in the process of feeding or incidentally to grooming. Bears are also capable of swimming and can become externally oiled.

Bears do not appear to avoid oil, and in some cases can be attracted to it. Although there is little specific information available about the sensitivity of brown or black bears to oil, evidence from polar bears suggests that bears may be extremely sensitive to ingested oil and to skin contact with oil.

There is no literature on rehabilitating oiled brown and black bears, although polar bear response information (*USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage) may be applicable. For example, brown and black bears, like polar bears, may be especially susceptible to hemorrhagic enteritis induced by the stress of capture and transport.

9740.2.3.3.2.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from bear habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

Secondary response strategies focus on deterring bears from areas contaminated by an oil spill. This response is appropriate under all circumstances and can be incorporated with primary response strategies. The potential for the animal actually contacting oil should be considered before secondary response strategies are initiated.

A deterrent is any method or device used to keep bears away from a particular location. The best deterrence requires early detection. Detection methods, which may be used in conjunction with deterrents, can include bear monitors, trained dogs, trip wires, and motion sensors.

There are no data indicating that visual or olfactory deterrent methods are effective in keeping bears away from specific sites. Artificial light, such as the electric lighting system at industry sites, may deter some bears at night. Auditory and physical stimuli, especially in combination, have been successfully used to deter bears, although bears may acclimate to auditory deterrence alone. Herding or hazing (dispersal of) polar bears with vehicles, boats, and aircraft has been successfully demonstrated. These methods may be effective when oil is confined to a small area and can be regularly patrolled.

Pre-emptive capture should only be initiated if all other methods under the secondary response strategy are ineffective in deterring bears from a spill site, and is only feasible if small numbers of animals are in danger of being oiled and suitable relocation sites are nearby. The potential for bears to be oiled will need to be high before this technique is initiated. Human safety, as with all spill response operations, is the top priority during all bear response activities.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies include capturing, handling, transporting, rehabilitating, holding, and releasing bears. Rehabilitation of individual animals may be considered on a case-by-case basis, with pregnant females and sows with cubs given priority. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases.

Details on hazing, deterrence, and capture of polar bears, which may be applicable for brown and black bears, can be found in the *USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Incident-specific bear safety plans will also outline currently accepted methods for hazing or deterring bears in the spill area.

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where black or brown bears are or may be present, response personnel must consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.3.2.2 – Black and Brown Bear Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct black and brown bear response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- *USFWS Oil Spill Response Plan for Polar Bears in Alaska*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
- Carcass collection information plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

9740.2.3.3.3 – Wolves

Wolves occur throughout mainland Alaska, Unimak Island, and on major islands in Southeast Alaska (except for Admiralty, Baranof, and Chichagof Islands). Wolves are susceptible to oil ingestion and external oiling. Ingestion of oil would probably pose the greatest risk to wolves, since they are opportunistic feeders and will consume carcasses found along the beach as well as terrestrial mammals disabled or killed by oil contamination. Anecdotal accounts suggest that wolves can be attracted to oil.

Wolves in the northern, western, and southwestern areas of the Alaska have been observed to carry rabies.

9740.2.3.3.3.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from wolf habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Secondary Response. Secondary response strategies will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind that deterrence can be labor-intensive, stressful, and dangerous to individual animals, and perhaps only effective for a short time, if at all.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies are not recommended, since wolves occasionally carry rabies. Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where wolves are or may be present, response personnel must consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.3.3.2 – Wolf Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct wolf response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Carcass collection information plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

9740.2.3.3.4 – Furbearers

Furbearers addressed in this appendix include red foxes, Arctic foxes, mink, river otters, muskrats, beavers, wolverine, marten, and miscellaneous small mammals.

Aquatic furbearers such as river otters, mink, muskrats, and beavers, spend large amounts of time in the water and rely on their fur for insulation. If externally oiled, these animals could become hypothermic and die. In addition, these species tend to groom frequently to maintain the insulating properties of their fur. This behavior places them at additional risk of ingesting oil. Arctic foxes, while they do not commonly enter the water, likewise rely heavily on their fur for insulation and groom extensively.

Many furbearers are opportunistic scavengers. This includes foxes, river otters, mink, wolverine, and marten. They often search intertidal areas for carcasses, especially during the winter and spring. This behavior places those species at risk of ingesting oiled food. Animals like river otters and mink, which spend considerable time in the water and feed on carcasses, are at highest risk for oil exposure. If oil cannot be contained before it comes ashore, the best strategy is to focus on removing oiled carcasses from habitats used by scavenger species.

There are no manuals on rehabilitating oiled terrestrial furbearers. However, protocols and procedures developed for sea otters are likely relevant to aquatic furbearers. See *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

9740.2.3.3.4.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Secondary Response. Secondary response strategies will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind that deterrence can be labor-intensive, stressful, and dangerous to individual animals, and perhaps only effective for a short time.

Tertiary Response. Capturing and rehabilitating oiled furbearers is not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis, or potentially for aquatic furbearers that may have similar cleaning and care requirements to sea otters. Careful consideration should be made of the added, handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases.

Foxes (red and Arctic) are vectors for rabies in Alaska and should never be pre-emptively captured or captured and rehabilitated.

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where furbearers are or may be present, response personnel should consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.3.4.2 – Furbearer Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct furbearer response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).

- Permits required for conducting response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
- Carcass collection information plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

9740.2.3.3.4.3 – Species Information

The following sections provide additional information for the following furbearers:

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.1 – Red Foxes](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.2 – Arctic Foxes](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.3 – Mink](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.4 – River Otters](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.5 – Muskrats](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.6 – Beavers](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.7 – Wolverines](#)

[9740.2.3.3.4.3.8 – Martens](#)

9740.2.3.3.4.3.1 – Red Foxes

Red foxes are found throughout the state, except for the western Aleutian Islands, Prince William Sound, and some islands in Southeast Alaska. Red foxes feed on a wide variety of coastal organisms and can be expected to scavenge whatever they find (including carcasses), especially during the winter and spring. Foxes, like many other mammals, often use beaches for travel routes, particularly when the snow is deep. Therefore, red foxes can ingest oil and become oiled externally following an oil spill in those areas.

Red foxes are one of the primary vectors for rabies in northern, western, and southwestern Alaska.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.1.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies are not recommended, since red foxes occasionally carry rabies. Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.2 – Arctic Foxes

Arctic foxes are ubiquitous in treeless coastal areas of the state. Their range extends from the Arctic Slope, through western and southwestern Alaska, and onto the Aleutian chain. Their numbers are subject to severe natural fluctuations. Although foxes are mostly solitary, concentrations of tens to hundreds have been observed scavenging around large food sources, such as whale carcasses, polar bear kills, or dumps.

Arctic foxes are particularly susceptible to oil contamination because they: 1) inhabit coastal areas and pack ice, 2) spend a considerable amount of time scavenging and could contact oiled carcasses, 3) groom extensively and could ingest oil, and 4) break into ringed seal lairs to hunt for newborn seals and

could encounter oil brought to the lair by an oiled seal. Since an Arctic fox's chief protection against the cold is a thick coat that traps air, it is subject to hypothermia if its coat becomes matted by oil.

Arctic foxes are one of the primary vectors for rabies in northern, western, and southwestern Alaska.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.2.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies are not recommended for any reason since Arctic foxes occasionally carry rabies. Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.3 – Mink

Mink are found throughout the state, except for Kodiak Island, the Aleutian Islands, and most of the Arctic Slope. Mink commonly occur in both coastal and inland riparian areas. Mink living in coastal areas frequently cross the intertidal zone and spend large amounts of time swimming and diving for food. They also scavenge for carcasses, especially during the spring. Consequently, contamination of mink fur by oil could occur, which would result in a loss of insulation and hypothermia. Mink also groom frequently and could ingest oil by grooming or eating oiled food. Due to these behavioral characteristics, mink are one of the furbearing species at greatest risk from an oil spill.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.3.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Capturing and rehabilitating mink is not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases. The manuals on cleaning sea otters are generally applicable to cleaning mink and other aquatic furbearers (see *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage).

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.4 – River Otters

River otters occur throughout Alaska, except for the Aleutian Islands and the area north of the Brooks Range. Like mink, river otters spend a great deal of time swimming and diving in nearshore and inland riparian areas for food. While they generally prefer live prey, river otters are also opportunistic feeders and will eat carcasses found in intertidal areas. While in the water or traversing the intertidal zone, their fur can become oiled, resulting in a loss of insulation and hypothermia. River otters also groom frequently and can ingest oil as a result. Along with mink, river otters are one of the furbearing species at greatest risk during an oil spill.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.4.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Capturing and rehabilitating river otters is not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases. The manuals on cleaning sea otters are generally applicable to cleaning river otters and other aquatic furbearers (see *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage).

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.5 – Muskrats

Muskrats occur throughout most of the Alaska mainland, except for the southern Alaska Peninsula and areas north of the Brooks Range. Muskrats live in and around wetland areas and generally feed on aquatic vegetation, invertebrates, and fish. Therefore, they are subject both to ingesting oil on their food and external oiling. Once their fur becomes oiled, it rapidly loses its insulating properties and muskrats can become hypothermic. Muskrats also groom frequently and can ingest oil as a result. Significant muskrat mortalities have been noted following past oil spills in inland waters.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.5.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Capturing and rehabilitating muskrats is not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases. The manuals on cleaning sea otters are generally applicable to cleaning muskrats and other aquatic furbearers (see *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage).

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.6 – Beavers

Beavers are present throughout most of the forested areas of the state, including Kodiak Island. They inhabit inland ponds, lakes, and streams and rely on their fur for insulation. Accordingly, they are at risk from external oiling, which could result in hypothermia. Grooming behavior and consumption of contaminated aquatic plants could also result in oil ingestion.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.6.1 – Response Strategies

Primary and Secondary Responses. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Tertiary Response. Capturing and rehabilitating beavers is not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases. The manuals on cleaning sea otters are generally applicable to cleaning beavers and other aquatic furbearers (see *Emergency Care and Rehabilitation of Oiled Sea Otters*, available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage).

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.7 – Wolverines

Wolverines are present throughout most of mainland Alaska and are found in both inland and coastal areas. Wolverines may be attracted to coastal areas to feed on carcasses of all types, including marine mammals, fish, and birds. As a result, wolverines could ingest oil or become oiled externally. They frequently tend to scavenge in intertidal areas during the winter and spring. In addition, they often use beaches as winter and spring travel routes.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.7.1 – Response Strategies

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Response. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.8 – Martens

Martens are present throughout most of the forested portions of Alaska. Martens live along inland bogs and streams as well as in coastal areas. They commonly feed on birds and small rodents. Since martens are opportunistic feeders, they could potentially scavenge oiled carcasses, including salmon.

9740.2.3.3.4.3.8.1 – Response Strategies

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Response. Primary response strategies should emphasize keeping spilled oil away from furbearer habitat and should include removal of oiled carcasses.

9740.2.3.3.5 – *Miscellaneous Small Mammals*

Small mammals, such as ground squirrels, voles, lemmings, and hares are ubiquitous throughout the state, and undergo large fluctuations in numbers.

If primary, secondary, or tertiary response strategies are proposed in locations where small mammals are or may be present, response personnel must consult with ADF&G regarding the proposed strategies to ensure compliance with state laws and permit requirements.

9740.2.3.3.5.1 – Response Strategies

Primary Response. Primary response strategies emphasize keeping spilled oil away from small mammal habitat.

Secondary Response. Secondary response strategies are not recommended.

Tertiary Response. Tertiary response strategies are not recommended. Rehabilitation of individual animals can be considered for humane reasons on a case-by-case basis. Careful consideration should be made of the added handling stress and the potential for spreading diseases.

Severely oiled individuals should be euthanized and their carcasses disposed of in accordance with incident-specific carcass collection protocols.

9740.2.3.3.5.2 – Small Mammal Response Forms and Tools

- Request authorization to conduct furbearer response activities (hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture and related activities, or oiled animal capture and related activities) in Startup or Comprehensive WRPs ([Section 9740.3.8](#)).
- Permits required for conducting response activities are listed in [Table 4-1](#).
- Carcass collection information plan (Sections [3640.2.1.1](#) and [9740.3.3](#)).

9740.3 – Wildlife Response Tactics, Guidelines, and Forms

The following sections contain the tactics, guidelines, and forms referenced in the WPG:

[9740.3.1 – Wildlife Response Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#)

[9740.3.2 – Tactic: Wildlife Reconnaissance \(Recon\)](#)

[9740.3.3 – Tactic: Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses](#)

[9740.3.4 – Wildlife Capture Forms](#)

[9740.3.5 – Checklist: Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response](#)

[9740.3.6 – Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels](#)

[9740.3.7 – Initiation and Close-Out Forms for ESA Section 7 Consultation](#)

[9740.3.8 – Wildlife Response Plans \(WRPs\)](#)

[9740.3.8.1 – Startup WRP](#)

[9740.3.8.2 – Comprehensive WRP](#)

The annual update process will include additional or updated tactics, guidelines, and forms. Full-page printable and fillable versions of applicable forms are available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

9740.3.1 – Wildlife Response Best Management Practices (BMPs)²⁰

These BMPs were developed as measures to reduce impacts to wildlife and their habitats during an oil spill response and for responder safety. These should be considered general guidance during spill responses. Not all BMPs will be applicable to every response, which is why incident-specific guidance is developed through the ESA section 7 consultation process and the Startup and Comprehensive WRPs. Best available information and professional judgment should be used when determining how to implement these BMPs during each response. BMPs include:

All Response Activities

1. Watch for and avoid collisions with wildlife; report all distressed or dead birds, marine mammals, fish, and other wildlife to Wildlife Branch or supervisor.
2. Ensure work areas are well-lit to minimize inadvertent impacts to wildlife or their habitat.
3. If bears are observed during response activities, contact supervisor, Safety Officer, or Environmental Unit.
4. Responders should follow procedures described in Section 3640.2 to report all oiled and unoiled carcasses to enable an assessment to determine if the animal may have died from spill-related causes (e.g., inhalation of product fumes or *in situ* burning, vessel/vehicle strike, or entanglement from gear in the water). These mortalities should be documented and, when possible, carcasses collected or photo documented according to procedures outlined in Section 3640.2.1.1.
5. Work with Operations and Planning Sections to mitigate impacts to subsistence activities from response activities.
6. Avoid transporting or introducing invasive species (e.g., rats).

Land-Based Activities

7. Avoid disturbing vegetation and shorelines with foot traffic, boats, and equipment. Consult wildlife agency representatives in the Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit if disturbance cannot be avoided.
8. Use existing access and egress areas and roadways.
9. Use low-pressure tire vehicles (e.g., all-terrain vehicles or side-by-side) or consult with wildlife agency representatives in the Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit to minimize impact.
10. Minimize removal of clean (unoiled) sediments.
11. Staging areas and waste collection areas should be examined, and land management agencies (e.g., Alaska Department of Natural Resources) consulted, for the presence of historical properties, cultural resources, and biological resources prior to establishment. Support

²⁰ A standalone version of these BMPs can be found on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

infrastructure should be located away from sensitive habitats, including shorelines, scrub, riparian habitat, and other vegetated areas.

12. All heavy equipment use should be as low on the beach as possible and avoid the high tide or wrack line while conducting cleanup activities. Keep heavy equipment away from the wrack line unless the wrack line is oiled.
13. Activities that require removal of riparian, forested, scrub, shrub, or other vegetated habitat should be minimized.
14. Waste management should be conducted in a manner that minimizes attracting wildlife (e.g., removing trash daily from work sites). If possible, cut all materials that form closed loops (e.g., plastic packing bands, rubber bands, and all other loops) prior to proper disposal in a closed and secured trash bin.
15. Stakes or flagging that preceded the spill and response activities should not be removed or destroyed.

Aircraft Activities

16. Adhere to incident-specific flight restrictions over sensitive habitats and avoid hovering or landing aircrafts in these areas.
17. Adhere to recommended flight altitude restrictions over wildlife management areas and other conservation units.

On-water Activities

18. If marine mammals or birds become trapped or entangled in boom, anchor lines, or other response equipment, immediately notify wildlife agency representatives for instructions.
19. Install and monitor underwater equipment or booms to prevent entrapment of fish and wildlife.
20. Do not block major egress points in channels, rivers, passes, and bays.
21. Use a properly screened water intake to avoid impacts to fish, especially juvenile or small resident fish. The intake should be centered with a screened enclosure to reduce the potential for fish to be entrained, impinged, or injured. Contact ADF&G for recommendations on screen mesh sizes and minimum water velocity depending on the location and timing of water withdrawal activities.

Additional information on wildlife response considerations, protection measures, and activities relevant to the Operations Section can be found in [Section 3600](#).

9740.3.2 – Tactic: Wildlife Reconnaissance (Recon)

A grab-and-go version of this tactic begins on the following page. A standalone version of the tactic and a full-page version of the associated form are available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent version.

TACTIC: WILDLIFE RECONNAISSANCE (RECON)

Objective and Strategy

- Identify and locate any wildlife that may be present and affected by a spill or response activities.
- Incidental wildlife (marine or terrestrial mammal, bird, fish, and invertebrate) observations can be made by any spill responder. Systematic wildlife observations are the primary responsibility of Wildlife Observers.

Tactic Description

- Look for, record information, and report wildlife that are:
 - In oiled areas;
 - In areas at risk of becoming oiled; and
 - Where affected wildlife is likely to travel (e.g., onshore).
- At a minimum, report this information:
 - **What kind, and how many?** (e.g., flock of 10 ducks, pod of 5-10 killer whales, 3 large whales, 5 seals)
 - **What were they doing?** (e.g., flying away from response boats, feeding in the area, hauled-out, floating/sitting in the water, transiting in a northerly direction)
 - **Where are they?** (preferably latitude/longitude, but could also be a description, e.g., “nearshore/shoreline approximately 1 kilometer west of oil, in [*name of*] Bay”)
 - **Any other details** (e.g., degree of oiling).
 - **Photos and video** are helpful.
- Wildlife Observers follow general or spill-specific protocols to systematically search for, identify, record, and report marine and terrestrial mammal, bird, fish, and invertebrate observations in the vicinity of the spill and response activities. They:
 - Survey numbers of wildlife using replicable methods;
 - Collect or verify baseline information;
 - Identify priority species and habitats;
 - Locate oiled individuals; and
 - Monitor oil spill impacts on wildlife through time, including impacts on animal behavior.

Safety Considerations

- Bear guards should be used when working on land or in nearshore environments when bears may be present, or as outlined in the incident-specific Safety Plan.
- Observers should exercise situational awareness depending on their observation platform. For example, slips, trips, and falls are a particular hazard on land and Personal Floatation Devices should be worn on vessels.
- Traveling on steep or unstable surfaces (cliffs, mud, exposed slopes, shoreline rocks with surf, etc.) should be avoided.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE; e.g., oil-resistant outerwear such as Tyvek coveralls) will be outlined in the incident-specific Safety Plan and is dependent on the potential exposure to oil in the observing environment.

Operational Considerations

Operating Environments, Geographic Considerations and Access

- Wildlife observation may be performed in all environments where a spill can occur (inland; on lakes, streams, and rivers; on marine shorelines; and in the marine nearshore and open-water environments).
- Observers may operate from one or more platforms, including on foot, in a vehicle or vessel, or by aircraft.
- Observers must avoid unnecessary disturbance to wildlife while conducting wildlife observations.
- Use of unmanned aircraft systems (UASs or drones) is not covered in this Tactic.

Species Type and Life Stage

- Incidental wildlife observations can be made by any responder, from any platform.
- Wildlife Observers may use species-specific or platform-specific protocols, such as marine mammal shipboard surveys or waterfowl aerial surveys.
- Be aware of species-specific requirements for non-approach zones (setback distances), sensitive time periods, and other factors to prevent or minimize disturbance.

Communications

- Ensure all forms are accurate and complete at the end of each shift.
- Incident-specific observation or survey protocols may identify specific communication requirements such as reporting thresholds to Unified Command and wildlife agencies.
- **All responders** can report wildlife observations through their supervisor to the Unified Command. Reports should include (at minimum):
 - **What kind, and how many?** (e.g., flock of 10 ducks, pod of 5-10 killer whales, 3 large whales, 5 seals)
 - **What were they doing?** (e.g., flying away from response boats, feeding in the area, hauled-out, floating/sitting in the water, transiting in a northerly direction)
 - **Where are they?** (preferably latitude/longitude, but could also be a description, e.g., “nearshore/shoreline approximately 1 kilometer west of oil, in [*name of*] Bay”)
 - **Any other details** (e.g., degree of oiling).
 - **Photos and video** are helpful.
- **Wildlife Observers** will follow incident-specific protocols for providing forms to USFWS, NMFS, ADF&G, and the Documentation Unit.

Equipment, Vehicles or Vessels, and Personnel for Wildlife Recon Tactic

- See [Table 9-7](#) (begins on next page).

Table 9-7: Equipment, Vehicles or Vessels, and Personnel for Wildlife Recon Tactic.

EQUIPMENT		QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Binoculars		1	Observe and identify wildlife.
GPS (with track-line function if available)		1	Set to Datum WGS84. Track-line can be uploaded to GIS.
Camera (with geo-referencing if available)		1	For documenting large groupings or significant observations. Geo-referenced photographs can be uploaded to GIS.
Wildlife Observation Forms		10	Print Wildlife Observation Forms on water-resistant (Rite-in-Rain [®]) paper, for filling out in field or for transferring device app information, if that is required. Observations may be collected using devices (tablet computer, cell phone). Device apps may be developed for an incident.
Incident-specific Wildlife Observation Protocol		1	Allows designated Wildlife Observers to collect comprehensive and scientifically defensible Wildlife Observations. If no incident-specific plan developed, follow Wildlife Recon Tactic.
Pens/pencils		5 each	
PPE		As needed for each responder	Protect personnel from platform-specific hazards. Platform-specific (e.g., personal flotation device for boat-based surveys)
VESSEL/VEHICLES		QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Varies. May include trucks, ATVs, boats, or aircraft.		Varies with incident	Enable Wildlife Observers to access survey area and conduct survey.
PERSONNEL	TACTIC-SPECIFIC TRAINING	QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Field Team Leader	Experience using binoculars to find and identify wildlife, and experience and training in identifying wildlife species in Alaska.	Varies with incident	Serves as primary Wildlife Observer; supervises field operations and is responsible for communication with Unified Command.
Wildlife Observer	Same as Field Team Leader	Varies with incident	Observe wildlife; record data.
Any Responder			Communicate any wildlife observations, especially in first 24-48 hours of spill, to supervisor or Unified Command.

IMPLEMENTATION

All Responders: Report wildlife observations through supervisor to Unified Command, including (as practicable):

1. **What kind, and how many?** (e.g., flock of 10 ducks, pod of 5-10 killer whales, 3 large whales, 5 seals)
2. **What were they doing?** (e.g., flying away from response boats, feeding in the area, hauled-out, floating/sitting in the water, transiting in a northerly direction)
3. **Where are they?** (preferably latitude/longitude, but could also be a description, e.g., “nearshore/shoreline approximately 1 kilometer from oil, in [name of] Bay”)
4. **Other relevant details** (e.g., degree of oiling, if observed).
5. **Photos and video** are helpful.

Wildlife Observers

1. Preparation:
 - a. Determine appropriate observation platform and ensure that Wildlife Observers have all required platform-specific training and PPE (e.g., Personal Floatation Device for boat-based recon).
 - b. Obtain and review standard survey methods for specific platform or any incident-specific survey protocols. Obtain Permits and Authorizations (if needed) for specific method/protocol. Obtain landowner permission if required.
 - c. Obtain equipment, Wildlife Observation Forms (print on Rite-in-the-Rain[®] or other water resistant paper).
 - d. Obtain map/charts/aerial photos of area to be surveyed.
 - e. Coordinate with Mapping Specialist as needed to determine incident-specific format of any electronic data such as track-lines, waypoints, data file transfers, geo-referenced photos, etc.
 - f. Coordinate timing of surveys through Operations to ensure platforms and resources are available and to prevent interference with other response activities.

2. Field Implementation:
 - a. Conduct surveys, record on map the area travelled and surveyed, take photographs.
 - b. Follow instructions on back of Wildlife Observation Form while filling them out and ensure documentation is complete and accurate at the end of each shift.
 - c. For long-term events, establish a routine and consistent survey schedule.
3. Deliverables (end-of-shift):
 - Completed Wildlife Observation Form(s) for each area surveyed.
 - Map of areas travelled and surveyed.
 - Any other documentation required by incident-specific protocols and formats.
 - SD cards, cameras, and GPS units turned in or data downloaded.

Notes:

Related Tactics

- Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses ([Section 9740.3.3](#))

Resources

- *Alaska Spill Response Wildlife ID Aid*, available on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage, is a field tool designed to aid spill responders in the identification and recording of wildlife observed during a spill..

Forms (on following pages)

- [Figure 9-2](#): Wildlife Observation Form
 - A printable version of this form is available on the on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
 - Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.

Figure 9-2: Wildlife Observation Form (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage).

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Wildlife Observation Form Return form(s) to Supervisor, Wildlife Branch, or wildlife agency representative		Incident Name:	Date (MM/DD/YYYY):	INV (OLE Use Only):		
ICS Position (Group, Task Force, Strike Team, or other name if no ICS Position):		Lead Observer Name & Employer (Phone & Email if no ICS Position):				
		Training/Experience:				
Other Observer(s) Names & Employers:						
General Location:	GPS Datum: WGS84 (preferred) <input type="checkbox"/> ; NAD83 <input type="checkbox"/> ; NAD27 <input type="checkbox"/> ; Other: _____	Camera & SD Card ID #:				
		GPS & SD Card ID #:				
For surveys, GPS Trackline File Name: _____ Total distance surveyed: _____ mi <input type="checkbox"/> or km <input type="checkbox"/>						
OBSERVATION INFORMATION						
Platform: On foot <input type="checkbox"/> Truck/4-wheeler <input type="checkbox"/> Vessel <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		Platform Description:				
Cloud Cover (%) _____	Wind Speed _____ mph <input type="checkbox"/> knots <input type="checkbox"/> OR Beaufort Wind Scale (1-6): _____	Direction wind is blowing from: _____				
Precipitation: None <input type="checkbox"/> Fog/Mist <input type="checkbox"/> Light Rain <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Rain <input type="checkbox"/> Snow <input type="checkbox"/>			Visibility: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>			
Time	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Species/Species Group	ID Certainty	# of Animals	Details
<i>EXAMPLE</i> 0805	57.70818 N	-52.32819 W	seabirds	certain	18	Mixed seabird flock incl 10 least auklets; feeding, not traveling, 2 km from oil, no visible oiling, WP 33
						START SURVEY (write time, location)

Wildlife Observation Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)

Lead Observer Name: _____

Date: _____

Time	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Species/ Species Group	ID Certainty	# of Animals	Details
						END SURVEY (write time, location)

INSTRUCTIONS: Wildlife Observation Form (or follow incident-specific protocols if available)

Incident Name and Date: Fill out.	ICS Position: ICS Position of Wildlife Observer(s), if applicable. Record other identifier if no ICS position.	Lead Observer: Record information for lead Wildlife Observer (person with the most training/experience). Training/Experience: May include but not be limited to applicable degree, employer training, USFWS/NMFS training, etc.			
Other Observer(s): Record information for other Wildlife Observers.	General Location: General location of observations, from navigational charts or maps (<i>Ex: Growler Bay</i>).		GPS Datum: Check one (found in GPS settings). WGS84 is preferred.		
Camera/GPS & SD Card IDs: Write ID numbers of assigned camera and GPS unit and SD cards (memory cards).		GPS Trackline File Name: For incident-specific protocols, record trackline file saved in your GPS. Total Distance Surveyed: record with units.			
Platform: Check one.	Platform Description: Record type, name, and identifying numbers/letters of vessel/vehicle/aircraft. If Other, provide details in description.			Cloud Cover: Estimate percentage.	
Wind Speed: Record with units OR Beaufort Wind Scale: 0: 0-1 mph, calm, flat seas 1: 1-3 mph, ripples 2: 4-7 mph, light breeze, wavelets 3: 8-12 mph, gentle breeze, large wavelets, some breaking crests 4: 13-18 mph, moderate breeze, small waves, many whitecaps 5: 19-24 mph, fresh breeze, 6-9 ft waves, some spray 6: 25-31 mph, strong breeze, large waves with spray >6: 32+ mph			Direction wind is blowing from: Record direction. Precipitation: Check one. Visibility: Check one. Excellent = unlimited; poor = <100 m		
Time: 24-hour format.	Latitude and Longitude: Decimal Degrees preferred. Regardless of format used, include any decimals and symbols for degrees/minutes/seconds. If no GPS unit is available, describe observation location as detailed as possible.		Species: Record the species as precisely as you can. For example, you might ID a gull as "short-billed gull" (to species), or as "unidentified gull" or "bird."		
ID Certainty: CERTAIN: You are quite sure of the species or species type. MAYBE: You have some question about the species or species type. UNCERTAIN: You do not know the species or species type.		# of Animals: Record the number of individuals of the same species or species group. Large numbers can be a range; for example, "40-50 short-billed gulls."	Details: Note any additional details, including: GPS waypoint (WP); size, age, or sex of animals; behavior (feeding, preening, loafing, or other); distance to oil; photo numbers; record degree of oiling; any other info you think important. Degree of oiling codes: NO =no obvious oil on body. LT =light spots of oil. MOD =moderate patches over body. HV =heavily oiled all over. UNK =unknown.		

Wildlife Observation Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

9740.3.3 – Tactic: *Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses*

A grab-and-go version of this tactic begins on the following page. A standalone version of the tactic and full-page versions of the associated forms and job aid are available on the [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent version.

The training video for this tactic, *Carcass Collection and Documentation during an Oil Spill Response*, can be found on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.

TACTIC: COLLECTION OF SMALL CARCASSES AND DOCUMENTATION OF LARGE CARCASSES

Objective and Strategy

- Remove oiled and unoled carcasses from the environment to prevent secondary contamination of scavengers.
- Document carcass species, locations, and other information to evaluate the impact of the spill on affected populations and to assess overall impact of a spill event on the environment.

Tactic Description

- Carcasses that are small enough to be removed from the environment (e.g., fish, shellfish, small mammals, and birds) need to be documented, collected, and transferred or disposed of according to protocol. Often, carcasses will be delivered to a wildlife agency representative at a single location – the Evidence Custodian at the morgue facility.
- Carcasses that are too large to remove from the environment need to be documented and perhaps sampled. Sample collection from large carcasses is not included in this tactic.
 - For additional information about large carcass documentation, please refer to the training video for this tactic, *Carcass Collection and Documentation during an Oil Spill Response*, available on the ARRT [Wildlife Protection Guidelines](#) webpage.
 - For large carcass sampling, see “Dead Marine Mammal Recovery and Field Processing Procedures” in the NMFS *Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Safety Considerations

- Bear guards, or appropriate bear safety equipment, should be used where bears may be present, or as outlined in the incident-specific Safety Plan.
- Slips, trips, and falls are a particular hazard for carcass collection because people may be focused on searching for carcasses while walking in rough, slippery terrain.
- Avoid steep and unstable surfaces (cliffs, mud, exposed slopes, shoreline rocks with surf, etc.).
- Primary PPE for carcass collection are nitrile gloves. Other PPE (e.g., oil-resistant outerwear such as Tyvek coveralls) will be outlined in the incident-specific Safety Plan, and is dependent on the level of carcass oiling, amount of oil in the environment, and weather.

Operational Considerations

Operating Environments, Geographic Considerations, and Access

- Carcass collection may be performed in all environments where a spill can occur, including:
 - On land;
 - Lakes, streams, and rivers and associated shorelines;
 - Marine shorelines, marine nearshore, and open water.
- Responders may search for carcasses on foot or by vehicle (snow machine, truck, ATV, boat, aircraft) depending on the size, location, and complexity of the spill; terrain; and land ownership/access.
- While carcass collection and disposition procedures will follow this tactic, how those carcasses are found – carcass surveys – may vary depending on the size, location, and complexity of the spill; survey protocols may be incident-specific.

Species Type and Life Stage

- **Birds and small mammals:** Collect partial carcasses and intact, whole birds and small mammals, regardless of degree of scavenging, disintegration, or decomposition. Do not collect single feathers, or feather or fur clumps, that are not attached to skin or other body part. Collect disarticulated carcasses (those in separate pieces) by bagging and tagging all pieces that likely came from the same animal as one whole animal.
- **Large mammals (adult bears, whales, seals, sea lions, walruses, and some ungulates):** Response personnel should notify Unified Command immediately upon finding carcasses that are too large to be collected. These must be documented by the carcass collection team and may subsequently be sampled by separate agency or authorized personnel. Carcasses of young large mammals such as cubs or calves should be collected when possible. Collect disarticulated carcasses (those in separate pieces) by bagging and tagging all pieces that likely came from the same animal as one whole animal.
- **Other aquatic species (fish, shellfish, and invertebrates):** Collect partial and intact whole carcasses, regardless of degree of scavenging, disintegration, or decomposition. If large numbers of disarticulated or very small carcasses are found, incident-specific protocols may be developed to facilitate their collection.
- **Oily waste:** Oiled carcasses are considered oily waste. Any oiled carcasses, such as large mammals or a large fish kill, that are not transported to the Evidence Custodian or morgue must be documented and disposed of according to the incident Waste Management Plan, after approval by wildlife agencies.

Communications

- Ensure all forms and tags are accurate and complete at the end of each shift.
- Follow incident-specific procedures to submit forms to USFWS, NMFS, ADF&G, and the Documentation Unit. Ensure tags will stay with the carcasses.
- Follow incident-specific reporting thresholds (e.g., report any and all protected species) to Unified Command and wildlife agencies.
- All responders should immediately report observations of carcasses through their supervisor to Unified Command. Reports should include (at a minimum):
 1. Observer name, time, date, and location (latitude/longitude and location description);
 2. Species or species group and numbers of each species observed;
 3. Estimated degree of oiling and location of carcass relative to known oiled area;
 4. Photographs, if possible.

Equipment, Vehicles or Vessels, and Personnel for Carcass Collection Tactic

- See [Table 9-8](#) (begins on next page).

Table 9-8: Equipment, Vehicles or Vessels, and Personnel for Carcass Collection Tactic.

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	As needed	Ensure safety of responders
Bear pepper spray	As needed	As outlined in incident-specific Safety Plan
GPS Unit	1	Document locations
Camera	1	Documentation
Photo scale	1	Documentation
Binoculars	1 per person or team	Search for carcasses; situational awareness
Extra batteries for GPS unit and camera	1 set each	Avoid electronics down time
Carcass Collection Kit (for 10 small birds or mammals, 1-3 eagles, 1-3 sea otters)	1 or more	Enable the safe and proper collection and documentation of carcasses.
Large/XL Cooler or tote	1	Wheeled if possible
Paperwork:		
Incident-specific maps or shoreline segment maps	1 set	
Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tags (white)	15	
Pre-printed Individual Carcass Identification Tags (yellow)	15	If pre-printed tags are unavailable, use water-resistant labels with: date, time, location, collector's name, and an assigned sequential carcass ID number.
Carcass Collection Forms	5	Print forms on water-resistant (e.g., Rite-in-the-Rain®) paper.
Ziploc® bags for Carcass Collection Forms	5	
Carcass Collection Protocol	1	Print on water-resistant (e.g., Rite-in-the-Rain®) paper.
Transport Log for Carcasses	10	For use by Transporter – may be with them. Print on water-resistant (e.g., Rite-in-the-Rain®) paper.
Pencil and permanent pen (e.g., Sharpie®)	5 each	
Clipboard	1	
Printed permits and authorizations	1 or more	May be from multiple agencies (USFWS, NMFS, and ADF&G) and landowners.
Water resistant field notebook	1 per person	
Collection supplies:		
Brown (kraft) paper bags, small	10	Lunch bags
Brown (kraft) paper bags, large	6	Leaf or lawn bags
Non-coated (e.g., kraft) roll of paper	1	If carcasses larger than will fit in a large paper bag are anticipated.

EQUIPMENT		QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Plastic bags, small (e.g., gallon size Ziplocs®)		10	
Plastic bags, large (e.g., kitchen trash bags, compactor bags)		10	
Twist ties, zip-ties, or wire ties		1 packet	
Nitrile gloves, one-size-fits-all		25 pairs	
Field scissors or knife		1	
Flagging		1 roll	
Ice packs		4	If available.
VESSEL/VEHICLES		QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Various depending on spill environment, size, and complexity. May include trucks, ATVs, boats, or aircraft, etc.		Varies	Enable carcass collectors to search, locate, retrieve, and transport carcasses to central location (morgue).
PERSONNEL	TACTIC-SPECIFIC TRAINING	QUANTITY	FUNCTION/NOTES
Carcass Collector	Carcass collection training	1	Supervises field operations and physically handles and bags carcasses.
Data Recorder	Carcass collection training	1	Completes forms, photo-documentation, records GPS coordinates (Lat/Long), and performs other administrative duties.
Transporter	Transporter training	Various, depending on complexity of incident	Transfers carcasses from field collection location to central location (morgue).
Evidence Custodian/ Designated Agency Personnel		1 or more	Receives carcasses and documentation from field teams; often are USFWS or NMFS law enforcement personnel.

Notes:

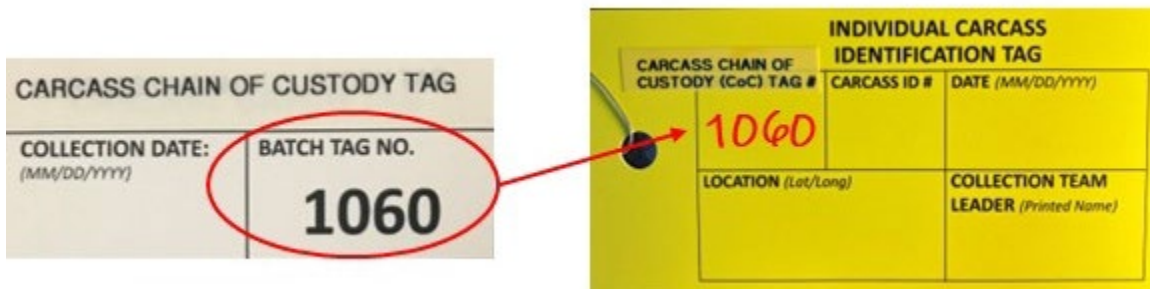
Implementation

1) Preparation:

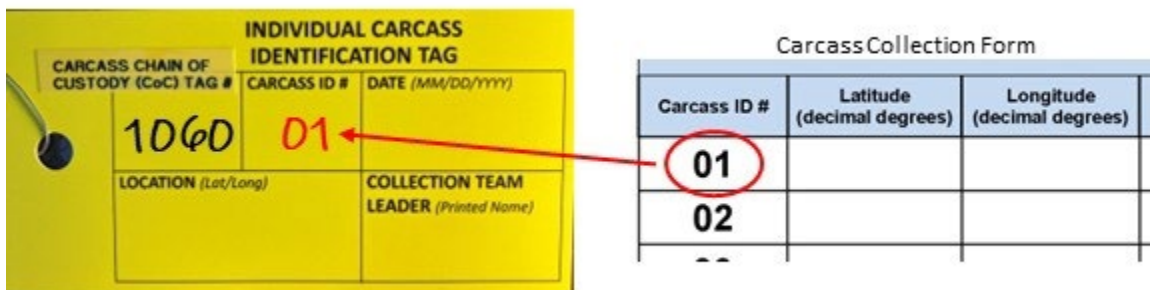
- a) Obtain PPE, equipment, and printed copy of Permits and Authorizations.
- b) Ensure activities can be safely conducted.
- c) Determine if Bear Guards or bear safety equipment are needed for shoreline or inland activities in accordance with the incident-specific Safety Plan.

2) Field Implementation (see also [Figure 9-3](#): Carcass Collection Job Aid For Small Carcasses)

- a) **RECORDER**: Complete top of Carcass Collection Form, following instructions on back of form.
 - Fill out the shoreline search section of the form only if instructed to do so, using incident-specific protocols.
 - Take photos as needed to document carcasses in the field.
- b) **COLLECTOR**: Wearing new nitrile gloves, place individual carcass in paper bag, then in clear plastic bag. For larger carcasses, wrap in uncoated (e.g., kraft) paper or aluminum foil and then place in larger plastic bags.
 - Do NOT put carcasses directly in plastic bags.
 - Do NOT place nitrile gloves in bag with carcasses.
- c) **RECORDER**: Complete a yellow Individual Carcass Identification Tag for each carcass.
 - The Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag # is the Batch Tag No. on the Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag:



- The Carcass ID # on Individual Carcass Identification Tag is the pre-printed number from the next blank line on the Carcass Collection Form:



- Individual Carcass Identification Tags may be a color other than yellow. If pre-printed Individual Carcass Identification Tags are not available, use waterproof paper to create a tag and write the date, time, location (Lat/Long), and Collector’s Name on it.
- d) **COLLECTOR:** Tie completed Individual Carcass Identification Tags to the outside of each plastic carcass bag.
- e) **RECORDER:** On the Individual Carcass Log section of the Carcass Collection Form, complete the line corresponding to the selected Carcass ID No. (Lat/Long, Species, Condition, etc.):

INDIVIDUAL CARCASS LOG							
Carcass ID #	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Species	Condition FRESH, DEG, MUM	Oiling NO, LT, MOD, HV, UNK	Photo #	Comments
01							
02							
03							

- f) **COLLECTOR:** Place bagged and tagged carcasses inside of larger plastic “batch” bag.
 - A “batch” is the number of animals that fit inside a large plastic bag and will vary from 1 to 10 carcasses depending on species size and number of carcasses.
- g) **RECORDER AND COLLECTOR:** Repeat Steps b-f until the batch is complete.
 - Start a new “batch” when: 1) Ten carcasses have been collected (and Carcass Collection Form is complete); 2) Batch bag is full; or 3) Moving to a new area.
- h) **RECORDER:** Place completed Carcass Collection Form in a re-sealable, waterproof (e.g., Ziploc®) bag. Place this bag inside the batch bag but outside of any individual carcass bags.
- i) **RECORDER:** Complete and sign a Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag for each batch of carcasses.
- j) **COLLECTOR:** Tie completed, signed Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag to outside of batch bag.
- k) **RECORDER:** For carcasses too large to collect, take photographs and write in field notebook:
 - Personnel name(s), time, date, and location (Lat/Long and description);
 - Species or species group and numbers of each species observed;
 - Estimated degree of oiling and location of carcass relative to known oiled area;
 - Number and location of photographs.

3) Transport and Storage

- a) **RECORDER AND TRANSPORTER:** Sign Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag when carcasses are transferred.
- b) **TRANSPORTER:** Complete Transport Log for Carcasses following instructions on back of form.
- c) **TRANSPORTER:** Keep carcasses as cool as possible.
- d) **TRANSPORTER:** Deliver carcasses to additional TRANSPORTER if needed (i.e., from vessel to vehicle) or to agency-designated Evidence Custodian at morgue or designated transfer point.
 - The Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag is signed by both TRANSPORTERS each time the carcasses change possession.

- The Evidence Custodian will sign the Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag, and inspect and catalogue all collected carcasses, then ensure storage until plans are made for final disposal.

4) Deliverables

- Correctly bagged carcasses and batches of carcasses.
- Completed Individual Carcass Identification Tag for each carcass.
- Completed Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag for each “batch” of 1-10 carcasses.
- Completed Carcass Collection Form for each “batch” of 1-10 carcasses.
- Completed Transport Log for Carcasses for each shift and mode of transportation.
- Copies of field notebooks and photographs for each shift.
- SD cards, cameras, and GPS units turned in or data downloaded.

Notes:

Additional Resources for Small Carcass Collection and Large Carcass Documentation and Sampling

- [Figure 9-3: Carcass Collection Job Aid for Small Carcasses](#) (full-page version available on the ADEC Area Plan [References and Tools](#) webpage).
- See the video tutorial of this tactic for demonstrations of small carcass collection and large carcass documentation.
- Equipment lists for sampling and collection of large carcasses, especially marine mammals, can be found in “Appendix 5: Equipment Lists Per Response Activity” in the NMFS *Cook Inlet and Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines*, the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Related Tactics

- Wildlife Reconnaissance (Recon; [Section 9740.3.2](#))

References

- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2017. NMFS Arctic Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines. U.S. Dep. Commerce, NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-F/AKR-16. 81 p. doi: 10.7289/V5/TM-F/AKR-16. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2019. Cook Inlet & Kodiak Marine Mammal Disaster Response Guidelines. NOAA Fisheries Guidance Document. pp 80 + appendices. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).
- Ziccardi, M.H., S.M. Wilkin, T.K. Rowles, and S. Johnson. 2015. Pinniped and Cetacean Oil Spill Response Guidelines. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS - OPR - 52, 138 p. Available from the [NOAA Institutional Repository](#).

Forms (on following pages)

- [Figure 9-4](#): Carcass Collection Form
 - A printable version of this form is available on the on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.
 - Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.
- [Figure 9-5](#): Individual Carcass Identification Tag
 - Pre-printed, as pictured, or use a water-resistant blank tag, two sides.
- [Figure 9-6](#): Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag
 - Pre-printed or use a water-resistant blank tag, two sides.
- [Figure 9-7](#): Transport Log for CARCASSES
 - A printable version of this form is available on the on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.

Figure 9-3: Carcass Collection Job Aid for Small Carcasses (full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Carcass Collection Job Aid

1 Fill out the top section of the Carcass Collection Form. Only fill out the shoreline search section on back of form if instructed to do so by incident-specific protocols.

2 When a carcass is located, place the carcass into a paper-bagged plastic bag and tie the bag securely.

3 Tag the plastic bag with an Individual Carcass Identification Tag with Date, Time, Location and Collector.

4 Wear nitrile gloves when handling carcasses.

Place the paper-bagged plastic bag in a large plastic bag.

Sign Carcass Chain of Custody Tag and attach to the large bag.

Complete the bottom section of the Carcass Collection Form. Fill out the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag then record the pre-printed Batch Tag No. on the Carcass Collection Form.

Place all clear bagged carcasses found in the location in a large plastic bag.

Fold the Carcass Collection Form in half, place it in a paper bag, and then place it in the large bag.

At the end of each day, the carcass collector or transporter should transfer all collected carcasses to the pre-designated carcass custodian (likely from a wildlife resource agency).

The bag of carcasses is handed to the transporter. Transporter signs Carcass Chain of Custody Tag and records information in the Transport Log for CARCASSES.

Complete a "From" section of the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag and attach to plastic bag.

Sign Carcass Chain of Custody Tag and attach to the plastic bag.

Job Role Key:

- Recorder
- Collector

Transport Log for CARCASSES
 FROM LEAVE WITH TRANSPORTER

Carcass ID #	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)
01		
02		
03		

INDIVIDUAL CARCASS IDENTIFICATION TAG

CARCASS CHAIN OF CUSTODY TAG # [] CARCASS ID # [] DATE []

LOCATION [] COLLECTION TEAM LEADER []

SHORELINE SEARCH INFORMATION

Date: [] Location and Shoreline Segment: []

CARCASS CHAIN OF CUSTODY TAG

COLLECTION DATE: [] BATCH TAG NO. 1060

From (Name/Co.) [] To (Name/Co.) []

DIY: Complete a "From" section of the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag and attach to plastic bag.

Release Signature [] Receipt Signature []

Carcass Collection Job Aid WPG Version 2020.2

Figure 9-4: Carcass Collection Form (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Carcass Collection Form Use one form for each batch of carcasses		Incident Name:		Today's Date (mm/dd/yyyy):		INV (OLE Use Only):	
ICS Position (<i>Group, Task Force, Strike Team, or other name if no ICS Position assigned</i>):				Carcass Collector <i>Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if no ICS Position assigned)</i> :			
Data Recorder <i>Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if no ICS position)</i> :				Have carcass collection permits & authorizations been obtained? YES <input type="checkbox"/> <i>If not, Do Not Collect Carcasses</i>			
Camera & SD Card ID #:		GPS & SD Card ID #:		GPS Datum: (WGS84 preferred) <input type="checkbox"/> NAD83 <input type="checkbox"/> NAD27 <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
General Location or Shoreline Segment:				<i>If applicable, fill out Shoreline Search Information on reverse.</i>			
INDIVIDUAL CARCASS LOG							
Carcass ID #	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Species	Condition FRESH, DEG, MUM	Oiling NO, LT, MOD, HV, UNK	Photo #	Comments
01							
02							
03							
04							
05							
06							
07							
08							
09							
10							
For this batch, record white Carcass Chain of Custody Tag pre-printed Batch Tag No.: _____ and Total number of carcasses: _____ Fold completed form and put inside a resealable waterproof storage bag (e.g., Ziploc®), then place inside the large plastic carcass batch bag.							

Carcass Collection Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)

INSTRUCTIONS: Carcass Collection Form (or follow incident-specific protocols if available)

Incident Name and Date: Fill out.	ICS Position: ICS position of Carcass Collection Team, if applicable. Record other identifier if no ICS position.	Carcass Collector: Record information for designated Carcass Collector, who serves as Collection Team Leader.
Data Recorder: Record information for the person filling out this form.	Permits and Authorizations: Ask your supervisor. If permits have not been obtained, you are not authorized to collect carcasses, although you can take photos and document their location.	
Camera/GPS & SD Card IDs: Write ID numbers of assigned camera and GPS unit and the SD (memory cards). PERSONAL PHONE OR CAMERA USE IS NOT RECOMMENDED.		GPS Datum: Check one (found in GPS settings). WGS84 is preferred.
Location: Name of general location as shown on navigational charts or maps, and (if applicable) name or number of assigned shoreline segment.		
Carcass ID #: When filling out yellow Individual Carcass ID Tag, this is the number (1-10) to record for "Carcass ID #".	Latitude and Longitude: Decimal Degrees preferred. Regardless of format, include any decimals or symbols for degrees/minutes/seconds. If no GPS unit is available, describe the location where carcass was found.	Species: Record the species as precisely as you can. For example, you might ID a gull as "mew gull" (to species), or as "unidentified gull" or "bird."
Condition: 'FRESH' = freshly dead. Eyeballs are plump and intact, body is whole with no evidence of insect/crustacean intrusion or other scavenging. 'DEG' = degraded body condition, with one or more of the following: eyeballs sunken or gone; body decomposing or being eaten by insects/crustaceans/other animals; exposed flesh does not appear completely dried out; or some body parts are missing. 'MUM' = mummified. Only skin, bones, or feathers remain, or exposed flesh appears completely dried out.		Oiling: NO = no obvious oil on body. LT = light spots of oil. MOD = patches over more of the body than LT. HV = heavily oiled, over most of the body. UNK = unknown.
Photo #: Digital photo # from SD card, or # written on whiteboard and photographed with carcass. A large number of similar carcasses can be photographed as a group.		Comments: Please note any additional information that you think might be useful.
Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Batch Tag No: Write pre-printed Batch Tag No. from white Carcass CoC Tag, & total number of carcasses for this batch (1-10).		

SHORELINE SEARCH INFORMATION (complete this section only if following protocol for SHORELINE SEARCHES)

Date:	Location and Shoreline Segment:	Carcass Collector Name:
Start / Stop Times: /	Start / Stop GPS Coordinates (decimal degrees): /	
Wind is Toward: Water <input type="checkbox"/> Land <input type="checkbox"/> Along Beach <input type="checkbox"/> No wind <input type="checkbox"/>	Search Platform: Walking <input type="checkbox"/> Boat <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Dominant Shoreline Type: Sand <input type="checkbox"/> Pebble <input type="checkbox"/> Cobble <input type="checkbox"/> Boulder <input type="checkbox"/> Bedrock <input type="checkbox"/> Vertical Cliff <input type="checkbox"/> Marsh <input type="checkbox"/> Sand/Mud Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		
Beach Width Searched (feet): _____ Search Path: Single Path <input type="checkbox"/> Out-and-back <input type="checkbox"/>		
Comments:		

Carcass Collection Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

Figure 9-5: Individual Carcass Identification Tag (pre-printed or water-resistant two-sided blank tag); one per carcass.

INDIVIDUAL CARCASS IDENTIFICATION TAG		
CARCASS CHAIN OF CUSTODY (CoC) TAG #	CARCASS ID #	DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
LOCATION (Lat/Long)		COLLECTION TEAM LEADER (Printed Name)

TAG INSTRUCTIONS
<p>This system works best when you complete the <i>Individual Carcass Identification Tag</i>, the <i>Carcass CoC Tag</i> and the <i>Carcass Collection Form</i> at the same time.</p> <hr/> <p>CoC Tag #: Enter the pre-printed number from the <i>Carcass CoC Tag</i> for the batch-bag this carcass will be placed into.</p> <hr/> <p>Carcass ID #: Assign a sequential number to each carcass to be placed within a batch-bag (Ex: 01, 02, 03, 04, etc). This number will match the Carcass ID number on the <i>Carcass Collection Form</i> for this batch.</p>

Figure 9-6: Carcass Chain of Custody (CoC) Tag (pre-printed or water-resistant two-sided blank tag); one per batch of carcasses.

CARCASS CHAIN OF CUSTODY TAG

COLLECTION DATE: <small>(MM/DD/YYYY)</small>	BATCH TAG NO. 1060
COLLECTION TEAM NAME:	
LOCATION DESCRIPTION:	
LIST OF EACH CARCASS IN THIS BATCH BY INDIVIDUAL CARCASS ID #:	
NAME OF COLLECTION TEAM LEADER:	
COMPLETE CHAIN OF CUSTODY ON REVERSE SIDE	

CHAIN OF CUSTODY: Complete a "From" and "To" section each time the Batch changes possession.

From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date
From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date
From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date
From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date
From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date
From (Name/Co.)	Release Signature	Date
To (Name/Co.)	Receipt Signature	Date

Figure 9-7: Transport Log for Carcasses (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Page 1 of 2

Transport Log for CARCASSES Form stays with Transport Team		Incident Name:			
--	--	----------------	--	--	--

TRANSPORT TEAM INFORMATION				
Transportation Name or Call Sign:	ICS Position <i>Group, Task Force, Strike Team:</i>	Data Recorder Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):		
<i>Type: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> AIRCRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/></i>				

LOG INFORMATION					
Batch Tag Number <i>Found on Carcass Chain of Custody Tag</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	Transporter Received the Carcass(es) FROM:	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Transporter Gave the Carcass(es) TO:	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>
		<i>Name of the signatory (From/Release) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag. Include Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>		<i>Name of the signatory (To/Receipt) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag. Include Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>	

Transport Log for CARCASSES – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)

Incident Name: _____

Data Recorder Name: _____

Batch Tag Number <i>Found on Carcass Chain of Custody Tag</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	Transporter Received the Carcass(es) FROM: <i>Name of the signatory (From/Release) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Transporter Gave the Carcass(es) TO: <i>Name of the signatory (To/Receipt) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>

INSTRUCTIONS: Transport Log for CARCASSES

This form is the primary record maintained by each transport boat/vehicle/aircraft to track each carcass or batch of carcasses transported by this team. The original form stays with the boat/vehicle/aircraft; copies will be requested by officials within the Incident Management Team. This information is important to record both to document each boat/vehicle/aircraft's transport activity and as a backup in case the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag is lost or damaged. Information should be recorded in this log for each carcass or batch of carcasses transported AND each transporter must complete and sign the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag when accepting or transferring carcasses.

Incident Name: Incident-specific assigned number or incident assigned name.		
TRANSPORT TEAM INFORMATION		
Transportation Name or Call Sign: Record boat/vehicle/aircraft name or identifying number.	ICS Position: ICS position of the transport boat/vehicle/aircraft. Indicate all areas of assignment. <i>(Ex: Wildlife, Task Force 1, Strike Team 1 or WL TF1, ST1).</i>	Data Recorder: Record information for the person filling out this form.
Transport Type: Check appropriate box.		
LOG INFORMATION		
Batch Tag Number: Pre-printed number on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag.	Species: Find this information on the Carcass Collection Form or ask the Carcass Collection Team.	
Transporter Received the Carcass(es) FROM: Write the name of the signatory (From/Release) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag, their transportation name or call sign, and their affiliation or ICS position. Date/Time that the carcass was received. Include AM or PM.	Transporter Gave the Carcass(es) TO: Write the name of the signatory (To/Receipt) on the Carcass Chain of Custody Tag, their transportation name or call sign, and their affiliation or ICS position. Date/Time that the carcass was transferred to the noted person. Include AM or PM.	
<i>THIS FORM STAYS WITH THE TRANSPORT TEAM</i>		

Transport Log for CARCASSES – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

9740.3.4 – Wildlife Capture Forms

This section contains live animal capture and transport forms. Full-page versions of the forms are available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent versions of the following forms:

- [Figure 9-8](#): Live Animal Capture Form
 - Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.
- [Figure 9-9](#): Capture Log for LIVE Animals
 - Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.
- [Figure 9-10](#): Transport Log for LIVE Animals
 - Print landscape orientation on both sides of one sheet of water-resistant paper.

These forms are provided for personnel who have been trained in live animal capture and transport. Training is provided by some OSRO/PRACs and can also be provided by resource agencies upon request.

Figure 9-8: Live Animal Capture Form (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

LIVE Animal Capture Form Form stays with Animal	Wildlife Captured		Incident Name:	INV (OLE Use Only):
	BIRD <input type="checkbox"/> Species: _____	SEA OTTER <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> : _____	Animal Number:	Rehab Facility Use Only
CAPTURE TEAM INFORMATION				
Transportation Name or Call Sign:	ICS Position Group, Task Force, Strike Team:	Data Recorder Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):		
Type: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> AIRCRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/>				
Lead Animal Handler Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):			Assistant Animal Handler Name & Employer:	
CAPTURE INFORMATION				
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: _____ AM PM	Location Name:	GPS Datum: WGS84 <input type="checkbox"/> NAD83 <input type="checkbox"/> NAD27 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Latitude:	Longitude:	
		Other:		
Animal Location PRIOR to Capture: ON LAND <input type="checkbox"/> IN WATER <input type="checkbox"/>	Animal Behavior PRIOR to Capture: SWIMMING <input type="checkbox"/> ; RUNNING <input type="checkbox"/> ; FLYING <input type="checkbox"/> ; STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; FEEDING <input type="checkbox"/> ; PREENING/GROOMING <input type="checkbox"/> ; WITH PUP/CHICK <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:			
Capture Method: DIP NET <input type="checkbox"/> TANGLE NET <input type="checkbox"/> MIST NET <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:	Reason for Capture: OILED <input type="checkbox"/> % <input type="checkbox"/> ; INJURED <input type="checkbox"/> ; LONE PUP/CHICK <input type="checkbox"/> ; PRE-EMPTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:		Pursuit Duration Minutes:	
Animal Reference Number:	Notes:			
ANIMAL DESCRIPTION				
Age: ADULT <input type="checkbox"/> PUP/CHICK <input type="checkbox"/> MOM & PUP/CHICK <input type="checkbox"/>	Sex: MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE <input type="checkbox"/> UNK <input type="checkbox"/>		Disposition AFTER Capture: TRANSFERRED <input type="checkbox"/> DIED <input type="checkbox"/> ESCAPED <input type="checkbox"/> EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; RELEASED <input type="checkbox"/> <i>If released or euthanized explain in notes below.</i>	
Animal Behavior AFTER Capture: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:				
Animal Care Provided in Field:			Notes:	
ANIMAL TRANSFER – FIELD CHAIN OF CUSTODY				
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: _____ AM PM	Animal Behavior AT TIME OF TRANSFER: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; DEAD <input type="checkbox"/> ; EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:		
Transfer to: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> HELO <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> STABILIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> REHAB <input type="checkbox"/> MORGUE <input type="checkbox"/>		Captor's Printed Name:		Signature:
		/		
Receiver's Printed Name:		Signature:	Affiliation:	
		/		
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: _____ AM PM	Animal Behavior AT TIME OF TRANSFER: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; DEAD <input type="checkbox"/> ; EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:		
Transfer to: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> HELO <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> STABILIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> REHAB <input type="checkbox"/> MORGUE <input type="checkbox"/>		Transferor's Printed Name:		Signature:
		/		
Receiver's Printed Name:		Signature:	Affiliation:	
		/		
LIVE Animal Capture Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)				

Incident Name: _____

Animal Reference Number: _____

ANIMAL TRANSFER – FIELD CHAIN OF CUSTODY CONTINUED			
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: AM PM	Animal Behavior AT TIME OF TRANSFER: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; DEAD <input type="checkbox"/> ; EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:	
Transfer to: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> HELO <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> STABILIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> REHAB <input type="checkbox"/> MORGUE <input type="checkbox"/>		Transferor's Printed Name: /	Signature:
Receiver's Printed Name: /		Signature: /	Affiliation:
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: AM PM	Animal Behavior AT TIME OF TRANSFER: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; DEAD <input type="checkbox"/> ; EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:	
Transfer to: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> HELO <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> STABILIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> REHAB <input type="checkbox"/> MORGUE <input type="checkbox"/>		Transferor's Printed Name: /	Signature:
Receiver's Printed Name: /		Signature: /	Affiliation:
Date: MM/DD/YYYY	Time: AM PM	Animal Behavior AT TIME OF TRANSFER: STILL/LETHARGIC <input type="checkbox"/> ; ALERT/ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; AGGRESSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ; GROOMING/PREENING <input type="checkbox"/> ; DEAD <input type="checkbox"/> ; EUTHANIZED <input type="checkbox"/> ; OTHER <input type="checkbox"/> Explain:	
Transfer to: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> HELO <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> STABILIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> REHAB <input type="checkbox"/> MORGUE <input type="checkbox"/>		Transferor's Printed Name: /	Signature:
Receiver's Printed Name: /		Signature: /	Affiliation:

INSTRUCTIONS: LIVE Animal Capture Form

Species Captured?: Check one. If OTHER, record the species/species group.		Incident Name: Incident-specific assigned number or incident assigned name.	
CAPTURE TEAM INFORMATION			
Transportation Name or Call Sign: Record boat/vehicle/aircraft name or identifying number. Transport Type: Check one.		ICS Position: ICS position of the capture boat/vehicle/aircraft. Indicate all areas of assignment. (Ex: <i>Wildlife, Task Force 1, Strike Team 1 or WL TF1, ST1</i>).	
Data Recorder: Record information for person filling out this form.	Lead Animal Handler: Record information for person who is the Lead Animal Handler (person with the most training and/or experience).	Assistant Animal Handler: Record information for person assisting the Lead Animal Handler.	
CAPTURE INFORMATION			
Date: Date of Capture	Time: Time of Capture. Circle AM or PM.	Location Name: Place name where the otter was caught (Ex: <i>Growler Bay</i>)	GPS Datum: Check one (found in GPS settings). WGS84 preferred.
LAT/LONG: GPS point for the capture location. Decimal Degree format preferred.			
Animal Location Prior to Capture: Check one.		Animal Behavior Prior to Capture: Check one or more as appropriate. If OTHER, explain.	
Capture Method: Check one. If OTHER, explain.	Reason for Capture: Check one. If oiled, estimate percentage of external oiling. If OTHER, explain (i.e., <i>if injured, describe the injury</i>).	Pursuit Duration: Amount of time (in minutes) from beginning of stalk until the animal is safely in a pet carrier.	
Animal Reference Number: Sequential number assigned by the capture boat/vehicle/aircraft to each animal. Typically, the first three letters of the boat/vehicle/vessel name followed by sequential numbers (Ex: <i>KIT 001, KIT 002, etc.</i>)			Notes/ Explain Sections: Add information as deemed necessary and appropriate.
ANIMAL DESCRIPTION			
Age and Sex: Record, if known.		Disposition After Capture: Check as appropriate. If the animal was released, explain why in the notes section.	
Animal Behavior After Capture: Check one or more as appropriate. If OTHER, explain.		Animal Care Provided in Field: Briefly describe any care or treatment administered in the field or during transit.	Notes/ Explain Sections: Add information as deemed necessary and appropriate.
ANIMAL TRANSFER – FIELD CHAIN OF CUSTODY			
Date: Date of Transfer	Time: Time of Transfer Circle AM or PM.	Animal Behavior at Time of Transfer: Check one or more as appropriate. If OTHER, explain.	Transfer to: Check one. Note: "STABILIZATION" and "REHAB" transfers may occur at pre-designated drop-off locations.
Captor's/Transferor's Name/Signature: Print and sign name.		Receiver's Name/Signature/Affiliation: Print and sign name. Provide affiliation or transportation name	

LIVE Animal Capture Form – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

Figure 9-9: Capture Log for LIVE Animals (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Page 1 of 2

Capture Log for LIVE Animals Form stays with Capture Team		Incident Name:				
CAPTURE TEAM INFORMATION						
Transportation Name or Call Sign:		ICS Position <i>Group, Task Force, Strike Team:</i>		Data Recorder <i>Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):</i>		
<i>Type: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> AIRCRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/></i>						
Lead Animal Handler <i>Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):</i>				Assistant Animal Handler <i>Name & Employer:</i>		
LOG INFORMATION						
Animal Reference Number <i>Located on LIVE Animal Capture Form</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	CAPTURE DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Capture LOCATION: <i>Place Name and Latitude/Longitude where the animal was captured</i>	DISPOSITION <i>At Time of Transfer</i> D = Died E = Escaped R = Released T = Transferred	Capture Team Gave the Animal TO: <i>Name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position, and any relevant notes to assist rehabilitators</i>	TRANSFER DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>

Capture Log for LIVE Animals – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)

Incident Name: _____ Data Recorder Name: _____

Animal Reference Number <i>Located on LIVE Animal Capture Form</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	CAPTURE DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Capture LOCATION: <i>Place Name and Latitude/Longitude where the animal was captured:</i>	DISPOSITION <i>At Time of Transfer</i> D = Died E = Escaped R = Released T = Transferred	Capture Team Gave the Animal TO: <i>Name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position, and any relevant notes to assist rehabilitators</i>	TRANSFER DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>

INSTRUCTIONS: Capture Log for LIVE Animals

This form is the primary record maintained by each capture boat/vehicle/aircraft to track each live animal captured by this team. The original form stays with the boat/vehicle/aircraft; copies will be requested by officials within the Incident Management Team. This information is important to record both to document each team's capture activity and as a backup in case individual LIVE Animal Capture Forms are lost. Information should be recorded in this log for each animal captured and transported. All live animals must be accompanied by a separate LIVE Animal Capture Form, which stays with the animal until it reaches a rehabilitation facility, AND must also be signed by each transporter.

Incident Name: Incident-specific assigned number or incident assigned name.		
CAPTURE TEAM INFORMATION		
Transportation Name or Call Sign: Record boat/vehicle/aircraft name or identifying number. Transport Type: Check appropriate box.		ICS Position: ICS position of the capture boat/vehicle/aircraft. Indicate all areas of assignment. (Ex: <i>Wildlife, Task Force 1, Strike Team 1 or WL TF1, ST1</i>).
Data Recorder: Record information for the person filling out this form.	Lead Animal Handler: Record information for the person who is the Lead Animal Handler (person with the most training and/or experience).	Assistant Animal Handler: Record information for person assisting the Lead Animal Handler.
ANIMAL INFORMATION		
Animal Reference Number: Sequential number assigned by the capture team to each live animal. The number can be found on the LIVE Animal Capture Form.		
Capture Date: MM/DD/YYYY (Ex: <i>06/05/2010</i>) Time: Record the time; include AM or PM.		
Capture Location Name: Place name where the animal was caught (Ex: <i>Growler Bay</i>).		
LAT/LONG: GPS point for the capture location in decimal degrees (<i>information should be the same as on LIVE Animal Capture Form</i>).		
Capture Team Gave the Animal TO: Log the name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, their Transportation Name or Call Sign, and their Affiliation or ICS Position. Write the Date/Time that the Animal was given to the noted person. Include AM or PM.		
Note: Add any information that may assist rehabilitators in evaluating and treating the animal. Use space below entry as needed.		
<i>THIS FORM STAYS WITH THE CAPTURE TEAM</i>		

Capture Log for LIVE Animals – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

Figure 9-10: Transport Log for LIVE Animals (two pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Page 1 of 2

Transport Log for LIVE Animals Form stays with Transport Team		Incident Name:			
TRANSPORT TEAM INFORMATION					
Transportation Name or Call Sign:		ICS Position <i>Group, Task Force, Strike Team:</i>		Data Recorder <i>Name & Employer (Phone & Email, if there is no ICS position):</i>	
<i>Type: BOAT <input type="checkbox"/> AIRCRAFT <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/></i>					
LOG INFORMATION					
Animal Reference Number <i>Located on LIVE Animal Capture Form</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	Transporter Received the Live Animal FROM: <i>Name of the signatory (Captor or Transferor) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Transporter Gave the Live Animal TO: <i>Name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>

Transport Log for LIVE Animals – WPG Version 2020.2 (front page)

Incident Name: _____

Data Recorder Name: _____

Animal Reference Number <i>Located on LIVE Animal Capture Form</i>	Species or Species Group (bird, sea otter, seal, etc.)	Transporter Received the Live Animal FROM: <i>Name of the signatory (Captor or Transferor) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position:</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>	Transporter Gave the Live Animal TO: <i>Name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, Transportation Name or Call Sign, Affiliation or ICS Position:</i>	DATE/TIME <i>(MM/DD/YYYY)</i>

INSTRUCTIONS: Transport Log for LIVE Animals

This form is the primary record maintained by each transport boat/vehicle/aircraft to track each live animal transferred by this team. The original form stays with the boat/vehicle/aircraft; copies will be requested by officials within the Incident Management Team. This information is important to record both to document each boat/vehicle/aircraft's transport activity and as a backup in case individual LIVE Animal Capture Forms are lost or damaged. Information should be recorded in this log for each animal transported. All live animals must be accompanied by a separate LIVE Animal Capture Form, which stays with the animal until it reaches a rehabilitation facility, AND must also be signed by each transporter.

Incident Name: Incident-specific assigned number or incident assigned name.		
TRANSPORT TEAM INFORMATION		
Transportation Name or Call Sign: Record boat/vehicle/aircraft name or identifying number.	ICS Position: ICS position of the transport boat/vehicle/aircraft. Indicate all areas of assignment. <i>(Ex: Wildlife, Task Force 1, Strike Team 1 or WL TF1, ST1).</i>	Data Recorder: Record information for the person filling out this form.
Transport Type: Check appropriate box.		
LOG INFORMATION		
Animal Reference Number: Sequential number assigned by the capture team to each live animal. The number can be found on the LIVE Animal Capture Form.		
Transporter Received the Live Animal FROM: Log the name of the signatory (Captor or Transferor) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, their Transportation Name or Call Sign, and their Affiliation or ICS Position. Write the Date/Time that the Animal was received. Include AM or PM.	Transporter Gave the Live Animal TO: Log the name of the signatory (Receiver) on the LIVE Animal Capture Form, their Transportation Name or Call Sign, and their Affiliation or ICS Position. Write the Date/Time that the Animal was given to the noted person. Include AM or PM.	
<i>THIS FORM STAYS WITH THE TRANSPORT TEAM</i>		

Transport Log for LIVE Animals – WPG Version 2020.2 (back page)

1. Preventing Rat Introduction on Alaska’s Rat-Free Islands (see [Section 3630.1](#)):

Does the stricken vessel have rats on board, or has it ever tied up at a port that has rats? (See [Figure 9-11](#) and [Table 9-9](#).)

NO

YES → Is the vessel near a rat-free location, especially in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge or the Pribilof Islands ([Table 9-10](#))?

NO

YES → Notify Unified Command

→ Notify Liaison Officer

→ Notify USFWS Oil Spill Response Coordinator (907-242-6893, fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov)

2. ENTANGLEMENT (see [Section 3630.2](#)):

2.a. Are there nets, lines (including anchor lines), or other gear in the water?

NO

YES → Describe the type, size, and deployment details:

Nets: What type? How large? Are they fully deployed? _____

Lines: How long? Anchor, long-line, baited? _____

Pots: Long-line pots or standard? _____

→ Is the deployed gear attached to the vessel?

NO

YES

2.b. Is there non-deployed gear (out of the water) that could become an entanglement issue if the vessel capsizes or sinks?

NO

YES → Describe as completely as possible:

3. DISPOSAL OF ON-BOARD CATCH (see [Section 3630.3](#)):

3.a. Does oiled fish or seafood need to be disposed of?

NO

YES → Notify Unified Command; oil-contaminated catch may not be disposed of in the water; it must be disposed of in permitted landfills, at disposal facilities outside of Alaska, or other locations approved by ADEC.

²¹ A standalone version of this checklist can be found on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

3.b. Does unholed catch need to be disposed of in water because it is spoiled or because it is causing vessel instability?

- NO
- YES → Notify Unified Command.
 - Consult with NMFS, USFWS, and ADF&G to avoid disposing of catch in a manner that could attract or sicken wildlife.
 - If disposal is proposed in ocean waters, as defined under the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA), 33 USC 1402(b),²² contact EPA Alaska Operations Office, (907) 271-5083. Permitting exclusions may apply, depending on disposal location.
 - If disposal is proposed in state waters shoreward of the baseline,²³ verbal or written authorization is required from the ADEC Environmental Health Division. If disposal is proposed in state waters seaward of the baseline, verbal or written authorization is required from the ADEC Environmental Health Division and EPA. Contact ADEC at (907) 269-7681.

4. INVASIVE SPECIES OTHER THAN RATS (see [Section 3630.4](#)):

4.a. Is there a potential for other invasive species to be on board (e.g., in ballast water, on hulls, in cargo)?

- NO
- YES → Consult with NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, and ADF&G on possible exposure pathways and species (see the ADF&G [Invasive Species](#) webpage).

5. OTHER IMPACTS (see [Section 3630.5](#)):

5.a. Will the vessel be removed, salvaged, or scuttled?

- NO
- YES → Notify Unified Command.
 - Contact EPA if scuttling is proposed in MPRSA-defined ocean waters (see the EPA [Disposal of Vessels at Sea](#) webpage).
 - Scuttling a vessel may also require USCG and ADEC approval or permits.
 - Consult with NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, and ADF&G for mitigation measures to minimize impacts to wildlife and sensitive habitats.

5.b. Is there fish or seafood on board?

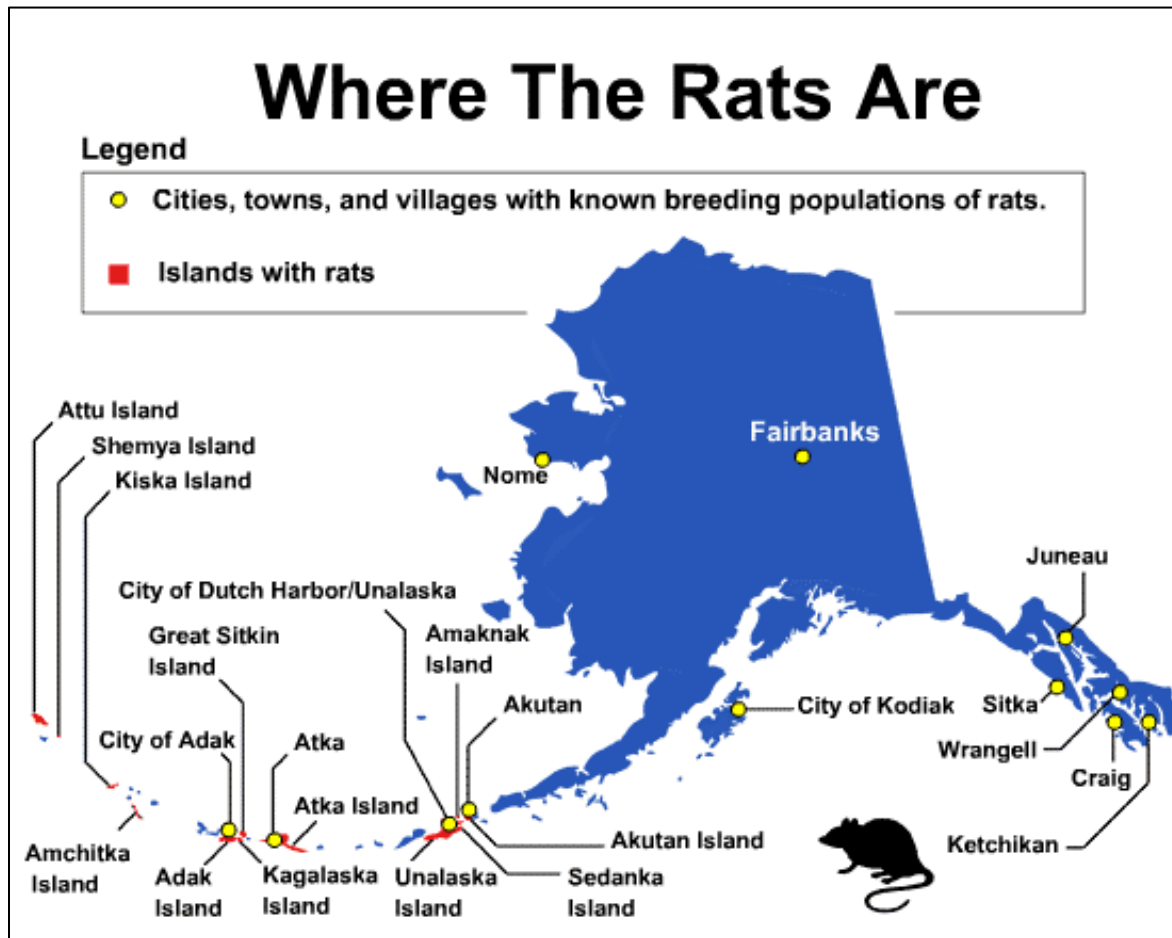
- NO
- YES → Return to Question 3, above.

Please return completed *Vessel Grounding or Sinking Response Checklist* to the wildlife agencies (see [Initial Emergency Contacts](#)).

²² “Ocean waters” means those waters of the open seas lying seaward of the “baseline” from which the territorial sea is measured, as provided for in the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (15 UST 1606; TIAS 5639).

²³ Generally, the baseline is the mean lower low water line (ordinary low water mark) along the coast, or “closing lines” that are depicted on maps across river mouths and openings of bays. The NOAA maintains data for maritime boundaries, including closing lines and state and federal waters, and can be viewed on the [NOAA Baseline](#) ArcGIS Online Map Viewer.

Figure 9-11: Location of Known Breeding Populations of Rats in Alaska.*



* **NOTE:** As of 2020, there was no evidence of a breeding population of rats in Fairbanks. Rat Island in the western Aleutian Islands is now rat free. Source: ADF&G [Invasive Species – Norway Rat \(*Rattus norvegicus*\)](#) webpage and ADF&G [Alaska Fish & Wildlife News](#), December 2020.

Table 9-9: Cities, Towns, and Villages in Alaska with Known Breeding Populations of Rats.

City, Town, or Village			
Adak	Craig	Juneau	Nome
Akutan	Dutch Harbor/Unalaska	Ketchikan	Sitka
Atka	Fairbanks	Kodiak	Wrangell

Table 9-10: Islands in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Known to Have Rats. All other islands in the Alaska Maritime NWR should be considered to be rat-free.

Fox Islands	Andreanof Islands	“Rat” Islands	Near Islands
Unalaska	Adak	Kiska	Attu
Amaknak	Great Sitkin	Amchitka	Shemya
Akutan	Kagalaska		
Sedanka	Atka		

9740.3.6 – Rat Prevention Guidelines for Vessels²⁴

Young rats in search of new territories may hop onto your vessel no matter how clean it is. Under the astonished eyes of biologists, a rat streaked down the Dutch Harbor dock and leapt onto the USFWS's M/V *Tiglux* during the M/V *Selendang Ayu* oil spill. Smelly boats will attract more rats, but no boat is immune. Rats could come aboard with freight, vehicles, and containers on cargo ships and ferries. Rats can cause significant damage to boats left unattended in rat-infested ports through the winter or until the next fishing opener. Keep traps set!

Be Knowledgeable and Ready

- Assume any port in the contiguous U.S. (the “Lower 48”) has rats.
- Good sanitation is a key to prevention; keep food and garbage in tightly sealed storage areas to avoid attracting rats.
- Familiarize yourself and your crew with rat sign, such as chewed materials, hair, rub marks, feces, and urine. Periodically search dark and concealed spaces for rat sign.

Run a Rat-free Boat

- When tying up in port, look for ways rats could board your boat, and take steps to stop them. Rats are excellent climbers, jumpers, and swimmers.
- Use rat guards on tie-up lines where appropriate.
- Because rats are nocturnal, night lighting on gangways and ramps can discourage their use by rats.
- Seal entry points to your vessel's interior, such as cable chases, and put screens or louvers over windows and vents.
- Inspect and shake out fishing nets and lines before taking them aboard. Rats like to nest and shelter in trawl and seine nets and coils of groundline. Most gear storage facilities do NOT have rat control programs. Soap does not work to protect stored nets from rat damage.
- Inspect cargo for rat sign. Rats can hide in containers and in pallets.

Kill Rats that Get Aboard

- Learn more about rat identification and environmental impacts from rats on the ADF&G [Invasive Species — Norway Rat \(*Rattus norvegicus*\)](#) webpage.
- When tied up in rat-infested ports, deploy traps or poison bait stations near any possible spot a rat could board.
- Use multiple approaches. Deploy snap traps, sticky boards, and poison. Put traps where rat sign is found, in dark and concealed spaces, and near food or garbage.
- Use fresh bait and be patient. Rats are wary of new items in their environment and often will not take bait for days or even weeks after it is introduced.
- If you catch one rat, do not assume it is the only one. Re-deploy traps.

²⁴ Adapted from information available on the StopRats.org [Stop Rats on Boats](#) webpage; a standalone version of these guidelines can be found on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage.

- As a last resort you may need to have the vessel fumigated.
- Never throw a live rat overboard. They are strong swimmers and may reach land.

Speak Up and Spread the Word

- Tell the harbormasters in the ports you patronize that you expect effective rat prevention as part of the service you pay for.
- Report rat sightings, and especially a rat invasion of your boat, to the harbormaster.
- Ask about rat control where you store your gear.
- Spread the word to the fleet.

9740.3.7 – Initiation and Close-Out Forms for ESA Section 7 Consultation

Template forms used by the USCG, NMFS, and USFWS in Alaska for initiating ([Figure 9-12](#)) and concluding ([Figure 9-13](#)) the emergency ESA section 7 consultation for incident response actions follow.

Fillable full-page versions of these forms are on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent versions.

Figure 9-12: Alaska Region Spill Response Emergency Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation Initiation Form (seven pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

This form is intended to initiate and document emergency consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (the Services) for species listed, and critical habitat designated under, the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). This form is intended to streamline and standardize initiation of the ESA consultation process, when emergency spill response activities may affect federally listed species and/or critical habitat. This form is not intended to alter any provisions of the Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities signed by six federal agencies in 2001.¹

Emergency Contact: The Services should be contacted as soon as possible by telephone and email at:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov	Cell: 907-242-6893	Alt: 907-750-8527
National Marine Fisheries Service	akrnmfspillresponse@noaa.gov	Off: 907-586-7630	Cell: 907-957-8147

The initial stages of emergency consultations can be done by phone, but must be followed as soon as possible by written correspondence; therefore, this form will be completed no later than 24 hours following notification of the emergency and transmitted via email regarding emergency spill response actions.

Instructions for Completing the Form

Pages 2-4: The Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) or FOSC Representative for ESA consultation, with assistance from the NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC), should fill out pages 2-4. All proposed initial response actions should be indicated, including any pre-approved practices to avoid or minimize impacts to listed species and critical habitats.

Pages 5-9: The Services will assist in determining the presence of ESA protected resources in the response area, but the initial checklist should be prepared by the FOSC (or designee). The Services will complete the initial effects assessment, considering the response actions and standard practices proposed. The Services may require additional information regarding proposed response actions and techniques when conducting this assessment. The Services will review the FOSC's determination of whether or not the proposed response tactics and actions will likely affect any listed species or critical habitat, check the appropriate and applicable protection measures, and provide recommendations to avoid and minimize any potentially adverse effects. The Services will strive to transmit the completed form to the FOSC within 24 hours of receipt.

Awaiting a response from the Services should not delay emergency response activities.

The FOSC will implement as many protection measures as feasible without delaying the response. The Services must be notified if actions and techniques change as the response progresses and will be available for further coordination and consultation as requested.

Post Emergency

Once the emergency response actions are completed, the Services will be notified and the Federal OSC and the Service(s) will jointly review and evaluate the effects of response activities on listed species and/or critical habitat, using the post response consultation close-out form. If the response resulted in adverse effects, formal consultation will be initiated. If no adverse effects occurred, ESA consultation is complete.

¹ Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities Under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Endangered Species Act. 2001.

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

TIME & DATE OF TRANSMITTAL:

FROM: FOSC U.S. Coast Guard	NAME: EMAIL:	Off.: Cell:
TO: USFWS <input type="checkbox"/>	NAME: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service EMAIL: fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov	Cell: 907-242-6893 Alt.: 907-750-8527
NMFS <input type="checkbox"/>	NAME: Sadie Wright EMAIL: akrnmfsspillresponse@noaa.gov	Off.: 907-586-7630 Cell: 907-957-8147

INCIDENT NAME:

DATE OF INCIDENT:

LOCATION INFORMATION:

CENTER LOCATION (NAD 83)	LATITUDE:	LONGITUDE:
LOCATION TYPE		NAME/LANDMARKS
<i>Check all that apply</i>		
Port/Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Riverine/Wetland	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inshore/Estuarine	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Nearshore/Coastal	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Offshore/EEZ	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: Be as complete as possible. Include information on the type and amount of material spilled, initial impacts, and other relevant details.</p>		

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**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

Response Actions (check all that apply)

ACTIONS / TACTICS ²	Check	Date	DETAILS / NOTES
Common Response Actions			
Boom	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sorbents/Snares	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Skimming/vacuuming	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Barriers/Berms/Fences	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Trenching	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Flooding/Flushing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Oiled Vegetation Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Debris Removal (oiled & unoled)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sediment Removal/Mixing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vessel/Container Removal	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Explosives	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Subpart J Countermeasures			
Dispersants	<input type="checkbox"/>		
In Situ Burn	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Solidifiers	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Surface Washing Agents	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wildlife Response Tactics			
Carcass Collection	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wildlife Hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Pre-emptive Capture	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wildlife Capture/Rehab	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other Options for Consideration			
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		

² As response (actions/tactics) changes, re-evaluation of the consultation is required.

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

Pre-Identified GRS, POR, and PS Sites³

TYPE	LOCATIONS(S) SITE IDENTIFIER	REFERENCE FOR PRE-APPROVAL (ACP, ESA sec. 7, etc.)
<i>Example: GRS</i>	<i>Northeast Prince William Sound PWS NE- 27 Granite Cove</i>	<i>Prince William Sound Area Contingency Plan</i>

³ GRS = Geographic Response Strategy, POR = Place of Refuge, PS = Priority Protection Site

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**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

Protected Species Checklist⁴

SPECIES ⁵ IN RESPONSE AREA	Check	Critical Habitat in Response Area ⁶	Response Likely to Adversely Affect ⁷	Response Not Likely to Adversely Affect
Birds				
Short-tailed albatross (STAL)				
Steller's eider (STEI)				
Spectacled eider (SPEI)				
Mammals				
Steller sea lion (STSL) (Western AK)				
Bowhead whale (BOWH)				
Cook Inlet beluga whale (CIBW)				
Ringed seal (RISE)				
Bearded seal (BESE)				
Fin whale (FIWH)				
Humpback whale (HUWH)				
Sperm whale (SPWH)				
Blue whale (BLWH)				
North Pacific right whale (NPRW)				
Sei whale (SEWH)				
Sea otter (SEOT) (Southwest AK)				
Polar bear (POBE)				
Other				

⁴ This table focuses on federally listed threatened or endangered species in coastal, estuarine, and inland areas that may be susceptible to oil spills, but does not identify all federally listed species that could be affected. Other federally listed species not listed in this table should be identified appropriately in rows listed under 'Other'.

⁵ Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is responsible for listed marine mammals other than sea otter, polar bear, and walrus; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is responsible for listed migratory birds, sea otter, polar bear, and walrus.

⁶ USFWS critical habitat metadata can be found on USFWS ECOS Critical Habitat Portal page at:
<http://ecos.fws.gov/crithab/>

⁷ A "Likely to adversely affect" indication is a preliminary estimate based on available information, and is subject to change as more information is received by the Services.

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
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Check all that apply	ESA Protection Measures ⁸	Implemented? Y / N
Wildlife Observers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deploy Wildlife Observers ⁹ to monitor vessels and aircraft (flying below 1,500 feet over marine waters or shoreline) involved in response. Observers expected to notify vessel captains/pilots about marine mammals to minimize impacts, and record sightings.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	All responders and Wildlife Observers shall report all sightings of healthy, oiled, or injured wildlife in or near the response area in real time to Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit.	
Collision Risk & Avoidance		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Response vessel operators shall avoid close approach (<300-500 feet) to whales and pinnipeds in the water.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vessel speeds shall be reduced to <13 knots when marine mammals sighted within 1,000 feet.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement vessel and aircraft no-entry buffer zones of 1,500 feet around known or observed marine mammal concentration areas, including seal and sea lion haulouts and rookeries, and migration pathways.	
Acoustic Disturbance / Noise		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid revving engines or other loud in-water activities exceeding 180 decibels in the marine environment. Use quieter equipment when possible (e.g., use 4-stroke instead of 2-stroke boat motors).	
Shoreside Activities (Harassment and Habitat Modification)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement 1,500 foot no-entry buffers around known or observed haulouts or rookeries to prevent shoreside responders from chasing animals into the water.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify all shoreside responders to look for and avoid disturbing (1,500 foot buffer) hauled out pinnipeds.	
Dispersant Use		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife Observers will be on all aircraft and vessels associated with dispersant application to ensure dispersant is not deployed on or near wildlife (Dispersant Use Plan states that dispersants will not be applied within 500m of marine mammals).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Limit the total amount of dispersant used in a single incident to minimize the risk to pelagic species and their prey.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement buffer zones around area of high wildlife concentrations (e.g., haulouts or rookeries) to minimize exposure.	
In-Situ Burns		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Avoid burns near wildlife concentration areas (e.g., pinniped haulouts or whale migratory routes) when large numbers of wildlife are observed or expected to be present, unless wind conditions are expected to direct the smoke plume away from the area of concern.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildlife Observers will be present to locate species of concern near a proposed burn site, and monitor throughout the activity to ensure that no wildlife approaches or becomes entrained in the fire booming. All wildlife will be reported to the Wildlife Branch or Environmental Unit.	

⁸ Mitigation Measures, Reasonable & Prudent Measures (RPMs), Terms & Conditions, and Conservation Recommendations. Incident-specific mitigation measures are provided to the Unified Command by NMFS (through the emergency ESA section 7 consultation) to minimize the impact of oil spill response activities to species under NMFS's authority, including all of the ESA-species considered in the Unified Plan consultation. The RPMs included, along with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed action. NMFS concludes that the RPMs are necessary and appropriate to minimize or to monitor the incidental take of bowhead whales, humpback whales, Cook Inlet beluga whales, western DPS Steller sea lions, ringed seals, bearded seals, and salmon resulting from the proposed action.

⁹ Sometimes referred to as "Protected Species Observers."

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE
EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
CONSULTATION INITIATION**

REQUIRED ESA PROTECTION MEASURES		Implemented? Y / N
Reduce Probability of Exposure		
X	Train and educate. Ensure all USCG and EPA field deployed response personnel, involved with spill response in a manner which may result in incidental take, are given the information needed to enable them to properly assess and protect potentially affected listed species.	
X	The USCG and EPA shall, within their level of discretion and contracting limitations, include as part of any contractual agreement with third parties involved in spill response in a manner which may result in incidental take, terms requiring compliance with Mitigation Measures, Reasonable and Prudent Measures and their corresponding Terms and Conditions.	
X	Conduct Tiered Emergency Consultation with NMFS during incidents when it is determined that ESA-listed species under NMFS's jurisdiction may be affected by response activities.	
Implement a Monitoring and Documentation Program		
X	Document effects to listed species, their prey, and habitat used by listed species from the response methods: species affected; habitat area and type; and temporal affects.	

ADDITIONAL IMPLEMENTED ESA PROTECTION MEASURES	

FOSC Signature *Date*

Figure 9-13: Alaska Region Spill Response Emergency Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Post-Response Consultation Close-Out Form (four pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

NMFS # _____ USFWS # _____

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
POST-RESPONSE CONSULTATION CLOSE-OUT**

This document is intended to complete emergency consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (the Services) for species listed, and critical habitat designated under, the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). The information provided within is the final step in the request for concurrence that emergency spill response activities undertaken did not adversely affect federally listed species and/or critical habitat. This form is not intended to alter any provisions of the Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities signed by six federal agencies in 2001.¹

This post-response documentation should be completed and submitted to the Service(s) emergency contact as soon as possible after all response activities have been concluded.

Emergency Contact: The Services should be contacted as soon as possible by telephone and email at:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov	Cell: 907-242-6893	Alt: 907-750-8527
National Marine Fisheries Service	akrnmfspillresponse@noaa.gov	Off: 907-586-7630	Cell: 907-957-8147

The Federal On-scene Coordinator (FOSC) and the Service(s) will jointly review and evaluate the effects of response activities on listed species and/or critical habitat. If the response resulted in adverse effects, formal consultation will be initiated. If no adverse effects occurred, ESA consultation is complete.

IMPORTANT

This consultation has been issued an Environmental Consultation Organizer identification number (ECO#) by NMFS which will remain open until NMFS consultation is complete.

This consultation has been issued an ECOSphere project code by USFWS, which will remain open until USFWS consultation is complete.

¹ Inter-agency Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Oil Spill Planning and Response Activities Under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act's National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan and the Endangered Species Act. 2001.

Last Revised 9/27/2023 1 of 4

NMFS # _____

USFWS # _____

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
POST-RESPONSE CONSULTATION CLOSE-OUT**

TIME & DATE OF TRANSMITTAL:

FROM: FOSC U.S. Coast Guard	NAME: EMAIL:	Off.: Cell:
TO: USFWS <input type="checkbox"/>	NAME: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service EMAIL: fwsakspillresponse@fws.gov	Cell: 907-242-6893 Alt.: 907-750-8527
NMFS <input type="checkbox"/>	NAME: Sadie Wright EMAIL: akrnmfspillresponse@noaa.gov	Off.: 907-586-7630 Cell: 907-957-8147

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSE: Fill in the information below as completely as possible.

- Included: chart or map showing the location of the incident
 photograph of the incident

INCIDENT SUMMARY (Describe the incident, briefly.)

RESPONSE ACTIONS (Provide a brief summary of the actions taken in response to the incident.)

Last Revised 9/27/2023

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NMFS # _____

USFWS # _____

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
POST-RESPONSE CONSULTATION CLOSE-OUT**

RESPONSE TIMELINE (Outline the timeline for all response actions taken in response to the incident.)

PROTECTION MEASURES (Describe all NMFS mitigation measures and recommendations, USFWS recommendations, and when they were incorporated.)

Last Revised 9/27/2023

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NMFS # _____

USFWS # _____

**ALASKA REGION SPILL RESPONSE EMERGENCY ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
POST-RESPONSE CONSULTATION CLOSE-OUT**

CONCLUSION (Based on the information above, provide a determination of effects to Federally Listed Species.)

LESSONS LEARNED (Briefly, discuss lessons learned from this incident response that may be applied to future responses affecting Federally Listed Species.)

SIGNATURE (Include contact information and date.)

Last Revised 9/27/2023

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9740.3.8 – Wildlife Response Plans (WRPs)

The following sections contain both the Startup and Comprehensive WRP forms (Sections [9740.3.8.1](#) and [9740.3.8.2](#), respectively). Both WRPs include requests to conduct primary, secondary, and tertiary response strategies. For more information about these forms see [Section 3650](#).

Fillable full-page versions of the Startup and Comprehensive WRPs are on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent versions.

9740.3.8.1 – Startup WRP

The Startup WRP ([Figure 9-14](#)) is a request to begin the process of authorizing all or some portion of wildlife response strategies to be conducted for up to 72 hours after the start of a spill. Pre-emptive capture may only be requested using a Comprehensive WRP (i.e., a Startup WRP may not be used to request pre-emptive capture; see Sections [3640.2.2.2](#), [3650.2](#), and [9740.3.8.2](#)). For more information about the Startup WRP form see [Section 3650.1](#).

Fillable full-page versions of the Startup WRP are on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent versions.

Figure 9-14: Startup Wildlife Response Plan (WRP) (17 pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan		
I. Incident Summary		
Incident Name:	Date / Time Prepared: / /	
Incident Location:	Date / Time at 72 hours after start of spill: / /	
Prepared By (print):	Affiliation:	ICS Position:
<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/update (all previous versions must be attached)		
Attachments:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Location map/sketch (ICS 201) or narrative <input type="checkbox"/> Incident Status Summary (ICS 209) or narrative <input type="checkbox"/> Resources at Risk (ICS 232) <input type="checkbox"/> ESA section 7 consultation documents <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Wildlife Observation Forms <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued ADF&G Wildlife Response Permits <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued USFWS permits (attach first page with Permit No.) or authorizations <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued NMFS authorizations (attach first page with Authorization No.)	
II. State and Federal On-Scene Coordinator Response to Request		
State On-Scene Coordinator's decision regarding proposed wildlife response activities:		
Time Received:	Date Received:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur with wildlife agencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not concur for the following reason(s):		
Signature:		
Time:	Date:	
Federal On-Scene Coordinator's decision regarding proposed wildlife response activities:		
Time Received:	Date Received:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur with wildlife agencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not concur for the following reason(s):		
Signature:		
Time:	Date:	

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

III. Wildlife Agency Response to Request		
Expiration of Startup Wildlife Response Activities (as determined by wildlife agencies):		
Date:	Time:	
ADF&G Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:
USFWS Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:
NMFS Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:

Acronyms in Startup WRP	
ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game BIA = Biologically Important Area (https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/biologicallyimportantareas.html) ESA = Endangered Species Act ICS = Incident Command System IMT = Incident Management Team LOA = Letter of Authorization MMHSRP = Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act	NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service OLE = Office of Law Enforcement OSRO = Oil Spill Removal/Recovery Organization PRAC = Primary Response Action Contractor RP/PRP = Responsible Party/Potential Responsible Party ¹ UAS = unmanned aerial/aircraft system, "drones" USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service WPG = Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska WRP = Wildlife Response Plan

¹ "RP/PRP" includes any entity contracted by the RP/PRP (or their OSRO/PRAC for the response) and is intended to include the RP/PRP, their contractors, the permittee, or whomever is directly responsible for carrying out this plan.

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies
Part A – Species and Habitats

This section to be filled out by RP/PRP.

Instructions: All questions must be answered by checking the appropriate box or writing in the information where applicable. Check with wildlife agencies if unsure about Species and Habitats. If more space is needed, attach a separate Word® document referencing appropriate section and numbers (for example, IV., 1., C., 1.) or reference and include applicable attachments. Fill this form out with the best available information with as much detail as possible. In some incidents, specific numbers of species may be available from actual observations and would be reported, for example, as “3 Cook Inlet beluga whales,” whereas if best available information is used to estimate numbers for an area known to support high concentrations of migratory birds, it could be reported as “tens of thousands” of “waterfowl, seabirds, and shorebirds.” **Use as much space as needed on this form or a separate document can be attached.** It is understood that conditions may change from the time this form is filled out until the Comprehensive WRP is finalized. Questions are intended to ensure that, once initiated, all aspects of the response strategy will be addressed. Answers may be brief and succinct. Detailed explanations will be required in the Comprehensive WRP.

SPECIES AND HABITATS

Which species groups are known or expected to be in the vicinity of the spill? For each YES, record which species/ species groups (e.g., waterfowl, harbor seal, etc.) and how many are likely present (use actual observations or estimates from reliable resources).

Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers	Fish, Shellfish, or Invertebrates
<p><i>Migratory birds</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Sea otters</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____</p>	<p><i>Whales</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Brown or black bears</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Fish</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>
<p><i>Eagles</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Walruses</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____</p>	<p><i>Seals</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Ungulates</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Shellfish</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>
<p><i>Non-migratory birds</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Polar bears</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____</p>	<p><i>Sea lions</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____</p> <p><i>Porpoises or Dolphins</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Furbearers</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>	<p><i>Invertebrates</i> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO How many? _____ Which species? _____</p>

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies Part A – Species and Habitats (continued)					
Species and Habitats	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers	Fish, Shellfish, or Invertebrates
<p><i>ESA-listed Species</i></p> <p>What ESA-listed species or critical habitat are or may be in the area?</p>					
<p><i>All Wildlife</i></p> <p>Where/how close are wildlife to the spill and trajectory?</p>					
<p><i>All Wildlife</i></p> <p>Which sensitive life stages or habitats could be affected by the spill or by the response activities?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Colonies <input type="checkbox"/> Nests: Incubating or with hatchlings <input type="checkbox"/> Migration or staging area <input type="checkbox"/> Fledglings <input type="checkbox"/> Active eagle nests	<input type="checkbox"/> Haulouts <input type="checkbox"/> Pupping <input type="checkbox"/> Dens	<input type="checkbox"/> Haulouts <input type="checkbox"/> Rookeries <input type="checkbox"/> Lairs <input type="checkbox"/> BIAs	<input type="checkbox"/> Dens <input type="checkbox"/> Insect relief <input type="checkbox"/> Calving or lambing areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Eggs/larvae <input type="checkbox"/> Migration corridor <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous water body

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies					
Part B – Proposed Response Strategies					
Primary Response Strategy – Carcass Collection	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers	Fish, Shellfish, or Invertebrates
1. <i>Is carcass collection proposed within 72 hours after the start of the spill?</i>	Migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea otters <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Whales <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Brown or black bears <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Fish <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Eagles <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Walruses <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Seals <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Ungulates <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Shellfish <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Non-migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Polar bears <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea lions <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Invertebrates <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
			Porpoises or Dolphins <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
If YES for any species, complete A through H in Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies under 1. Primary Response Strategy.					

Secondary Response Strategy – Hazing/Deterrence	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
2. <i>Is hazing/deterrence proposed within 72 hours after the start of the spill?</i> <i>Passive</i> includes visual methods (e.g., human effigies, streamers, balloons). Include physical barriers (e.g., fences or netting) as passive. <i>Active</i> includes auditory methods (e.g., propane cannons, audio-visual alarms, pyrotechnics).	Migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea otters <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Whales <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Brown or black bears <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Eagles <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Walruses <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Seals <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Ungulates <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Non-migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Polar bears <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea lions <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO
			Porpoises or Dolphins <input type="checkbox"/> PASSIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If YES for any species, complete A through H in Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies under 2. Secondary Response Strategy.				

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

continued on next page

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies <i>Part B – Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
Tertiary Response Strategy – <i>Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
3. Is capture, transport, stabilization, or rehabilitation proposed within 72 hours after the start of the spill?	Migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea otters <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Whales <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Brown or black bears <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Eagles <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Walruses <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Seals <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Ungulates <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Non-migratory birds <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Polar bears <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Sea lions <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Furbearers <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
			Porpoises or Dolphins <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If YES for any species, complete A through J in Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies under 3. Tertiary Response Strategy.				

continued on next page (if any YES)

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies					
Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies					
1. Primary Response Strategy – Carcass Collection	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers	Fish, Shellfish, or Invertebrates
A. Status of permits and authorizations for carcass collection? ➤ If pre-issued, list permit or authorization number.	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued (non-migratory birds only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued
B. Who will collect carcasses (RP/PRP staff, OSRO/PRAC, contractor, other)? List all if multiple. ➤ What is their status (on alert/standby, mobilizing, on site and ready, etc.)? ➤ When will they arrive at the field/spill site?					
C. What equipment will be used for carcass collection activities? ➤ When will it arrive at the field/spill site?					
D. How will carcasses be transported from the field to the morgue or staging area? ➤ When will transportation be fully operational?					

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies					
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>					
1. Primary Response Strategy – <i>Carcass Collection (continued)</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers	Fish, Shellfish, or Invertebrates
E. Where will the morgue be established? ➤ When will it be operational?					
F. Where will carcasses be refrigerated (for no more than 48 hours) or frozen until morgue is fully operational?					
G. Have you requested (e.g., submitted ICS form 213RR) a wildlife agency representative be the carcass custodian?					
H. Describe any proposed deviations from the procedures outlined in WPG Tactic Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses .					

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)				
2. Secondary Response Strategy – Hazing/Deterrence	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
A. Status of permits and authorizations for hazing/deterrence? ➤ If pre-issued, list permit or authorization number and attach at least the first page showing permit/authorization number.	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued
B. Are any of the following present in the area where hazing is proposed?	<input type="checkbox"/> ESA-listed species <input type="checkbox"/> Molting waterfowl <input type="checkbox"/> Colonies <input type="checkbox"/> Migration or staging area <input type="checkbox"/> Nests: Incubating or with hatchlings <input type="checkbox"/> Fledglings <input type="checkbox"/> Active eagle nests	<input type="checkbox"/> ESA-listed species <input type="checkbox"/> Haulouts <input type="checkbox"/> Polar bear dens	<input type="checkbox"/> ESA-listed species <input type="checkbox"/> Haulouts <input type="checkbox"/> Rookeries <input type="checkbox"/> Pups <input type="checkbox"/> Lairs <input type="checkbox"/> BIAs	<input type="checkbox"/> Dens <input type="checkbox"/> Insect relief <input type="checkbox"/> Calving or lambing areas
C. What non-target species might be in the area that could be inadvertently hazed/deterred? ➤ What methods will be employed to avoid hazing/deterrence of non-target species?				

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
2. Secondary Response Strategy – <i>Hazing/Deterrence (continued)</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
D. Who will conduct deterrence/hazing activities (RP/PRP staff, OSRO/PRAC, contractor, other)? List all if multiple. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe applicable training or expertise. ➤ What is their status (on alert/standby, mobilizing, on site and ready, etc.)? ➤ When will they arrive at the field/spill site? 				

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
2. Secondary Response Strategy – <i>Hazing/Deterrence (continued)</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
E. When is deterrence/hazing expected to begin (be as accurate as possible)?				
F. What equipment will be used for deterrence/hazing (Breco buoys, propane cannons, horns, etc.)? ➤ What platform(s) will hazing/deterrence be conducted from (on foot, vessel, etc.)? ➤ Will aircraft, including UAS, be used to haze wildlife?				
G. Who will be responsible for documenting hazing efforts and how will this information be conveyed to the IMT and wildlife agencies?				
H. Number of Wildlife Observers in the field (WPG Tactic Wildlife Reconnaissance)? Describe applicable training or expertise.				

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
3. Tertiary Response Strategy – <i>Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
A. Status of permits and authorizations for capture, transport, stabilization, or rehabilitation? ➤ If pre-issued, list permit or authorization number and attach minimum of first page showing permit/authorization number.	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued	<input type="checkbox"/> Requesting <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-issued
B. Who will conduct wildlife capture (RP/PRP staff, OSRO/PRAC, contractor, other)? List all if multiple. ➤ Describe applicable training or expertise. ➤ What is their status (on alert/standby, mobilizing, on site and ready, etc.)? ➤ When will they arrive at the field/spill site?				

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
3. Tertiary Response Strategy – <i>Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation (continued)</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
C. When is capture expected to begin (be as accurate as possible)?				
D. How will wildlife be transported from the field to a stabilization/rehabilitation facility? Include all if multiple.				
E. When are transport capabilities expected to be operational (specify as close as possible)?				
F. Describe any stabilization of wildlife that may occur during transport, including who will do so and their applicable training or expertise.				

continued on next page

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Request for Startup of Wildlife Response Strategies				
<i>Part C – Supporting Information for Proposed Response Strategies (continued)</i>				
3. Tertiary Response Strategy – <i>Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation</i> <i>(continued)</i>	Migratory Birds, Eagles, or Non-Migratory Birds	Sea Otters, Walruses, or Polar Bears	Whales, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, or Dolphins	Brown or Black Bears, Ungulates, or Furbearers
G. Will a temporary stabilization facility be set up? If so, ➤ Where will it be located? ➤ When will it be fully operational?				
H. Where will wildlife be held until stabilization or rehabilitation facilities are operational?				
I. Where will oiled wildlife be cleaned and rehabilitated? ➤ Who is the veterinarian (name and affiliation) that will oversee wildlife care at the facility?				
J. When will the cleaning and rehabilitation facility be fully operational?				

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

V. Wildlife Agency Permits and Authorizations for Proposed Response

This section to be filled out by wildlife agencies.

Instructions: For each species group checked, agencies should indicate permit or authorization status using one or more of these: **Initiated** (ESA section 7 consultation only); **Pending** (include estimated time of completion); **Issued** (include permit number); **Emergency** authorization provided (verbal or email approval, hard copy of permit will follow); **Not applicable** or not required for proposed activities; or **Other** (include comments).

Response activities for each species group *as proposed in Section IV* of this form may begin as soon as all necessary permits and approvals for *that* species group are listed as **Initiated, Issued, or Emergency**.

Species or Species Group	CARCASS COLLECTION		HAZING/DETERRENCE		CAPTURE, TRANSPORT, STABILIZATION, & REHABILITATION	
	Permit/Authorization	Status	Permit/Authorization	Status	Permit/Authorization	Status
Threatened or endangered species	USFWS ESA section 7 consultation		USFWS ESA section 7 consultation		USFWS ESA section 7 consultation	
	NMFS ESA section 7 consultation		NMFS ESA section 7 consultation		NMFS ESA section 7 consultation	
	USFWS ESA OLE authorization					
Migratory birds	USFWS Migratory Bird Salvage Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		USFWS Migratory Bird Rehab Permit	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Bald or golden eagles	USFWS permit		USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit		USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Sea otters	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Walrus	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Polar bears	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Whales	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Seals	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Sea lions	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Porpoises or dolphins	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Brown or black bears	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Ungulates	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Furbearers	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Non-migratory birds	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Fish	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shellfish	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Invertebrates	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

VI. Additional Conditions

This section to be filled out by wildlife agencies.

Instructions: Wildlife agencies must check each applicable condition and write in any additional conditions or approvals.

Permits, LOAs, and ESA section 7 consultations will include protection measures, restrictions, or conditions for the proposed activities that must be adhered to. Additional conditions for the following activities include:

Primary Response Strategies – Carcass Collection

- _____
- _____

Secondary Response Strategies – Hazing/Deterrence

- To ensure non-target species are not inadvertently hazed, active hazing/deterrence must cease if the following species are within _____ m (_____ ft) of the spill site or areas where hazing is proposed:

- Hazing may not resume until these species have left the area of their own accord.
- Hazing/deterrence may not occur in areas where molting waterfowl are observed.
- Hazing/deterrence may not occur within _____ m (_____ ft) of _____.
- Report observations of _____ to _____.
- Report observations of _____ to USFWS as soon as possible at 907-242-6893 (USFWS Alaska Region Spill Response Team).
- Report observations of _____ to NMFS as soon as possible at 877-925-7773 (Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network).
- Hazing/deterrence activities must be monitored by one or more Wildlife Observers (see WPG Tactic **Wildlife Reconnaissance**), as needed.
- _____
- _____

Tertiary Response Strategies – Capture, Transport, Stabilization, and Rehabilitation

- Report observations of _____ to _____.
- Report observations of _____ to USFWS as soon as possible at 907-242-6893 (USFWS Alaska Region Spill Response Team).
- Report observations of _____ to NMFS as soon as possible at 877-925-7773 (Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network).
- Tertiary response activities must be monitored by a Wildlife Observer (see WPG Tactic **Wildlife Reconnaissance**).
- _____
- _____

STARTUP Wildlife Response Plan

VII. Worksheet for Operations Section and Field Personnel

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: List conditions, stipulations, and protection measures of permits and authorizations as they are finalized and issued. This Worksheet is intended to help convey pertinent details of authorized wildlife response activities from the Environmental Unit to Operations and field personnel. The Environmental Unit Lead or their designee should read and review permits, authorizations, and ESA section 7 consultation information as they are issued/finalized, and include pertinent protection measures, stipulations, and other conditions for Operations to inform and direct field personnel (e.g., in ICS 204s). This information should be transferred to Section XII of the Comprehensive WRP. This Worksheet does not replace or negate any information found in permits and authorizations. Wildlife agencies may assist with this, but *the permittee or RP/PRP is ultimately responsible for all actions conducted under the authority of each issued permit or authorization.*

Startup Wildlife Response Plan – Version 2020.2

END OF STARTUP WILDLIFE RESPONSE PLAN

Wildlife Protection Guidelines, version 2020.2

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9740.3.8.2 – Comprehensive WRP

The Comprehensive WRP ([Figure 9-15](#)) should be completed and approved by the wildlife agencies and the Unified Command before any carcass collection, hazing/deterrence, pre-emptive capture, or capture and rehabilitation activities begin or before the Startup WRP expires. For more information about these this form see [Section 3650.2](#).

Fillable full-page versions of the Comprehensive WRP can be found on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools](#) webpage. Please check this website for the most recent versions.

Figure 9-15: Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan (WRP) (16 pages; full-page version available on the ADEC [Area Plan References and Tools webpage](#)).

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan		
I. Incident Summary		
Incident Name:	Date / Time Prepared: / /	
Incident Location:	Operational Period Date / Time: From: / / To: / /	
Prepared By (print):	Affiliation:	ICS Position:
<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment/update (all previous versions must be attached)		
Attachments:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Location map/sketch (ICS 201) or narrative	<input type="checkbox"/> Startup WRP	
<input type="checkbox"/> Incident Status Summary (ICS 209) or narrative	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Resources at Risk (ICS 232)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued USFWS permits (attach first page with Permit No.) or authorizations	
<input type="checkbox"/> ESA section 7 consultation documents	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Issued NMFS authorizations (attach first page with Authorization No.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Wildlife Observation Forms		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
II. State and Federal On-Scene Coordinator Response to Request		
State On-Scene Coordinator's decision regarding proposed wildlife response activities:		
Time Received:	Date Received:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur with wildlife agencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not concur for the following reason(s):		
Signature:		
Time:	Date:	
Federal On-Scene Coordinator's decision regarding proposed wildlife response activities:		
Time Received:	Date Received:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur with wildlife agencies. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not concur for the following reason(s):		
<i>Federal On-Scene Coordinator must also inform NRDAR Liaison.</i>		
Signature:		
Time:	Date:	

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

III. Wildlife Agency Response to Request		
ADF&G Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:
USFWS Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:
NMFS Recommendation/Decision:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Approve requested activities as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Deny requested activities for the following reason(s):		
Signature:	Date:	Time:

Acronyms in Comprehensive WRP	
ADF&G = Alaska Department of Fish and Game BIA = Biologically Important Area (https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/biologicallyimportantareas.html) DPS = Distinct Population Segment ESA = Endangered Species Act ICS = Incident Command System IMT = Incident Management Team LOA = Letter of Authorization MMHSRP = Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program MMPA = Marine Mammal Protection Act NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service	NRDAR = Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration OLE = Office of Law Enforcement OSRO = Oil Spill Removal/Recovery Organization PRAC = Primary Response Action Contractor RP/PRP = Responsible Party/Potential Responsible Party ¹ UAS = unmanned aerial/aircraft system, "drones" USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service WPG = Wildlife Protection Guidelines for Oil Spill Response in Alaska WRP = Wildlife Response Plan

¹ "RP/PRP" includes any entity contracted by the RP/PRP (or their ORSO/PRAC for the response) and is intended to include the RP/PRP, their contractors, the permittee, or whomever is directly responsible for carrying out this plan.

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Wildlife Information and Proposed Response Strategies: Part A – Non-ESA-listed Species Groups							
<i>This section to be filled out by RP/PRP.</i>							
Instructions: 1 and 2: Use field observations from the spill area or pre-existing data sources if no field data are available. 3: Check proposed response strategies for each species or species group in cooperation with available experts and agency representatives. Part A is only for species not listed under the ESA.							
1. Is a species or species group known or expected to be present in the spill area?		2. If YES, list specific species information:		3. Identify Proposed Response Strategies			
		↓		Primary ↓	Secondary ↓		Tertiary ↓
				Carcass Collection	Haze/ Deter	Pre- emptive Capture	Capture and Rehab
Species Group	Yes	Species, numbers (estimated or observed), and location relative to spill, etc.		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bald or golden eagles	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raptors	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waterfowl	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diving ducks	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shorebirds	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seabirds	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passerines	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-migratory birds	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brown or black bears	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ungulates (moose, deer, caribou, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small furbearers (fox, muskrat, river otter, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolves	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Northern sea otters (Southcentral or Southeast Alaska stocks)	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walrus	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harbor, spotted, or ribbon seals	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Northern fur seals	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steller sea lions Eastern DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minke, killer, gray, beluga, or humpback whales (non-ESA-listed)	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dolphins or porpoises	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invertebrates	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fish or shellfish	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	N/A	N/A
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

IV. Wildlife Information and Proposed Response Strategies: Part B – ESA-listed Species						
<i>This section to be filled out by RP/PRP.</i>						
Instructions: 1 and 2: Use field observations from the spill area or pre-existing data sources if no field data is available. 3: Identify the proposed response strategies for each species in cooperation with available experts and agency representatives. Part B is for species listed under the ESA.						
1. Is a species known or expected to be present in the spill area? ↓		2. If YES, list specific species information: ↓	3. Identify Proposed Response Strategies			
			Primary ↓	Secondary ↓		Tertiary ↓
Species	Yes	Numbers (estimated or observed), and location relative to spill, etc.	Carcass Collection	Haze/Deter	Pre-emptive Capture	Capture and Rehab
	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Steller's eider	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spectacled eider	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Short-tailed albatross	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eskimo curlew	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Northern sea otter	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Southwest Alaska DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polar bear	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steller sea lion Western DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ringed seal	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bearded seal	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beluga whale Cook Inlet DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blue whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bowhead whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fin whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North Pacific right whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sei whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sperm whale	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humpback whale Mexico or Western North Pacific DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gray whale Western North Pacific DPS	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood Bison	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leatherback turtle	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Green turtle	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loggerhead turtle	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

V. Other Primary Response Actions

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: Check any primary response actions underway or previously taken: (1) to protect wildlife and/or wildlife habitat, and (2) which may affect the proposed wildlife response activities. Describe any additional actions underway or previously taken.

- Control and contain the source of the spill.
- Mechanical recovery (boom, skimmers, etc.).
- Sensitive area protection (booming of anadromous streams, marine mammal haulouts, seabird rookeries, etc.).
- Non-mechanical recovery (dispersants or *in-situ* burning)
- Removal of oiled debris (kelp, driftwood, etc.)
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

VI. Carcass Collection Plan

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: Include information for each species or species group checked in Section IV, Parts A and B. Any differences between each species group must be clearly articulated. If more space is needed, attach a separate Word® document referencing appropriate section, number, and species group (e.g., Section VI. 10. Seals) or reference and include applicable attachments.

1. List pre-existing permits and authorizations, and those that were obtained for carcass collection through the Startup WRP process.

2. How will oiled carcasses be observed and reported to Unified Command and wildlife agencies (for example, actively searching collection teams, carcasses reported through opportunistic field observations)?

3. Describe or indicate on a map where carcasses will be searched for or collected, or where opportunistic observations will occur.

4. Who will collect oiled carcasses (RP/PRP staff, contractors, agency staff, OSRO/PRAC)? List all if multiple.

5. Describe carcass collection teams: How many, whether they have other duties (for example, opportunistic/as needed vs. sole duty for large numbers of carcasses), number of collectors and their ICS positions (e.g., Carcass Collection Task Force member).

6. What supplies and equipment will be used; where is it stored; how and when will it get to the field?

7. Describe the data collection plan and any forms that will be used to document carcass collection activities.

8. How will carcasses be transported from the field (boat, plane, vehicle, etc.)?

9. How and where will carcasses be stored until handed over to agencies (for example, freezer space, refrigerator, coolers at staging area, morgue)?

10. Where will a morgue be set up (staging area, warehouse, etc.)? When will it be operational? How will the morgue be secured and who will have access to it?

11. Has a carcass custodian from one of the wildlife agencies been requested (e.g., submitted ICS form 213RR)? Who will receive the carcasses prior to the agency custodian being on site?

12. Describe in detail any deviations that will be made from the WPG Tactic **Collection of Small Carcasses and Documentation of Large Carcasses**.

13. Describe any additional details necessary for Incident Command to fully understand implementation of this plan.

14. How has this plan been coordinated with NRDAR Trustees?

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

Summary of Wildlife Agency Comments: Section VI. Carcass Collection Plan
Instructions for agency representatives: Indicate the number in Section VI to which your comment refers. Include recommended language for additions, deletions, requests for additional details, or other comments.
ADF&G comments:
USFWS comments:
NMFS comments:

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

VII. Hazing/Deterrence Plan

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: Include information for each species or species group checked in Section IV, Parts A and B. Any differences between each species group must be clearly articulated. If more space is needed, attach a separate Word® document referencing appropriate section, number, and species group (e.g., Section VII. 2. Seals) or reference and include attachments.

1. List pre-existing permits and authorizations, and those that were obtained for hazing/deterrence through the Startup WRP process.

2. Which species/species groups are intended to be hazed/deterred?

3. What non-target species might be in the area that could be inadvertently hazed/deterred? What methods will be employed to avoid hazing/deterrence of non-target species?

4. Describe or indicate on a map areas where wildlife will be deterred/hazed from (for example, priority response areas or as wildlife are encountered). Describe nearby suitable habitat where wildlife are intended to be hazed to, including distance and direction from their current location.

5. Who will be conducting hazing/deterrence activities (RP/PRP staff, OSRO/PRAC, contractor, other)? List all if multiple. Describe applicable training or expertise, including affiliation, names (if known), and person in charge (with ICS position) of deterrence activities. When will they arrive at the field/spill site?

6. Describe the method and type of equipment that will be used for each species group. Include the platform(s) hazing/deterrence will be conducted from (on foot, boat, etc.) and if any aircraft, including UAS, will be used to haze/deter wildlife.

7. Who (name or ICS position) will be responsible for documenting the success/failure of hazing efforts (e.g., a Wildlife Observer (see WPG Tactic **Wildlife Reconnaissance**), one of the persons conducting hazing, etc.)?

8. Describe the documentation/communication plan. What information will be documented, by whom, and how often will it be communicated to the IMT?

9. Describe what next steps will be taken if hazed species inadvertently become oiled.

10. Describe or attach any additional details necessary for Incident Command to fully understand implementation of this plan, such as guidance documents, tactic descriptions, or other instructions.

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

Summary of Wildlife Agency Comments: Section VII. Hazing/Deterrence Plan
Instructions for agency representatives: Indicate the number in Section VII to which your comment refers. Include recommended language for additions, deletions, requests for additional details, or other comments.
ADF&G comments:
USFWS comments:
NMFS comments:

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

VIII. Pre-emptive Capture Plan

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: Include information for each species or species group checked in Section IV, Parts A and B. Any differences between each species group must be clearly articulated. If more space is needed, attach a separate Word® document referencing appropriate section, number, and species group (e.g., Section VIII. 1. Seals) or reference and include attachments.

1. Who is capturing wildlife? Provide affiliation and applicable training. Names of individuals must be provided for the proposed capture of any marine mammals, eagles, or ESA-listed species. _____
2. Describe all aspects of wildlife transportation. How will each species be transported from the field, where are they being transported to (for example, stabilization facility, temporary holding location, proposed release site)? _____
3. Describe the stabilization facility or temporary holding location/facility. Provide the name of the individual or ICS position in charge of the chain-of-custody paperwork at the stabilization facility. Attach a plan describing the detailed care of each species (e.g., feeding, nutrition, temperature control, etc.) _____
4. Provide the name and affiliation of the veterinarian(s) in charge of monitoring captured wildlife. _____
5. Describe why the release site was chosen (for example, location or habitat characteristics). _____
6. Provide the name, ICS position, and contact information for the person responsible for writing a release plan (e.g., release date and location, appropriate tagging/banding or final disposition of the animal, etc.) and coordinating review of the plan with the appropriate wildlife agency. _____
7. Describe or attach any additional details necessary for Incident Command to fully understand implementation of this plan, such as guidance documents, tactic descriptions, or other instructions. _____

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

Summary of Wildlife Agency Comments: Section VIII. Pre-emptive Capture Plan
Instructions for agency representatives: Indicate the number in Section VIII to which your comment refers. Include recommended language for additions, deletions, requests for additional details, or other comments.
ADF&G comments:
USFWS comments:
NMFS comments:

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

IX. Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation, and Release Plan

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: Include information for each species or species group checked in Section IV, Parts A and B. Any differences between each species group must be clearly articulated. If more space is needed, attach a separate Word® document referencing appropriate section, number, and species group (e.g., Section IX. 1. Seals) or reference and include attachments.

1. List pre-existing permits and authorizations, and those that were obtained for capture, transport, stabilization, and rehabilitation through the Startup WRP process.

2. Provide affiliation and applicable training of wildlife capture personnel. Names of individuals must be provided for the proposed capture of any marine mammals, eagles, or ESA-listed species. When will they arrive at the site?

3. Describe all aspects of wildlife transportation. How will each species be transported from the field, where are they being transported to (for example, stabilization facility, temporary holding location, proposed release site)?

4. Describe the temporary stabilization facility(ies) if one or more will be used. Provide the name of the individual or ICS position in charge of the chain-of-custody paperwork at each stabilization facility.

5. Where is the cleaning and rehabilitation facility(ies)?

6. Provide the name and affiliation of the veterinarian(s) in charge of cleaning and rehabilitation of oiled wildlife.

7. Provide the name of the individual or ICS position in charge of the chain-of-custody paperwork at the rehabilitation facility.

8. Describe fresh/marine water sources and daily capacity in gallons (fresh and/or marine) for cleaning and holding of wildlife.

9. Describe how waste and wastewater is being handled, including daily capacity, for (a) oily water, (b) wastewater with natural animal contaminants (fecal matter, skin, fur, food, fish, etc.), and (c) biomedical waste, including drugs.

10. Describe how wildlife will be held while in rehabilitation and estimated time individuals in each species group will remain in rehabilitation.

11. Describe disposal or storage for euthanized or deceased animals (e.g., will they be transported to the morgue location outlined in Section VI, will another morgue be established at rehabilitation facility, will animal be transported to wildlife agency). Attach euthanasia plan or describe in adequate detail here.

12. Provide the name, ICS position, and contact information for the person/people responsible for writing a release plan (e.g., release date and location, appropriate tagging/banding or final disposition of the animal, etc.) and coordinating review of the plan with the appropriate wildlife agency.

13. Describe or attach any additional details necessary for Incident Command to fully understand implementation of this plan, such as guidance documents, tactic descriptions, or other instructions.

Comprehensive Wildlife Response Plan

Summary of Wildlife Agency Comments: Section IX. Capture, Transport, Stabilization, Rehabilitation, and Release Plan
Instructions for agency representatives: Indicate the number in Section VIII to which your comment refers. Include recommended language for additions, deletions, requests for additional details, or other comments.
ADF&G comments:
USFWS comments:
NMFS comments:

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X. Wildlife Agency Permits and Authorizations for Proposed Response

This section to be filled out by wildlife agencies.

Instructions: For each species group checked, agencies should indicate permit or authorization status using one or more of these: **Initiated** (ESA section 7 consultation only); **Pending** (include estimated time of completion); **Issued** (include permit number); **Emergency** authorization provided (verbal or email approval, hard copy of permit will follow); **Not applicable** or not required for proposed activities; or **Other** (include comments).

Response activities for each species group *as proposed in Sections VI – IX* of this form may begin as soon as all necessary permits and approvals for *that* species group are listed as **Initiated, Issued, or Emergency**.

Species or Species Group	CARCASS COLLECTION		HAZING/DETERRENCE		CAPTURE, TRANSPORT, STABILIZATION, & REHABILITATION	
	Permit/Authorization	Status	Permit/Authorization	Status	Permit/Authorization	Status
Threatened or endangered species	USFWS ESA section 7 consultation		USFWS ESA section 7 consultation		USFWS ESA section 7 consultation	
	NMFS ESA section 7 consultation		NMFS ESA section 7 consultation		NMFS ESA section 7 consultation	
	USFWS ESA OLE authorization					
Migratory birds	USFWS Migratory Bird Salvage Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		USFWS Migratory Bird Rehab Permit	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Bald or golden eagles	USFWS permit		USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit		USFWS Eagle Depredation Permit	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Sea otters	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Walrus	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Polar bears	USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA authorization		USFWS MMPA section 112(c) LOA	
	USFWS OLE authorization					
Whales	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Seals	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Sea lions	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Porpoises/dolphins	NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request		NMFS MMHSRP request	
Brown or black bears	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Ungulates	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Furbearers	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Non-migratory birds	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit	
Fish	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shellfish	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Invertebrates	ADF&G Wildlife Response Permit		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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XI. Additional Conditions

This section to be filled out by wildlife agencies.

Instructions: Wildlife agencies must check each applicable condition and write in any additional conditions or approvals.

Permits, LOAs, and ESA section 7 consultations will include protection measures, restrictions, or conditions for the proposed activities that must be adhered to. Additional conditions for the following activities include:

Primary Response Strategies – Carcass Collection

- _____
- _____

Secondary Response Strategies – Hazing/Deterrence

- To ensure non-target species are not inadvertently hazed, active hazing/deterrence must cease if the following species are within _____ m (_____ ft) of the spill site or areas where hazing is proposed:

Hazing may not resume until these species have left the area of their own accord.

- Hazing/deterrence may not occur in areas where molting waterfowl are observed.
- Hazing/deterrence may not occur within _____ m (_____ ft) of _____.
- Report observations of _____ to _____.
- Report observations of _____ to USFWS as soon as possible at 907-242-6893 (USFWS Alaska Region Spill Response Team).
- Report observations of _____ to NMFS as soon as possible at 877-925-7773 (Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network).
- Hazing/deterrence activities must be monitored by one or more Wildlife Observers (see WPG Tactic **Wildlife Reconnaissance**) as needed.
- _____
- _____

Tertiary Response Strategies – Capture, Transport, Stabilization, and Rehabilitation

- Report observations of _____ to _____.
- Report observations of _____ to USFWS as soon as possible at 907-242-6893 (USFWS Alaska Region Spill Response Team).
- Report observations of _____ to NMFS as soon as possible at 877-925-7773 (Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network).
- Tertiary response activities must be monitored by a Wildlife Observer (see WPG Tactic **Wildlife Reconnaissance**).
- _____
- _____

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XII. Worksheet for Operations Section and Field Personnel

This section to be filled out by the RP/PRP.

Instructions: List conditions, stipulations, and protection measures of permits and authorizations as they are finalized and issued. This Worksheet is intended to help convey pertinent details of authorized wildlife response activities from the Environmental Unit to Operations and field personnel. The Environmental Unit Lead or their designee should read and review permits, authorizations, and ESA section 7 consultation information as they are issued/finalized, and include pertinent protection measures, stipulations, and other conditions for Operations to inform and direct field personnel (e.g., in ICS 204s). Some of this information may be obtained from Section VII of the Startup WRP. This Worksheet does not replace or negate any information found in permits and authorizations. Wildlife agencies may assist with this, but *the permittee or RP/PRP is ultimately responsible for all actions conducted under the authority of each issued permit or authorization.*

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END OF COMPREHENSIVE WILDLIFE RESPONSE PLAN

Wildlife Protection Guidelines version 2020.2

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