

**Sector Mobile Frequently Asked Questions Regarding
Wildlife Oil Spill Response Activities
June 2010**

Q1. Can you provide some detail on how the response to oiled birds is going to work in Florida?

This response plan is currently under development and revision as additional locations and Incident Command Centers are being established throughout Florida. Florida is unique since it has two Incident Command Centers, Sector Mobile (Panhandle through Fenholloway River) as well as the Peninsular Florida Sector (Sector St Pete, Sector Key West and Sector Miami). Not all Sectors may necessarily have Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Centers, although Tri-State may set up Washing/Stabilization Centers at several locations statewide. Sector Mobile is currently the most active in oiled wildlife response in Florida at the Pensacola Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Center for washing birds and at a Stabilization Center trailer now located in Panama City. Additional locations will be established as this dynamic situation develops.

Q2. Specifically, who is going to rescue and transport birds?

Currently, the rescue and transportation of birds has been coordinated through the Oiled Wildlife Hotline, who dispatches the closest FWS/BP response team (Recon and Recovery, SCAT/Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Team) to transport the bird to the Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. The Florida Transportation Plan is being developed to possibly utilize USDA Wildlife Services, Nuisance Wildlife Trappers, permitted wildlife rehabilitators and/or paraprofessionals to assist with rescue and/or transportation of birds.

In the event of a large scale wildlife incident involving excessive numbers of birds, a transportation company is already under contract with BP that can respond throughout Florida with a climate controlled rig outfitted to Tri-State's recommendation for that species (boxes or kennels etc). Transportation assistance has also been offered through Disney's Animal Kingdom, Sea World Orlando, and a network of avian zookeepers at Florida institutions.

Q3. What do I do if I see an oiled, injured, debilitated or dead sea turtle or marine mammal?

Any reports of oiled, injured, debilitated or dead sea turtles or marine mammals should also be reported to the Oiled Wildlife Hotline at 1-866-557-1401. Members of the local sea turtle or marine mammal stranding network will be deployed to respond to the animal and take appropriate action.

Q4. How do you define paraprofessional for the oil spill event?

A paraprofessional is defined as individuals that:

1. Either possess, or work directly under a person possessing, an active permit or authorization related to the species to be worked on;
2. Are affiliated with a wildlife organization working within the Wildlife Branch of the Incident Command Structure (ICS), or are a staff member of a wildlife Trustee agency;
3. Agree to work under, and abide by, appropriate planning documents prepared by the Unified Command (such as Site Safety Plan, Incident Action Plan, public affairs requirement, etc.) and
4. Have a working knowledge and experience (at least 3 months) with the general protocol, procedures and safety hazards associated with working on the species of question

Q5. How is the list being created for volunteers/paraprofessionals to rescue oiled wildlife, transport oiled wildlife and assist at the Tri-State rehabilitation facility?

The paraprofessional list was generated from and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 4 Migratory Bird Program in Atlanta. The original "Request for Paraprofessionals" announcement was sent to the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association, the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council and the Florida Wildlife Rehabilitators Association. In addition, federally permitted migratory bird rehabilitators and members of NWRA and IWRC are being contacted in the Gulf States of FL, AL, MS,

LA, TX. First preference for scheduling at the wildlife centers is given locally to personnel located within those states, to nearby states and then individuals willing to travel. The Service updates the list and provides it to the (4) Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Centers, who schedule the number of paraprofessionals needed dependent upon the volume of animals at the center.

Q6. A. What is the status of that list for Florida – how many paraprofessionals are ready to go and on the list? B. Where are they geographically?

A. Currently, 232 Florida paraprofessionals are included in the master list of 575 paraprofessionals that are registered, although many of these represent organizations that have additional resources from 2-20 people who could be mobilized. In addition, there are 130 paraprofessionals located outside of Florida that have indicated a willingness to travel if needed. There are also 45 nationwide AZA zoos with over 180 employees that have pledged assistance, many of which are located in Florida.

B. Geographically, the Florida paraprofessionals are widely dispersed, and are located from the Panhandle to the Keys, on the east and west coast and in central Florida, in large metropolitan areas, as well as in smaller communities.

Q7. How are paraprofessionals being contacted by the Incident Command Center?

Paraprofessionals are contacted by phone or by email by either the Paraprofessional Coordinator at the Incident Command Center or the Migratory Bird Program in the Atlanta Regional U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office. Currently, after paraprofessionals provide their registration information at the FWS email address fw4ppc@fws.gov, they are thanked for their interest, told they will be contacted for scheduling and what to wear/expect at the centers, and information is provided for the required online BP Safety Training. They are also informed to print their BP Safety Training Certificate and bring it with them should they be scheduled.

Since public interest is high and the response need is currently low at the wildlife centers, a communication plan is being developed that will generate a bimonthly email communication to keep paraprofessionals engaged in and informed about the oil spill response efforts and wildlife news. News bulletins with very important updates would also be sent if needed.

Q8. Is there a running list of paraprofessionals for Florida?

Yes, Florida is very interested in assisting wildlife! The list is constantly updated as people provide their notice of availability dates, willingness to travel and that they have passed the required BP Safety Training.

Q9. What happens to a call that comes into the Oiled Wildlife Hotline?

The Oiled Wildlife Hotline headquartered in Houston is managed 24 hours by a call service company which generates an email with contact name, number, address and circumstance information that is routed to the Mobile Sector. The Mobile Sector Hotline hours are from 7am and have been expanded until 12 midnight, although Incident Command Center staff is onsite at 6 am and immediately review any emails generated between 12 midnight and 6 am for response.

The Mobile Sector is currently working to have the calls routed directly to the Mobile Incident Command Center instead of being routed through Houston in efforts to improve efficiencies and response times. In addition, an Oiled Wildlife Capture Team is on call until midnight to rescue and transport any oiled wildlife reported during the evening hours.

Q10. How is the system working so far with the oiled wildlife calls in Florida – for example the Pelican in Destin and the Northern Gannets?

The system is constantly improving as the public and Florida wildlife rehabilitators are aware of and utilize the Oiled Wildlife Hotline 1-866-557-1401 for reporting oiled wildlife. Multiple efforts by state and federal

wildlife agencies and wildlife rehabilitation organizations are being made to inform rehabilitators and the public that for human health and safety, as well as wildlife health and safety reasons, the rescue and rehabilitation of any oiled wildlife must be a coordinated effort.

Q11. Who is overseeing oiled wildlife response in Florida at the Incident Command Center?

It takes a team to manage the oiled wildlife response...Ken Rice is the Wildlife Branch Supervisor; Dave Warbuton is currently the Deputy Branch Director for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Oiled Wildlife Hotline oversees incoming calls and coordinates response. Additional Service personnel are tasked with response activities, pre-survey assessment, managing evidence collection, paraprofessionals and volunteers.

Q12. Where can I find the request for paraprofessional announcement?

Here is the "REQUEST FOR WILDLIFE PARAPROFESSIONAL INFORMATION":

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research (Tri-State) who is contracted by British Petroleum to provide wildlife assistance for species who may be impacted by the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The Service recognizes Tri-State's expertise in wildlife oil spill response and, while many wildlife organizations and individuals have expressed interest in providing their assistance, all rehabilitation efforts must be coordinated through the Service and Tri-State. Coordination is vitally important for recovery and research efforts, and specific safety requirements and other requirements must be met before anyone will be allowed on-site for any participation.

The Service and Tri-State have designated a Paraprofessional Coordinator (PPC) to compile a list and organize scheduling of potential responders providing the information requested below. Paraprofessionals located within the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Texas will have first preference in scheduling and will be scheduled for efforts located within their home state. If you are located outside of these states and are interested in providing wildlife assistance, please submit the same requested information. All responders will be contacted by the PPC when their assistance is needed.

State rehabilitation organizations, permitted wildlife rehabilitation organizations, private rehabilitators or those individuals who are associated with a wildlife organization can help now by providing the following information if you would be available to assist in the oil spill response efforts:

- Name
- Complete Address
- Phone Numbers (primary and alternate)
- Email Address
- Exact dates you are available
- Where you can travel
- Number of people available

It is also helpful to note if you are a Wildlife Rehabilitator, what species you have experience with, i.e. wading birds, raptors, pelagic seabirds, waterfowl, etc. It would also be beneficial to know if you are a veterinarian or an avian veterinarian, a veterinary technician, or a well-seasoned rehabilitator; and if you have Rabies pre-exposure shots.

Please direct inquires or any calls about your interest in providing wildlife assistance to fw4ppc@fws.gov or to 404/679-7049.

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3. Agree to work under, and abide by, appropriate planning documents prepared by the Unified

Command (such as Site Safety Plan, Incident Action Plan, public affairs requirement, etc.) and
4. Have a working knowledge and experience (at least 3 months) with the general protocol, procedures and safety hazards associated with working on the species of question.

Anyone who does not qualify as a paraprofessional and is still interested in volunteering, may register at Gulf of Mexico- Deepwater Horizon Incident <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/site/2931/>.

All oiled wildlife calls should be directed to the Oiled Wildlife Hotline at 1-866-557-1401 so that we can coordinate recovery/rescue.

It is important that you please avoid going to affected areas or handling wildlife until you are a registered official in the coordinated response effort. Thank you in advance for your assistance and for your willingness to help America's wildlife.

Q13. Is there any special training required in order to volunteer in the oil spill response efforts for beach clean-up, bird surveys or if I am a qualified wildlife paraprofessional?

Yes, BP is requiring all oil spill response and paraprofessional volunteers to complete Safety Training at a live training class location offered throughout the Gulf Coast Region. Please call the Training Hotline at 1-866-647-2338 for information about class schedules or to enroll.

Or, if you prefer, you may also attend this BP Safety Training online by visiting <https://www2.virtualtrainingassistant.com/BPPublic/wc.dll?learner~cmenu> There is a test at the end of the course, and you must pass with an 80% (you will have three attempts). Please print the certificate. If you are called to be scheduled to assist at an Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, you will need to provide a copy of the BP Safety Training certificate. However, completing the training is not a guarantee that you will be scheduled, that depends upon oiled wildlife volume. If you have any IT difficulty, you can also call the Training Hotline listed above for assistance.

Q14. I am not a paraprofessional, but I still want to help in the oil spill response efforts, what can I do?

Please note that only the Unified Command has the legal authority to decide upon the use of volunteers in an area impacted by the spill. Current information about the oil spill clean-up efforts and volunteer opportunities are posted at: <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/site/2931/>. The Unified Command's decisions to recruit, train and deploy volunteers are contingent upon the location and size of the spill, the appropriate clean-up strategies, and safety considerations.

You can also register to volunteer in Florida online <http://www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org/>

In addition, the National Audubon Society is also signing up volunteers to assist. The signup information is at http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=3400.