

Deepwater Horizon Response

Response and Rescue Plans for Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles Impacted by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico



The Wildlife Branch of the Unified Command has organized trained wildlife care providers and investigators to assist sea birds, marine mammals and sea turtles that will be impacted by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The marine mammal and sea turtle response teams include authorized personnel from the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program and the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network who respond to stranded marine animals in the upper Gulf of Mexico and consist of experts from federal and state agencies, academia, wildlife and veterinary professionals and zoo/aquaria facilities. The overall response will build upon the local stranding programs but will call upon the national network to assist as needed. This is an outstanding example of collaborative conservation efforts that are being brought together to assist marine animal wildlife in this oil spill event.



NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have identified primary responders and rehabilitation facilities in the local areas for live cetaceans, manatees and sea turtles. Facilities have also been identified and are being readied for necropsies of dead marine mammals and sea turtles. Federal and state agencies are partnering with bird rehabilitation experts to provide facilities and care for sea birds.



Given the long time frame for this effort, experts from other areas of the country are also being identified and brought into the region. These are personnel who are highly trained in the special needs required for handling and treating marine mammal or sea turtles and will be used as the response progresses and as needed to assist the local rescue teams.

Additional rehabilitation and necropsy facilities outside of the upper Gulf region have already been identified and are on standby to assist or receive animals if circumstances demand.

What to Do If You Find Oiled, Injured or Dead Marine Mammals, Sea Turtles or Birds

If you find an oiled, injured or dead marine mammal, sea turtle, or bird, please contact the Wildlife Hotline at:

866-557-1401

Please **DO NOT** touch or try to approach the animal. Handling oiled wildlife may pose a serious health and safety risk to both you and the animal you are trying to rescue. The chemicals in oil are toxic and only trained personnel with appropriate protective gear and equipment should handle and treat oiled animals.



NOAA Fisheries Service



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



UC Davis Oiled Wildlife Care Network

If you find an oiled animal please call the Wildlife Hotline immediately. Helpful information you can provide us includes:

- Type of animal (*i.e.*, bird, mammal or turtle);
- Location (be as specific as possible, *e.g.*, beach name, where on beach in the specific state);
- Time last seen; and
- Your name and phone number in case we need to reach you.

We will deploy trained wildlife rescue personnel to collect the animal.

Other Ways to Help

Members of the public who wish to volunteer to assist with this effort should contact the Community Information Line at:

866-448-5816

Experienced marine mammal and sea turtle responders and veterinarians should contact their regional or state stranding coordinator to be placed on a standby response list.

For Additional Information

Oiled Wildlife Care Network Homepage:

<http://www.owcn.org/>

Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/>

NOAA website on Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response:

<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/deepwaterhorizon>

NOAA Home Page:

<http://www.noaa.gov/>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website on Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Response:

<http://www.fws.gov/home/dhoilspill/index.html>



NOAA Fisheries Service



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