UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Fisheries Center
Miami Laboratory
75 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, FL 33149

17 March 1986 F/SEC11:BAS

TO: Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) Members

FROM: STSSN Coordinating Team - NMFS (Miami Laboratory) B. A. Schroeder

SUBJECT: Revised STSSN Data Reporting Form

Attached is a sample copy of the revised stranding data report form. This form was designed in an effort to standardize data reporting and to include several critical data items not requested on previous forms. We request that all future sea turtle stranding data be reported on these revised forms. We would like to completely replace all versions of blank stranding data sheets previously in use.

Also attached is an instruction packet which provides an explanation of each data item on the new form. We urge all network volunteers to take the time to review the new data sheet and explanations. In addition to the instruction sheet attached, the following information is critical:

1. You must indicate on the data sheet the nature of the occurrence if the turtle is not a stranded animal. Stranded turtles are those that wash up on the beach or shore, either dead or alive. If the event you are reporting is not a "true" stranding, please indicate that on the form. Examples of non "true" stranding occurrences include (but are not limited to): hook and line catches, trawler captures, set net catches, sightings in the water of healthy or injured turtles, nesting turtles, aerial observations, etc. Reporting the nature of the occurrence is the only way we can correctly code the record into the data base.

2. Please print as clearly as possible in dark ink on the data sheets. If we cannot read your writing, we cannot code the record into the data base. Xeroxed data sheets filled out in pencil are often unreadable.

These requests are made in an effort to improve the quality of the stranding data base and decrease the lag time between receipt and availability of data to user's. The success of the network depends primarily on the network volunteers collecting accurate data in the field. The network appreciates and acknowledges your efforts.

If you have any questions regarding the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network, please contact your state coordinator or one of the network coordinators at the NMFS/Miami Laboratory.

YOUR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION ARE SINCERELY APPRECIATED!!!

STSSN DATA REPORT FORM - EXPLANATION OF DATA ITEMS

OBSERVERS FULL NAME: This is the person who handled the turtle in the field. Please include your middle initial if you have one. Records are partially indexed by observer initials.

STRANDING DATE: This is the date the stranded turtle was first reported or encountered. If you did not investigate until a later date, please make that known in the remarks section.

ADDRESS/AFFILIATION and AREA CODE/PHONE NUMBER: We may need to contact you for clarification of the reported data, please give us an address and phone number where we can reach you.

SPECIES: Use the codes given on the bottom right of the data sheet.

TURTLE NUMBER BY DAY: This is used to keep track of more than one turtle investigated on a single day by the same volunteer. Your first turtle of the day is 01, second of same day is 02, etc.

RELIABILITY OF I.D.: Circle the reliability of your species identification. It is better to be conservative and select probable or uncertain if you really aren't sure. The key on the back can help you identify the species. If a reliablity is not circled, the species will be coded as an unidentified turtle.

SPECIES VERIFIED BY STATE COORDINATOR?: If the species was verified by your state coordinator check yes, if not check no.

SEX: This will most often be undetermined, as immature sea turtles cannot be sexed externally. If you circle male or female, please explain how you reached that decision in the adjacent blank - HOW WAS SEX DETERMINED? If you circle male or female and do not give a reason, we must code the sex as undetermined.

STATE: This is the state the turtle stranded in.

COUNTY: The county the turtle stranded in. This is a new data item and will be very helpful in summarizing data by location. In Louisiana, give the parish name.

LOCATION: Please be as specific as possible and use a known reference point. Local names or landmarks not found on most charts do not help us pinpoint a location. Good reference points are inlets, county lines, state boundaries, cape points, large cities, etc. The stranding location is one of the most important data items on the form.

LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: If possible, please include the latitude/longitude of the stranded turtle. Positions are coded to the nearest tenth of a degree (e.g. 28°16.8'N and 80°36.3'W). LORAN positions will be converted, but it will speed data entry if you give the lat/long instead. If you cannot provide a lat/long, it is even more important to give a location description that your state coordinator or the network coordinator can plot on a chart.

CONDITION OF TURTLE: Use the numbered codes given on the bottom right of the data sheet. If the turtle seems intermediate between two stages of decomposition pick the one which fits best. If you specify two conditions, we will pick one, and we have never seen the turtle you are reporting.

FINAL DISPOSITION OF TURTLE: Use the numbered codes given on the bottom right of the data sheet. These codes refer to what you did with the stranded turtle (e.g. code 1 - painted, left on beach: means you painted the turtle and left it on the beach). Codes 1-5 refer to dead turtles only. Codes 6 and 7 are for live animals. If you use code 6 (alive, released) please state in the remarks when and where you released the turtle. If you use code 7 (alive, taken to a holding facility) please give the name and location of the place the turtle was taken to. If none of the disposition codes fit the event you are reporting, please explain what you did with the animal.

TAG NUMBER(S): List the tag number(s) and indicate which flipper(s) it(they) were on. Please copy the return address on the back of the tag. Indicate what you did with the tag (e.g. left intact, removed and kept, removed and returned to address on back of tag, etc.). If this is a live turtle that gets tagged before release, please state, "untagged when found, tagged before release", and give the tag numbers applied. If additional tag(s) are placed on an already tagged animal, please explain if the original tag(s) were removed or left intact.

REMARKS: This space is for your notes. The more information you give us, the easier it will be for us to code the record. Use the back of the data sheet to continue your remarks. Always note anything unusual about a stranding event, some of these are listed on the sheet. We will code these notes onto each turtle's record.

MEASUREMENT BOX: Enter the measurement in the correct slot (straight or curved, length or width). Be sure to circle the units you used as centimeters (cm) or inches (in). If the units are not circled, we cannot include the measurement in the data base. In order to standardize measurements, please measure according to the method explained at the top of the data sheet. If your measuring method differs from the one described, please write down how you measured the turtle. Use the diagram to indicate flipper damage, wounds, tag locations or anything else you want to note about the turtle.

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COMPLETED DATA SHEETS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO YOUR STATE COORDINATOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. A LISTING OF STATE AND NETWORK COORDINATORS IS ATTACHED.

SEA TURTLE STRANDING AND SALVAGE NETWORK - STRANDING REPORT

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND FILL IN ALL APPLICABLE BLANKS. Use codes below. Measurements may be straight line (caliper) and/or over the curve (tape measure). Measure length from the center of the nuchal notch to the tip of the most posterior marginal. Measure width at the widest point of carapace. **CIRCLE THE UNITS USED.** See diagram below. Please give a specific location description. **INCLUDE LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE.**

Observer's Full Name _____ Stranding Date ____ - ____ - ____ (year month day)

Address / Affiliation _____

Area Code / Phone Number _____

Species _____ Turtle Number By Day _____

Reliability of I.D.: (CIRCLE) Unsure Probable Positive Species Verified by State Coordinator? Yes☐ No☐

Sex: (CIRCLE) Female Male Undetermined How was sex determined? _____

State _____ County _____

Location (be specific and include closest town) _____

_____

Latitude _____ Longitude _____

Condition of Turtle (use codes) _____ Final Disposition of Turtle (use codes) _____

Tag Number(s) (include tag return address and disposition of tag) _____

_____

Remarks (note if turtle was involved with tar or oil, gear or debris entanglement, wounds or mutilations, propellor damage, papillomas, epizoa, etc.) continue on back if necessary

_____

_____

_____

MEASUREMENTS: CIRCLE UNITS

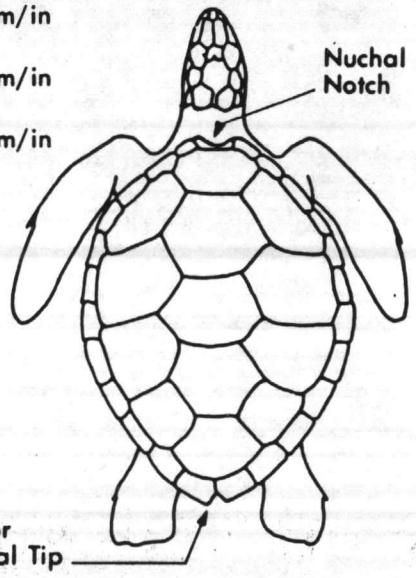
Straight Length _____ cm/in

Straight Width _____ cm/in

Curved Length _____ cm/in

Curved Width _____ cm/in

Mark wounds, abnormalities, and tag locations



CODES:

SPECIES:
- CC = Loggerhead
- CM = Green
- DC = Leatherback
- EI = Hawksbill
- LK = Kemp's ridley
- UN = Unidentified

CONDITION OF TURTLE:
- 0 = Alive
- 1 = Fresh dead
- 2 = Moderately decomposed
- 3 = Severely decomposed
- 4 = Dried carcass
- 5 = Skeleton, bones only

FINAL DISPOSITION OF TURTLE:
- 1 = Painted, left on beach
- 2 = Buried: on beach / off beach
- 3 = Salvaged specimen: all / part
- 4 = Pulled up on beach or dune
- 5 = Unpainted, left on beach
- 6 = Alive, released
- 7 = Alive, taken to a holding facility

SAMPLE FORM - SAMPLE FORM - SAMPLE FORM

SEA TURTLE STRANDING AND SALVAGE NETWORK - STRANDING REPORT

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND FILL IN ALL APPLICABLE BLANKS. Use codes below. Measurements may be straight line (caliper) and/or over the curve (tape measure). Measure length from the center of the nuchal notch to the tip of the most posterior marginal. Measure width at the widest point of carapace. **CIRCLE THE UNITS USED.** See diagram below. Please give a specific location description. **INCLUDE LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE.**

Observer's Full Name: Barbara A. Schroeder Stranding Date: 86 - 02 - 21 (year month day)

Address / Affiliation: NMFS 75 Virginia Beach Drive Miami, FL 33149

Area Code / Phone Number: (305) 361-4488

Species: CC Turtle Number By Day: 01

Reliability of I.D.: (CIRCLE) Unsure Probable (Positive) Species Verified by State Coordinator? Yes☐ No☒

Sex: (CIRCLE) Female (Male) Undetermined How was sex determined? tail extends 26.0 cm beyond rear of carapace

State: Florida County: Dade

Location (be specific and include closest town): Key Biscayne, 1.0 mi south of Bear Cut, Crandon Park - ocean side, dead on beach at high tide line

Latitude: 25° 43.5 ' N Longitude: 80° 09.1 ' W

Condition of Turtle (use codes): 2 Final Disposition of Turtle (use codes): 3 (see remarks)

Tag Number(s) (include tag return address and disposition of tag): no tags observed

Remarks (note if turtle was involved with tar or oil, gear or debris entanglement, wounds or mutilations, propellor damage, papillomas, epizoa, etc.) continue on back if necessary

salvaged skull, buried remainder on beach; left front flipper missing ~ 75%; patches of tar on ventral sides of both rear flippers; heavy barnacle covering - 90% of carapace covered

MEASUREMENTS: CIRCLE UNITS

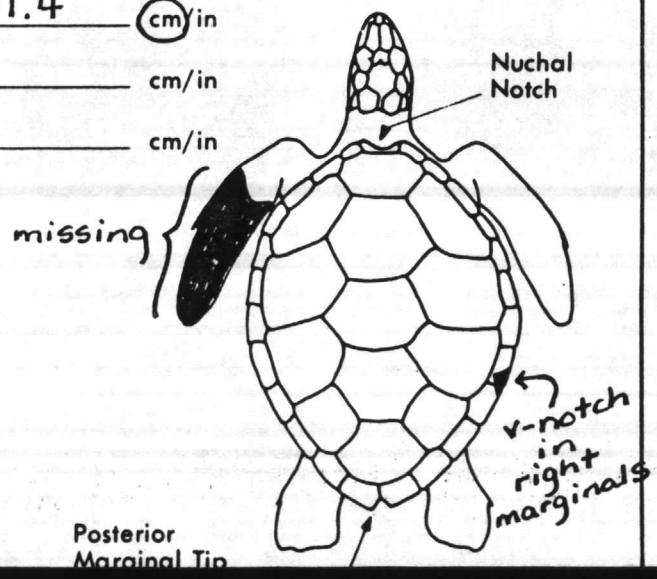
Straight Length: 104.1 (cm)/in

Straight Width: 91.4 (cm)/in

Curved Length: _____ cm/in

Curved Width: _____ cm/in

Mark wounds, abnormalities, and tag locations



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- 5 = Skeleton, bones only

FINAL DISPOSITION OF TURTLE:
- 1 = Painted, left on beach
- 2 = Buried: on beach / off beach
- 3 = Salvaged specimen: all / part
- 4 = Pulled up on beach or dune
- 5 = Unpainted, left on beach
- 6 = Alive, released

SEA TURTLE STRANDING & SALVAGE NETWORK

GULF & ATLANTIC UNITED STATES

(3/17/86)

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