

RRT II Meeting

11-12 June 2025

AST
Response
WS

2025

Best Management Practices Environmental Unit Leader Quick Reference Guide

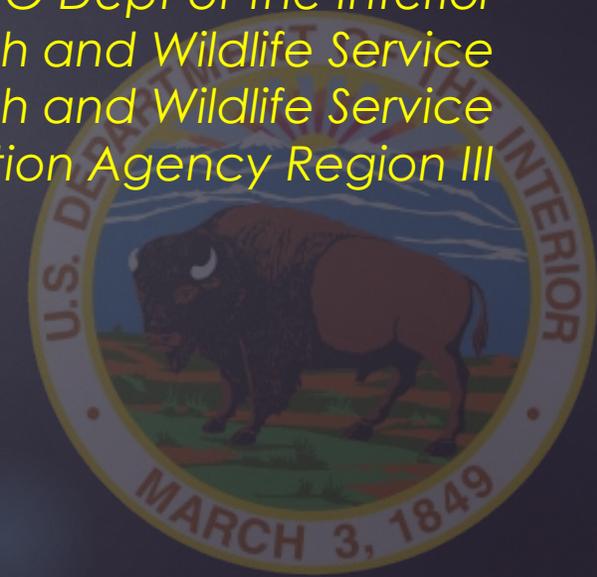
*Frank Csulak, NOAA Scientific Support Coordinator
Elisha Cook, USCG Fifth District Response Advisory Team*

John Nelson, REO Dept of the Interior

Sarah Schaeffer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Joann Banda, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Myles Bartos, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region III



RRT3 Environmental Guides / Tools

- RRT3 Environmental Consultation Guidance and Form (Feb 2022)
- RRT3 Environmental BMPs for Oil Spill Response (Dec 2023)
- RRT3 ENVL Quick Reference Guide (DRAFT ~ June/July 2025)
- USFWS Wildlife Spill Response Survey (ArcGIS & Survey123)
- RRT3 Unanticipated Discoveries
- RRT3 NAGPRA Guidance (DRAFT ~ June/July 2025)
- Future developments...



Environmental BMPs for Oil Spill Response

- Provides general recommendations and guidance to the FOSC to avoid and minimize impact to fish, wildlife, and cultural/historic resources during a response to an oil spill.
- General BMPs for FOSC to use during initial response actions.
 - Incident Specific BMPs developed via emergency consultation process.
- Organized by Response Action
- Feedback incorporated from USCG, NOAA, USFWS, SHPOs, NGOs.



Regional Response Team II

- Converting the RRT 3 BMP for Oil Spill Response into a Regional Response Team 2 (RRT2) Coastal Zone document.
- NOAA and EPA Region 2 met on 4 June
- Draft Regional Response Team 2 (RRT2) Coastal Zone
- Distribute, review, revise, finalize



TABLE OF CONTENTS

AST
Response
WS

2025

Use of the Environmental BMPs for Oil Spill Response in the Coastal Zone

Background and Purpose

Environmental BMPs for Coastal Oil Spill Response

General Response Operations

Vessel Operations

On-water Mechanical Operations

On-water Chemical Countermeasures

Other Countermeasures

Aircraft Operations

Vehicle Operations

Shoreline Response Operations

Staging Areas / Support Facilities

Waste Management

Grounded or Displaced Vessel Response/Removal Operations

Environmental Points of Contact

Primary Environmental Agencies / Organizations

Report a Stranded or Injured Marine Mammal or Sea Turtle

State Historic Preservation Office Contacts

List of Abbreviations



USE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BMPS FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE IN THE COASTAL ZONE

AST
Response
WS

2025

- **Background and Purpose**

- **The purpose of this document is to provide recommendations and guidance to the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) to avoid and minimize impact to fish, wildlife, and cultural/historic resources during a response to an oil spill.**

- All BMPs are provided as recommendations and guidance, developed in coordination with Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), to avoid and minimize impact to fish and wildlife resources during a response to an oil spill. These agencies are referred to as "the Services." State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) input for cultural/historic resource considerations during oil spill response operations is also included within this guidance document.

- This document is not intended to cover all possible scenarios or every individual species. The BMPs provided in this document are general in nature for oil spill response actions and enable the FOSC to quickly implement BMPs for response actions at the onset of a response. Due to area, environmental, and situational differences amongst potential operation areas,



General Response Operations

- Response personnel may not attempt to scare, herd, disturb, or harass any protected species to encourage them to leave the area. Coordination with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Stranding Coordinator, or appointed point of contact, may result in authorization for these actions.
- Report stranded, injured, sick, trapped, entangled, or dead wildlife to the Incident Commander (IC) and Environmental Unit as soon as possible to ensure appropriate agency notifications are made. *Utilize the 'USFWS Wildlife Spill Response Survey' within the Survey123 app if available and being utilized for incident [ArcGIS Survey123 Downloads \(esri.com\)](#). The USFWS species are preloaded into the Wildlife Spill Response Survey, however any species including NMFS species can be recorded in the app.*
- If any impacted sea turtle, sturgeon, or marine mammal (or their parts) are observed, NMFS should be contacted for collection protocols. If a Wildlife Branch is stood up, coordination for response and collection should be communicated through the NMFS representative in the Wildlife Branch. NMFS may authorize collection by spill response personnel if species specific responders are not available (and delegation authority is allowed under the appropriate permit) and will provide instructions on proper handling and disposition. For impacted marine mammals and sea turtles, call the NMFS Regional Marine Animal Hotline: 866-755-NOAA (6622), Option zero to speak with NMFS staff. For sturgeon, reports should be made to NMFS Protected Resources Division by phone (978-281-9328) and e-mail (nmfs.gar-sturgeon-salvage@noaa.gov) as soon as possible.



Vessel Operations

- All response vessel operators and crew must watch for and avoid collision with species protected under the ESA and MMPA (sea turtles, manatees, seals, dolphins, whales, Atlantic and short-nose sturgeon). The Environmental Unit can provide an updated list of protected species in the response area. When available a dedicated wildlife observer should be assigned for each response area.
- All response vessels shall maintain minimum distances specified below for specific species:
 - 1,500-ft distance (500 yards) from North Atlantic right whale.
 - 300-ft, as practicable, from all other marine mammals (i.e., dolphins, other whales, seals/pinnipeds, and porpoises):
 - Seal colonies will likely flush (i.e., move away from) from haul outs into the water at greater distances than 300-ft. Consideration should be given to the potential presence of pups on haul outs in certain seasons. A biologist associated with an authorized marine mammal stranding response program experienced in marine mammal/protected species identification should be onboard to advise location of boom deployment distances when possible.
 - 300-ft from waterfowl /seabird aggregation sites. Large numbers of sea birds and waterfowl winter in coastal waters bays and tributaries, with flocks of up to 5,000 individuals. Boat operations must maintain a minimum distance from waterfowl / sea bird aggregation sites.
 - 150-ft from sea turtles.
 - 50-ft from manatees (rare in RRT3). All in-water operations, including vessels, must be shut down if a manatee comes within 50 ft of the operation. Activities will not resume until the manatee(s) has moved beyond the 50-ft radius of the project operation, or until 30 minutes elapses if the manatee(s) has not reappeared within 50 ft of the operation. All on-site project personnel are responsible for observing water-related activities for the presence of manatees. Animals must not be herded away or harassed into leaving.
 - 100-ft from all other protected species not already listed above. Stop operating mechanical equipment, including response vessels, immediately if any protected species is observed within a 100-ft radius and resume after the species has departed the area of its own volition.



On-water Mechanical Operations

- A biologist experienced in marine mammal/protected species identification or dedicated crew member is required for all skimming, booming, burning, and dispersant operations, with responsibility for avoiding marine mammals, sea turtles, birds, and reporting distressed or deceased animals.
- Stop operating mechanical equipment, including response vessels, immediately if a protected species is observed within a 50-ft radius and resume after the species has departed the area of its own volition.
- Entanglement:
 - All in-water equipment (including hard and sorbent booms) must be properly secured with materials that reduce the risk of entanglement of marine species. Booms, lines, and other equipment must be made of materials that reduce the risk of entanglement of marine species. Keep all in-water lines (rope, chain and cable, including the lines to secure boom, buoys, anchors, etc.) stiff, taut, and non-looping. Floating line should be used as appropriate.
 - Where feasible, the use of equipment with breakaway capabilities is advised to prevent or minimize the risk of entanglement of marine species.
 - The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) should be contacted if sea turtles are entangled or entrapped during offshore operations.
- Entrapment:
 - In-water equipment (including hard and sorbent boom) must be placed in a manner that does not entrap species within the work area or block access for them to navigate around the work area.
 - If protected species become entrapped in an enclosed area, notify NMFS immediately. If observers note entrapped animals are visually disturbed, stressed, or their health is compromised, then activities may cease so the animal can either leave on its own or be moved under the direction of NMFS.
 - The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) should be contacted if sea turtles are entangled or entrapped during offshore operations.



On-water Chemical Countermeasures

- *(Dispersants, Solidifiers, Herding Agents, Elasticity Modifiers)*
 - A biologist experienced in marine mammal/protected species identification or dedicated crew member is required for all skimming, booming, burning, and dispersant operations, with responsibility for avoiding marine mammals, sea turtles, birds, and reporting distressed or deceased animals.
 - Where approved, dispersants should not be used within a 3-nautical mile radius of marine mammal species (e.g., whales, dolphins, seals, sealions, and manatees). The radius should increase to 10-nautical miles if North Atlantic right whales are observed in the area.
 - Where approved, avoid dispersant applications near bird concentration areas and minimize bird exposure from wind drift of applied dispersant.



Other Countermeasures

- *(In-situ Burn, Bioremediation)*
 - A biologist experienced in marine mammal/protected species identification or dedicated crew member is required for all skimming, booming, burning, and dispersant operations, with responsibility for avoiding marine mammals, sea turtles, birds, and reporting distressed or deceased animals.
 - Watch for and avoid marine mammals while operating vessels or aircraft involved directly or in support of in-situ burn operations. Marine species observers on the ignition vessel will monitor 3 areas prior to the burn (the area in front of the tow boats, oil concentrated in the boom, and any oil trailing behind the boom). A survey should be conducted in the burn area after the burn is complete and any distressed or dead marine mammals should be counted and reported to the Environmental Unit immediately.
 - Avoid burning near bird concentration areas and minimize bird exposure from wind drift of smoke.
 - Avoid burning near archaeological sites or other historic properties, particularly when these are not completely submerged.



Aircraft Operations

- *(Airplanes, Helicopters, Drones/Unmanned Aircraft Systems)*
- Prior to operating Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) coordinate with respective land managers to get specific UAS limitations.
- UAS flights should be limited to 100 feet above ground level (AGL) above resting birds on land or water (i.e., not in flight). Rotary aircraft should limit elevations to 300-400 feet AGL. If hazing/disturbances occur, increase altitude and report adjusted height to the Environmental Unit.
- Fixed-wing aircraft should follow NOAA marine mammal aerial survey protocols for speed (100 mph preferred), height (1000 feet AGL), and dwell time and for aircraft choice.
 - For flyovers for identifying animals in the area are best done from aircraft that can fly low and slow and remain in an area for an extended period.
- Aircraft must stay >1,000 feet above bird nesting and aggregation sites and limit repetitive passes to minimize disturbance.
- Where deemed applicable, wildlife observers may be deployed on aircraft to report and record sightings of ESA species and/or other wildlife.



Vehicle Operations

- *(All-Terrain Vehicles, Automobiles/Trucks Heavy Equipment)*
- ❑ Prior to vehicle operations, a biologist experienced in shorebird species identification is required to evaluate beaches for use by shorebirds (nesting, fledgling) each day.
- ❑ Prior to vehicle operations, the SHPO and THPO (if applicable) should be consulted to avoid disturbance of archaeological sites or other historic properties.
- ❑ Generally, preference is given to operations during daytime periods to minimize impacts to sea turtles and nesting shorebirds. Prior to any nighttime operations, it is highly recommended to consult with the Services for guidance.
- ❑ Utilize a lightweight vehicle with low tire pressure (10 psi), such as an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) or Mule whenever possible to reduce sand compaction and/or rutting.
- ❑ Utilize the same trackline for vehicle operations to minimize disturbance to multiple areas.
- ❑ Power wash vehicles prior to operating on beach areas to prevent spread of invasive species (e.g., Asian sand sedge).
- ❑ Enter the beach only at designated access points and proceed directly to the hard-packed sand near or below the high tide line. Stay below the tide line when driving if no oil is present and it is safe to do so.
- ❑ Do not drive in dune habitat.
- ❑ Avoid driving over the wrack line or areas of dense sargassum (otherwise known as seaweed), which may contain sea turtle hatchlings or newly hatched birds.
- ❑ Do not enter posted sea turtle or shorebird nest sites and minimize time spent around these sites. Most of these will be marked with posts and signs, but not all.
- ❑ Drive slowly. Travel should be slow enough to observe any bird eggs, chicks, or sea turtle hatchlings in the vehicle's line of travel. Be aware that bird chicks often feed along the water's edge. They may freeze in place rather than run away when ATVs or other vehicles approach.
- ❑ Check under and around vehicles and heavy equipment parked in shoreline areas before they are moved. Shorebirds (piping plover and red knot) are especially vulnerable when they are roosting at night, and extra care should be taken at these times. However, by this time of year, it is likely that these two federally threatened shorebird species have departed the area.



Shoreline Response Operations

- *(Protection/Containment: Pre-impact Debris Removal, Deflection/Protection Boom, Barriers/Berms, Flooding; Shoreline Treatment / Cleanup: Natural Recovery, Washing/Flushing, Physical Removal, Vegetation Cutting/Removal, Vacuum)*
 - In shallow nearshore areas with sensitive habitats, consider land-side access from roads, bulkheads, or other developed areas for operations.
 - Avoid and minimize response disturbance to sensitive shoreline habitats and in particular sand dunes and wetlands. Of particular concern are areas with Federally listed species in dune habitats such as tiger beetle, seabeach amaranth, and nesting birds. Contact the Environmental Unit to identify updated locations with these listed species in dune habitats.
 - Where equipment or crews must access areas across tidal marsh, seagrass, or oyster habitats, use shallow draft vessels or specialized equipment with low pressure/flotation tires, equipment mats, walk boards, or other comparable methods to minimize disturbance, as applicable.
 - Keeping clean wrack in general proximity is ideal, but it is not necessary to move it a substantial distance and back—use reasonable judgment.
 - Following response work on beaches, return the beach to its original profile at the end of each day.
 - Do not enter sites where birds are nesting or roosting and maintain a buffer of at least 300 ft from these sites. If birds are flushed, move away from the area, and observe a larger buffer distance to avoid and minimize disturbance.
 - When working in or near bird migratory/wintering areas, work crews should be limited to the minimum number of personnel and equipment required to complete response activities in an efficient time frame and as is feasible to minimize disturbance.
 - Be aware of the potential for sea turtle nesting activity if any operations are planned on Atlantic Ocean-facing sand beaches. Nests, eggs, and hatchlings may be present from May through November.
 - Adult sea turtles, crawls, nests, eggs, hatchlings, and critical habitat should be protected during response activities on sea turtle nesting beaches, including hatchling turtles as they emerge from the nest and crawl to the sea. If a sea turtle nest is inadvertently excavated during assessment or response activities, all work shall cease in that area immediately and the Environmental Unit should be contacted.
 - Upon locating any dead, injured, or sick sea turtle, birds, or marine mammals, or if eggs or nests are disturbed during response activity, initial notification must be made to the Environmental Unit as soon as possible. The Environmental Unit will make further notifications to the appropriate agency contacts.
 - Contact the Unified/Incident Command (UC/IC) and Environmental Unit prior to conducting any response efforts that require substantial ground disturbance as additional SHPO coordination may be required. Federally recognized tribes with interest in the area and the THPO may be contacted if applicable.
- Cease all activities involving subsurface disturbance and immediately contact the UC/IC and Environmental Unit if prehistoric/historic artifacts, such as pottery or ceramics, projectile points, dugout canoes, metal implements, historic building materials, or any other physical remains that could be associated with Native American, early European, or American settlement are encountered at any time (and leave all artifacts in place). The SHPO and/or THPO must be notified.



Staging Areas / Support Facilities

- ❑ Equipment and material staging areas must be located outside of areas of natural/native vegetation and known endangered species habitats, including federally threatened plant(s) that may be present in dunes. Areas proposed for equipment and material staging should be determined in consultation with the SHPO and/or THPO to avoid disturbance of archaeological sites or other historic properties. Contact the Environmental Unit (if established) for assistance.
- ❑ Use existing beach access areas and trails only.
- ❑ All trash resulting from the response should be removed from the area as appropriate or disposed of properly in covered wildlife-proof trash receptacles.



Grounded or Displaced Vessel Response/Removal Operations

- ❑ Avoid and minimize response disturbance to sensitive benthic and shoreline habitats including tidal marshes, oyster reefs, seagrasses, sand beaches, and dunes.
- ❑ Contact the Environmental Unit prior to conducting any response efforts that require significant ground disturbance as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and/or State permits may be required. Additionally, substantial ground disturbance beyond the initial disturbance caused by the grounding may require additional SHPO coordination for historic sites and/or THPO for tribal coordination.
- ❑ Contact the Environmental Unit if significant sediment disturbance is anticipated, as further coordination with USACE may be required.
- ❑ Contact the Environmental Unit if filling of wetlands or surface waters or dredging that creates or expands surface waters is anticipated, as emergency permitting from State Agencies may be required.
- ❑ Turbidity control measures may be implemented if significant turbidity increases are expected during response actions. Such control measures include:
 - Install floating turbidity barriers with weighted skirts that extend to within 1-ft of the bottom around all work areas that are in, or adjacent to, surface waters, if heavy turbidity is expected.
 - Use these turbidity barriers throughout vessel removal to control erosion and siltation and ensure that turbidity levels within the project area do not exceed background conditions (i.e., the normal water quality levels from natural turbidity).
 - Position turbidity barriers in a way that does not block species entry to or exit from designated critical habitat.
 - Monitor and maintain turbidity barriers in place until the authorized work has been completed and the water quality in the project area has returned to background conditions.
- ❑ Avoid response vessel grounding, prop and bow/keel/skeg scarring, and prop washing in tidal marsh, seagrass, oyster reef habitats, and archaeological sites or other historic properties.
- ❑ Avoid/minimize anchoring and spudding on tidal marsh, seagrass, and oyster reef habitats; anchor and spud on bare sand and mud bottoms, while avoiding archaeological sites or other historic properties. Consult with the SHPO and/or THPO to determine proximity of archeological/historic sites.
- ❑ If spudding on seagrasses cannot be avoided, fill spud holes to grade with clean sand, as feasible, to minimize impacts. Consult the Environmental Unit for any remediation requirements.
- ❑ Avoid/minimize shading of seagrasses with large vessels and barges for more than a few days; move large vessels and barges from over seagrasses onto bare sand or mud substrates when not undergoing active operations (such as in barge staging areas).
- ❑ Prior to hoisting, refloating, or repositioning grounded or displaced vessels, work crews should evaluate the immediate area and determine an ingress/egress path that will have the least impact to tidal marsh, seagrass, oyster reef habitats, and archaeological sites or other historic properties. Contact the Environmental Unit for assistance.
- ❑ Temporary stakes/buoys should be used to mark the ingress/egress path, if applicable, to assist in staying on course and to avoid the areas of greatest tidal marsh, oyster reef, and seagrass habitat extent and quality.



ENVIRONMENTAL POINTS OF CONTACT

Primary Environmental Agencies / Organizations

- If the Environmental Unit is not stood up, the key points of contact for environmental, wildlife, and historic preservation concerns during an oil spill response are provided below.
- [U.S. Coast Guard First District Response Advisory Team \(DRAT\)](#)
 - Joseph Boudrow, joseph.a.boudrow@uscg.mil, 617-406-9042
 - Cornell Rosiu, cornell.j.rosiu@uscg.mil, 617-406-9011
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Scientific Support Coordinator \(SSC\)](#)
 - Frank Csulak, frank.csulak@noaa.gov, 732-371-1005
- [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service \(USFWS\) Response Coordinators](#)
 - Sarah Shaeffer (NJ, NY, DE, Eastern PA/Delaware Watershed), sarah_schaeffer@fws.gov, 609-833-1476
 - [Great Lakes Contact?](#)
- [Department of the Interior \(DOI\)](#)
 - Andrew Raddant, andrew_raddant@ios.doi.gov, 617-223-8565
- [Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research](#)
 - 1-800-261-0980, oilprograms@tristatebird.org, <https://tristatebird.org/oil-spill-response/>
- [Report a Stranded or Injured Marine Mammal or Sea Turtle](#)
- [Northeast Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding and Entanglement Hotline, 866-755-NOAA](#)
- [New Jersey](#)
 - [Marine Mammal Stranding Center, 609-266-0538, https://mmsc.org/](#)
- [New York/Long Island](#)
 - [New York Marine Rescue Center, 631-369-9840, https://nymarinerescue.org/](#)
- [Great Lakes \(Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York\)](#)

□ Placeholder



State Historic Preservation Office Contacts

- For the most current list of SHPO contacts please see the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers website at ncshpo.org/directory/.
- New Jersey SHPO; Department of Environmental Protection, Historic Preservation
 - Kate Marcopul, kate.marcopul@dep.nj.gov, 609-633-2397; <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/>
 - Mitzi Kaiura, mitzi.kaiura@dep.nj.gov, 609-633-2168; <https://dep.nj.gov/easyaccess/commissioners-office/>
- New York SHPO; Division for Historic Preservation
 - Daniel Mackay, daniel.mackay@parks.ny.gov, 518-268-2171; <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/contact/>



Report a Stranded or Injured Marine Mammal or Sea Turtle

- Northeast Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding and Entanglement Hotline, 866-755-NOAA
- *New Jersey*
 - Marine Mammal Stranding Center, 609-266-0538, <https://mmsc.org/>
- *Delaware*
 - MERR Institute, 302-228-5029, <https://www.merrinstitute.org/>
- *Maryland*
 - Maryland Marine Animal Reporting Hotline, 800-628-9944
 - Maryland Department of Natural Resources Cooperative Oxford Laboratory (Dead animals only), <https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/oxford/stranding.aspx>
 - National Aquarium in Baltimore, Marine Animal Rescue Program, <https://www.aqua.org/Support/BLUEprint/animal-care-and-rescue-center>
- *Virginia*
 - Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, 757-385-7575, <https://www.virginiaaquarium.com/research-and-conservation/stranding-response>



Historic Preservation Office Contacts

- For the most current list of SHPO contacts please see the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers website at neshpo.org/directory/.
- New Jersey SHPO; Department of Environmental Protection, Historic Preservation
 - Kate Marcopul, kate.marcopul@dep.nj.gov, 609-633-2397; <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/>
 - Mitzi Kaiura, mitzi.kaiura@dep.nj.gov, 609-633-2168; <https://dep.nj.gov/easyaccess/commissioners-office/>
- New York SHPO; Division for Historic Preservation
 - Daniel Mackay, daniel.mackay@parks.ny.gov, 518-268-2171; <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/contact/>
- Environmental BMPs for Coastal Zone Oil Spill Response RRT2
- Updated/Validated: 06 JUN 2025 19 Key Points of Contact
- Pennsylvania SHPO; PA Historic Preservation Office
 - Andrea MacDonald, amacdonald@pa.gov, 717-787-4215; <http://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation>
- Ohio SHPO; OH State Historic Preservation Office
 - Diana Welling, shpo@ohiohistory.org, 614-297-2548; <https://www.ohiohistory.org/preserving-ohio/state-historic-preservation-office/>



Environmental Unit Role

- Provides scientific / technical expertise to Unified Command
 - Recommendations based on available scientific data and subject matter expertise.
- Falls under Planning Section Chief
 - Comprised primarily of environmental technical specialists
- Works closely with Operations, Safety, Situation, Logistics, Liaison Officer, and Public Information Officer
 - Coordination with IMT on environmental related issues and concerns



Environmental Unit Organization

- Flexible based on incident needs...



Example from CG Incident Management Handbook

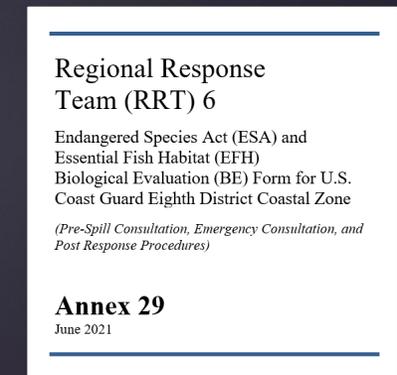
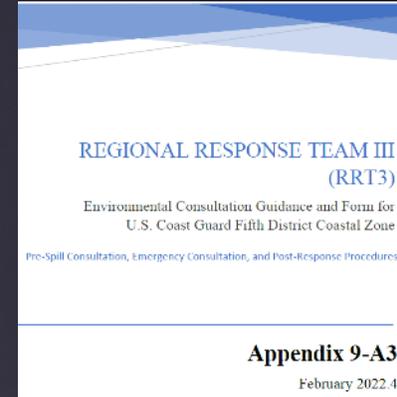


Example from EPA ENVL Job Aid



Environmental Consultation Guide / Form

- Provide clear and consistent guidance and process to Coast Guard Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC) on when and how to initiate Environmental consultation with the “Services” (i.e., National Marine Fisheries Service & U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).
- Examples:
 - NRT ESA Consultation Guidance
 - Regional Response Team 3 Environmental Consultation Guide & Form for USCG 5th District Coastal Zone
 - Regional Response Team 6 ESA / EFH BE Form for USCG 8th District Coastal Zone
- Provides information/resources to document the presence and effects of federal actions on federally listed threatened and endangered species, critical habitats, and/or essential fish habitats.
- Ongoing efforts to incorporate tools to assist FOSC in making species determinations.



Environmental BMPs for Oil Spill Response

AST
Response
WS

2025

Environmental BMPs for Coastal Zone Oil Spill Response

RRT3

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Use of the Environmental BMPs for Oil Spill Response in the Coastal Zone	4
Background and Purpose	4
Environmental BMPs for Coastal Oil Spill Response	5
General Response Operations	5
Vessel Operations	7
On-water Mechanical Operations	9
On-water Chemical Countermeasures	9
Other Countermeasures.....	10
Aircraft Operations	11
Vehicle Operations.....	12
Shoreline Response Operations	13
Staging Areas / Support Facilities.....	14
Waste Management.....	14
Grounded or Displaced Vessel Response/Removal Operations	15
Environmental Points of Contact	17
Primary Environmental Agencies / Organizations.....	17
Report a Stranded or Injured Marine Mammal or Sea Turtle	17
State Historic Preservation Office Contacts.....	18
List of Abbreviations	19



General Response Operations

- Response personnel may not attempt to scare, herd, disturb, or harass any protected species to encourage them to leave the area. Coordination with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Stranding Coordinator, or appointed point of contact, may result in authorization for these actions.
- Report stranded, injured, sick, trapped, entangled, or dead wildlife to the Incident Commander (IC) and Environmental Unit as soon as possible to ensure appropriate agency notifications are made. *Utilize the 'USFWS Wildlife Spill Response Survey' within the Survey123 app if available and being utilized for incident [ArcGIS Survey123 Downloads \(esri.com\)](#). The USFWS species are preloaded into the Wildlife Spill Response Survey, however any species including NMFS species can be recorded in the app.*
- If a sea turtle is stranded, injured, or sick, and actively moving, it should be retained onboard a vessel or if on land, responders should remain with the turtle until the stranding/rehabilitation personnel provide guidance on what action should be taken, which could include transferring the turtle to a designated stranding/rehabilitation facility.
- If a sea turtle is stranded, injured, or sick but unresponsive (doesn't move its head or flippers when handled), you should follow the handling and resuscitation guidelines after you have called the NOAA hotline at 866-755-NOAA (6622). Do not assume that an inactive turtle is dead. The onset of rigor mortis and/or rotting flesh are often the only definite indications that a turtle is dead. Releasing an unresponsive turtle into any amount of water may drown it. Unresponsive sea turtles may recover following resuscitation.
 - For your and the turtle's safety, always pick it up by the shell and keep your hands away from the head. Sea turtles have been known to revive up to 24 hours after resuscitation procedures have been followed. In accordance with Sea Turtle Resuscitation Regulations (50 CFR 223.206(d)(1)), steps for resuscitation can be found at https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/sea_turtle_handling_and_resuscitation_measures.pdf.
- Handling live sturgeon should be minimized and used only when necessary. Sturgeon should be supported by a sling or net when being moved. Live sturgeon must never be held vertically by the tail or gills and should never be tied by the tail. Sturgeon should be kept in water to the maximum extent possible to reduce stress.
 - For a non-responsive or overly stressed sturgeon, personnel must allow the animal to recover in floating net pens or in well-aerated onboard live tanks and shielded from direct sunlight. Alternatively, the sturgeon may be immersed in clean river water and moved back and forth to aid water passage over the gills.
 - The sturgeon should be released as soon as possible when it has recovered. At water temperatures <7°C (44°F) and >27°C (80°F), holding time of a recovered sturgeon must not be greater than 30 minutes. A spotter should watch the fish as it is released making sure it stays submerged and does not need additional recovery immediately after release.
 - Sturgeon are extremely sensitive to chlorine and other sanitizing solutions. Use care when using any of these products around sturgeon.

Vessel Operations

- All response vessel operators and crew must watch for and avoid collision with species protected under the ESA and MMPA (sea turtles, manatees, seals, dolphins, whales, Atlantic and short-nose sturgeon). The Environmental Unit can provide an updated list of protected species in the response area. When available a dedicated wildlife observer should be assigned for each response area.
- All response vessels shall maintain minimum distances specified below for specific species:
 - 1,500-ft distance (500 yards) from North Atlantic right whale.
 - 300-ft, as practicable, from all other marine mammals (i.e., dolphins, other whales, seals/pinnipeds, and porpoises):
 - Seal colonies will likely flush (i.e., move away from) from haul outs into the water at greater distances than 300-ft. Consideration should be given to the potential presence of pups on haul outs in certain seasons. A biologist associated with an authorized marine mammal stranding response program experienced in marine mammal/protected species identification should be onboard to advise location of boom deployment distances when possible.
 - 300-ft from waterfowl /seabird aggregation sites. Large numbers of sea birds and waterfowl winter in coastal waters bays and tributaries, with flocks of up to 5,000 individuals. Boat operations must maintain a minimum distance from waterfowl / sea bird aggregation sites.
 - 150-ft from sea turtles.
 - 50-ft from manatees (rare in RRT3). All in-water operations, including vessels, must be shut down if a manatee comes within 50 ft of the operation. Activities will not resume until the manatee(s) has moved beyond the 50-ft radius of the project operation, or until 30 minutes elapses if the manatee(s) has not reappeared within 50 ft of the operation. All on-site project personnel are responsible for observing water-related activities for the presence of manatees. Animals must not be herded away or harassed into leaving.
 - 100-ft from all other protected species not already listed above. Stop operating mechanical equipment, including response vessels, immediately if any protected species is observed within a 100-ft radius and resume after the species has departed the area of its own volition.



ENVL Quick Reference Guide

- Outlines essential roles, responsibilities, tasks, and recommendations to be taken under consideration by Environmental Unit members.

- Deconflicted with both CG/EPA Guidance
- Quick start guide for key actions that fall under ENVL.

- ❖ General description and role
- ❖ Technical Specialists (THSP) Supporting ENVL
- ❖ ENVL Forms / Plans
- ❖ Agencies / Organizations Supporting ENVL
- ❖ Key ENVL Tasks

RRT3 Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG)*	
<p>Introduction</p> <p>The purpose of this Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG) is to provide end-users with a condensed set of essential instructions, responsibilities, tasks, and recommendations to be taken under consideration by Environmental Unit (EU) members. It is not a replacement for agency specific guidance or job aids but rather a quick start guide for key actions that fall under the role of the EU.</p> <p>Environmental Unit (EU)</p> <p>The EU provides scientific and technical expertise to the Unified Command (UC), ensuring environmentally sound response strategies. Led by the ENVL, the EU develops and monitors plans for a comprehensive range of activities. These include assessing environmental impacts, conducting monitoring and surveillance, developing predictive models (e.g., trajectory, fate and transport), and recommending remediation strategies. The EU also plays a key role to ensure response actions comply with applicable environmental laws and regulations. This often involves data analysis and interpretation, sampling plan development, response technology evaluation, and providing technical support to the Operations Section Chief with early and consistent communications to assess response actions with the greatest net environmental benefit and monitoring environmental consequences. The EU should coordinate with the Safety Officer (SOF) regarding potential environmental, safety, health risks, or hazards. The EU also prepares environmental data for the Situation Unit to inform overall situational awareness.</p> <p>Technical Specialists (THSP) Supporting ENVL</p> <p>Evaluate and determine appropriate staffing needs to meet UC goals, including potential use of the below THSP to support the EU; not all incidents will require a robust EU.</p> <p>Scientific Support Coordinator: Principal Scientific Advisor to the POSC (not the ENVL).</p> <p>Trajectory Forecasting Specialist: Providing projections on movement / behavior of spill to include trajectories, plume monitoring, and fates / effects of the released hazardous substance or discharge of oil.</p> <p>Data Analyst: Collect and conduct environmental data quality control, interpretation, and development of environmental summaries and metrics for IMT Staff.</p> <p>GIS Specialist: Incorporation of environmental data and information into display products.</p> <p>Weather Forecast Specialist: Develop real-time and incident-specific weather forecasts.</p> <p>Sampling Specialist: Sampling plan development and monitor / evaluate implementation.</p> <p>Response Technology Specialist: Providing mechanical containment and recovery, dispersant application, in-situ-burning, and bioremediation expertise.</p> <p>Resources at Risk Specialist: Identify resources at risk from exposure to spilled product and response activities. Recommend priorities for protection based on importance / risks.</p> <p>Historic/Cultural Resources Specialist: Identify historical / cultural sites and develop strategies for protection / cleanup of sites to minimize damage from response activities.</p> <p>Wildlife Specialist: Develop Wildlife Management Plan and provide wildlife expertise.</p> <p>Disposal/Waste Management Specialist: Develop Disposal Plan and validate disposal data.</p> <p>Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) Coordinator: Shoreline assessments, recommendations for shoreline treatment methods/endpoints, shoreline inspection against cleanup endpoints, and recommendations for signoff of treated shorelines.</p>	<p>ENVL Forms / Plans</p> <p>Coordinate with resource trustees to develop the Resources at Risk Summary (ICS 232), as appropriate, to identify and document sensitive areas due to environmental, archaeological, or socio-economic resources at risk, and identify incident specific priorities and issues. Maintain a daily Unit Log (ICS 214) to capture EU members and activities.</p> <p>Work with technical specialists (THSP), state and local authorities (e.g., health, environmental, natural resources), non-governmental agencies (NGOs) and/or the Operations Section in the development of supplemental plans (e.g., Disposal / Waste Management Plan, Decontamination Plan, Air Monitoring Plan, Wildlife Management Plan).</p> <p>Coordinate with Liaison Officer (LOFR) as needed to coordinate with other cooperating agencies or stakeholders not already present in the EU and to assist with coordination of issues identified as being of interest to stakeholders.</p> <p>The Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) Program may fall under the EU or Operations Section. The SCAT Coordinator develops a Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Plan that includes: 1) Organization of field surveys to document shoreline oiling conditions; 2) Habitat-specific shoreline treatment methods / endpoints; 3) Development of shoreline treatment recommendations (STRs); and 4) Shoreline Inspection Reports (SIRs) to support sign-off of shoreline treatment. The EU / Operations provides input for the Assignment List (ICS 204) for SCAT, depending on the ICS structure.</p> <p>Specific Agency / Organizations Supporting the ENVL</p> <p>Provided below are some of the key federal, state, and NGOs that may provide support to the EU; it is not all inclusive.</p> <p>Responsible Party (RP) / Potential Responsible Party (PRP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ RP/PRP Representative (e.g., Qualified Individual, Incident Commander, contractors, OSROs) ➤ Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) can be assigned to the roles listed above as appropriate <p>U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ District Response Advisory Team (DRAT), Sector personnel, National Strike Force (NSF) <p>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental Response Team (ERT) ➤ Radiological Emergency Response Team (RETT) ➤ Consequence Management Advisory Team (CMAT) ➤ EPA Contractors: Provide air monitoring and water/soil sampling, particularly regarding public health. <p>Department of the Interior (DOI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DOI Regional Environmental Officer (REO) ➤ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Refuge Managers, Law Enforcement, Field Spill Response Coordinator ➤ USFWS Survey/22 Spill Response Wildlife Survey, dashboard, and data manager ➤ USFWS Biologists: Resources at Risk, Endangered Species Act species and consultations ➤ USFWS NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations. ➤ National Park Service (NPS) Managers, Law Enforcement, and SMEs <p>Tribal Representatives (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tribal Liaison / Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) ➤ Tribal Monitor <p>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC): Principal Scientific Advisor to the POSC ➤ SCAT Coordinator, Data Analyst, and Field Staff: Manage the SCAT Program ➤ Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) Database Managers: Establish and maintain the Common Operational Picture (COP) for USCG ➤ National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): Resources at Risk, Endangered and Threatened Species, Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultations ➤ National Weather Service (NWS): Weather forecasts ➤ Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Liaison: Coordination between NOAA NRDA activities and response operations <p>State/Commonwealth Representatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) ➤ Environmental/Natural Resource/State Park Agencies ➤ State Health Department and/or Seafood Safety (public health, water, air, sediment, shellfish safety) ➤ State NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations <p>Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research: Oiled Wildlife Responders & SMEs ➤ National Aquarium ➤ Marine Education, Research & Rehabilitation (MERR) Institute ➤ Academic institutions ➤ Environmental stakeholder liaisons (e.g., riverkeepers)

RRT3 Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG)*	
<p>General Tasking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and participate in meetings, briefings, and debriefings, as requested to provide environmental input during briefings and clarifying any environmental aspects. Support the development of the Incident Action Plan (IAP). Maintain and submit Environmental Unit Log (ICS 214). Conduct EU meetings to assign tasks, set priorities, assess personnel needs, identify issues, etc. Determine EU staffing / space requirements including use of THSP over the duration of the response; THSP needs and staffing should also be coordinated with Operations Section and SOFR. Submit resource request forms (ICS 215BR) for personnel and/or equipment required to the Planning Section chief for approval; continuously assess resources ready for demobilization. Coordinate with the Liaison Officer (LOFR), Public Information Officer (PIO), and SOFR to compile and assess environmental data to address stakeholder perceptions and concerns about environmental, safety, health risks, and hazards; may include development of presentation materials for briefings or providing THSP regarding the summary and evaluation of environmental data. Coordinate with the SSC on special scientific topics, as necessary. <p>Trajectories, Fate, Behavior, and Forecasts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile information on the spilled product characteristics (chemistry, behavior), fate, and effect. Create comprehensive quality assurance, sampling, and analysis plans for use across the incident. Plans may include arranging for collection of source and field samples for characterization and/or fingerprinting analysis, including split samples for on-scene Coordinators, RP / PRP, Trustees, etc. Request initial spill modeling and trajectories and identify any existing data gaps. Conduct flow, fate, air, and transport modeling. Coordinate with NOAA, Interagency Modeling and Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMAAC), or others to update SITL / Operations. Request aerial overflights to ground truth trajectories, identify impacted resources, and determine extent/degree of shoreline impact for potential treatment. NWS (if in EU), provides spill-specific weather forecasts and analysis to support SITL / Operations. <p>Resources at Risk / Ecological Assessment and Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify resources at risk and priority protection areas using ICS 232 (as appropriate). Initial resources include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPAC) ➤ NOAA Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) atlases ➤ State and local agencies Identify the need for and obtain permits, consultations (e.g., ESA / EPH, NHPA, SHPO, Tribal Liaison, THPO) and other authorizations, including governmental / agency provisions. Consult with Natural Resource Trustees to address the protection of environmental sensitive wildlife and other resources to include recommended Best Management Practices (BMPs). Identify sensitive areas and recommend response priorities; review existing geographic response strategies for accuracy and provide input on implementation of strategies. Coordinate with the Wildlife Branch (if established) to develop a Wildlife Management Plan. 	<p>Data Analysis / Quality Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Situation Unit in establishment of a GIS-based data management team and a Common Operating Picture (COP); support development of environmental maps / charts (e.g., extent of discharge / release, shoreline impacts, trajectories, wildlife surveys). Ensure that all data and information products are reviewed for accuracy and quality assurance. Prepare environmental data and information presentations / packages and provide to SITL / DOCL to support situation awareness and documentation (e.g., sampling / monitoring locations and results, SCAT data, wildlife rescue / recovery data, overflight maps, chemistry data, trajectories). <p>Support of Response Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop incident-specific BMP recommendations for the Operations Section Chief based on agency input; Note that there may be existing templates to work from or existing general BMPs for initial implementation during the initial response. Coordinate with Operations Section Chief / Air Operations Branch to recommend establishment of flight restrictions, as necessary, for sensitive wildlife and sensitive areas. Recommend staging areas and access points that will minimize potential environmental impacts. Under the SCAT Program (if established), develop shoreline assessment and cleanup plans, including endpoint recommendations by habitat. Shoreline Treatment Recommendations (STRs), and recommend final inspection and signoff forms and procedures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinate with the Operations Section Chief to ensure they clearly understand the shoreline treatment recommendations. ➤ Recommend Operations Section Rep in the EU for complex shoreline treatment conditions. Coordinate with the Wildlife Branch (if established) under the Operation Section to provide input on wildlife protection / recovery priorities and strategies. Develop waste / disposal and decontamination plans. Monitor the effectiveness of response measures; evaluate the opportunity to use other response technologies that may be more effective and/or have less impact. As appropriate, provide recommendations on fishery closures; State has the lead for fishery closures / openings in State waters and NOAA has the lead for fishery closures / openings in Federal waters. Be aware of navigational closures, as they might affect operational activities, transportation for responders, wildlife recovery, etc. Assist with the decision on closures by land managers, such as National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, USFWS, State Park managers, etc. Assess and work with the Safety Officer and Liaison Officers to address stakeholder concerns about environmental, safety, health risks and hazards, and closures and advisories. Coordinate with NRDA Trustees. <p>* Note: In accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS), additional Environmental Unit Leader tasks and guidance may be found in Agency specific Incident Management Handbooks, Environmental Unit Job Aids, and/or Guides. Many of the Environmental Unit tasks involve close coordination and/or potential overlap with the Operations Section, Logistics Section, Liaison Officer, and Public Information Officer to ensure environmental related issues and concerns are appropriately addressed by the Incident Management Team. It is important to remember that the EU is not a decision maker in the UC but rather their role is to provide sound recommendations based on available scientific data and subject matter expertise.</p>

RRT3 Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG)

AST
Response
WS

2025

ENVL QRG (Side 1)

- Introduction
- Environmental Unit
- THSP Supporting ENVL
- ENVL Forms / Plans
- Agency / Organizations Supporting ENVL

Introduction

The purpose of this Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG) is to provide end-users with a condensed set of essential instructions, responsibilities, tasks, and recommendations to be taken under consideration by Environmental Unit (EU) members. It is not a replacement for agency specific guidance or job aids but rather a quick start guide for key actions that fall under the role of the EU.

Environmental Unit (EU)

The EU provides scientific and technical expertise to the Unified Command (UC), ensuring environmentally sound response strategies. Led by the ENVL, the EU develops and monitors plans for a comprehensive range of activities. These include assessing environmental impacts, conducting monitoring and surveillance, developing predictive models (e.g., trajectory, fate and transport), and recommending remediation strategies. The EU also plays a key role to ensure response actions comply with applicable environmental laws and regulations. This often involves data analysis and interpretation, sampling plan development, response technology evaluation, and providing technical support to the Operations Section Chief with early and consistent communications to assess response actions with the greatest net environmental benefit and monitoring environmental consequences. The EU should coordinate with the Safety Officer (SOFR) regarding potential environmental, safety, health risks, or hazards. The EU also prepares environmental data for the Situation Unit to inform overall situational awareness.

Technical Specialists (THSP) Supporting ENVL

Evaluate and determine appropriate staffing needs to meet UC goals, including potential use of the below THSP to support the EU; not all incidents will require a robust EU.

Scientific Support Coordinator: Principal Scientific Advisor to the FOSC (not the ENVL).

Trajectory Forecasting Specialist: Providing projections on movement / behavior of spill to include trajectories, plume monitoring, and fates / effects of the released hazardous substance or discharge of oil.

Data Analyst: Collect and conduct environmental data quality control, interpretation, and development of environmental summaries and metrics for IMT Staff.

GIS Specialist: Incorporation of environmental data and information into display products.

Weather Forecast Specialist: Develop real-time and incident-specific weather forecasts.

Sampling Specialist: Sampling plan development and monitor / evaluate implementation.

Response Technology Specialist: Providing mechanical containment and recovery, dispersant application, in-situ-burning, and bioremediation expertise.

Resources at Risk Specialist: Identify resources at risk from exposure to spilled product and response activities. Recommend priorities for protection based on importance / risks.

Historic/Cultural Resources Specialist: Identify historical / cultural sites and develop strategies for protection / cleanup of sites to minimize damage from response activities.

Wildlife Specialist: Develop Wildlife Management Plan and provide wildlife expertise.

Disposal/Waste Management Specialist: Develop Disposal Plan and validate disposal data.

Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) Coordinator: Shoreline assessments, recommendations for shoreline treatment methods/endpoints, shoreline inspection against cleanup endpoints, and recommendations for signoff of treated shorelines.

ENVL Forms / Plans

Coordinate with resource trustees to develop the Resources at Risk Summary (ICS 232), as appropriate, to identify and document sensitive areas due to environmental, archaeo-cultural, or socio-economic resources at risk, and identify incident specific priorities and issues. Maintain a daily Unit Log (ICS 214) to capture EU members and activities.

Work with technical specialists (THSP), state and local authorities (e.g., health, environmental, natural resources), non-governmental agencies (NGOs) and/or the Operations Section in the development of supplemental plans (e.g., Disposal / Waste Management Plan, Decontamination Plan, Air Monitoring Plan, Wildlife Management Plan).

Coordinate with Liaison Officer (LOFR) as needed to coordinate with other cooperating agencies or stakeholders not already present in the EU and to assist with coordination of issues identified as being of interest to stakeholders.

The Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) Program may fall under the EU or Operations Section. The SCAT Coordinator develops a Shoreline Cleanup and Assessment Plan that includes: 1) Organization of field surveys to document shoreline oiling conditions; 2) Habitat-specific shoreline treatment methods / endpoints; 3) Development of Shoreline Treatment Recommendations (STRs); and 4) Shoreline Inspection Reports (SIRs) to support sign-off of shoreline treatment. The EU / Operations provides input for the Assignment List (ICS 204) for SCAT, depending on the ICS structure.

Specific Agency / Organizations Supporting the ENVL

Provided below are some of the key federal, state, and NGOs that may provide support to the EU; it is not all inclusive.

Responsible Party (RP) / Potential Responsible Party (PRP)

- RP/PRP Representative (e.g., Qualified Individual, Incident Commander, contractors, OSROs)
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) can be assigned to the roles listed above as appropriate

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

- District Response Advisory Team (DRAT), Sector personnel, National Strike Force (NSF)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Environmental Response Team (ERT)
- Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT)
- Consequence Management Advisory Team (CMAT)
- EPA Contractors: Provide air monitoring and water/soil sampling, particularly regarding public health.

Department of the Interior (DOI)

- DOI Regional Environmental Officer (REO)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Refuge Managers, Law Enforcement, Field Spill Response Coordinator
- USFWS Survey123 Spill Response Wildlife Survey, dashboard, and data manager
- USFWS Biologists: Resources at Risk, Endangered Species Act species and consultations
- USFWS NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations.
- National Park Service (NPS) Managers, Law Enforcement, and SMEs

Tribal Representatives (if applicable)

- Tribal Liaison / Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)
- Tribal Monitor

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC): Principal Scientific Advisor to the FOSC
- SCAT Coordinator, Data Analyst, and Field Staff: Manage the SCAT Program
- Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) Database Managers: Establish and maintain the Common Operational Picture (COP) for USCG
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): Resources at Risk, Endangered and Threatened Species, Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultations
- National Weather Service (NWS): Weather forecasts
- Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Liaison: Coordination between NOAA NRDA activities and response operations

State/Commonwealth Representatives

- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Environmental/Natural Resource/State Park Agencies
- State Health Department and/or Seafood Safety (public health, water, air, sediment, shellfish safety)
- State NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

- Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research: Oiled Wildlife Responders & SMEs
- National Aquarium
- Marine Education, Research & Rehabilitation (MERR) Institute
- Academic institutions
- Environmental stakeholder liaisons (e.g., riverkeepers)

Specific Agencies / Organizations Supporting ENVL

Responsible Party (RP) / Potential Responsible Party (PRP)

- RP/PRP Representative (e.g., Qualified Individual, Incident Commander, contractors, OSROs)
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) can be assigned to the roles listed above as appropriate

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

- District Response Advisory Team (DRAT), Sector personnel, National Strike Force (NSF)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

- Environmental Response Team (ERT)
- Radiological Emergency Response Team (RERT)
- Consequence Management Advisory Team (CMAT)
- EPA Contractors: Provide air monitoring and water/soil sampling, particularly regarding public health.

Department of the Interior (DOI)

- DOI Regional Environmental Officer (REO)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Refuge Managers, Law Enforcement, Field Spill Response Coordinator
- USFWS Survey123 Spill Response Wildlife Survey, dashboard, and data manager
- USFWS Biologists: Resources at Risk, Endangered Species Act species and consultations
- USFWS NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations.
- National Park Service (NPS) Managers, Law Enforcement, and SMEs

Tribal Representatives (if applicable)

- Tribal Liaison / Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Tribal Monitor

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- Scientific Support Coordinator (SSC): Principal Scientific Advisor to the FOSC
- SCAT Coordinator, Data Analyst, and Field Staff: Manage the SCAT Program
- Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) Database Managers: Establish and maintain the Common Operational Picture (COP) for USCG
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): Resources at Risk, Endangered and Threatened Species, Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultations
- National Weather Service (NWS): Weather forecasts
- Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Liaison: Coordination between NOAA NRDA activities and response operations

State/Commonwealth Representatives

- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Environmental/Natural Resource/State Park Agencies
- State Health Department and/or Seafood Safety (public health, water, air, sediment, shellfish safety)
- State NRDA Liaison: Coordination of NRDA activities and response operations

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

- Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research: Oiled Wildlife Responders & SMEs
- National Aquarium
- Marine Education, Research & Rehabilitation (MERR) Institute
- Academic institutions
- Environmental stakeholder liaisons (e.g., riverkeeper)



RRT3 Environmental Unit Leader (ENVL) Quick Reference Guide (QRG)*

AST
Response
WS

2025

General Tasking

- Attend and participate in meetings, briefings, and debriefings, as requested to provide environmental input during briefings and clarifying any environmental aspects.
- Support the development of the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- Maintain and submit Environmental Unit Log (ICS 214).
- Conduct EU meetings to assign tasks, set priorities, assess personnel needs, identify issues, etc.
- Determine EU staffing / space requirements including use of THSP over the duration of the response; THSP needs and staffing should also be coordinated with Operations Section and SOFR.
- Submit resource request forms (ICS 213RR) for personnel and/or equipment required to the Planning Section Chief for approval; continuously assess resources ready for demobilization.
- Coordinate with the Liaison Officer (LOFR), Public Information Officer (PIO), and SOFR to compile and assess environmental data to address stakeholder perceptions and concerns about environmental, safety, health risks, and hazards; may include development of presentation materials for briefings or providing THSP regarding the summary and evaluation of environmental data.
- Coordinate with the SSC on special scientific topics, as necessary.

Trajectories, Fate, Behavior, and Forecasts

- Compile information on the spilled product characteristics (chemistry, behavior), fate, and effect.
- Create comprehensive quality assurance, sampling, and analysis plans for use across the incident. Plans may include arranging for collection of source and field samples for characterization and/or fingerprinting analysis, including split samples for On-scene Coordinators, RP / PRP, Trustees, etc.
- Request initial spill modeling and trajectories and identify any existing data gaps. Conduct flow, fate, air, and transport modeling. Coordinate with NOAA, Interagency Modeling and Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMACC), or others to update SITL / Operations.
- Request aerial overflights to ground truth trajectories, identify impacted resources, and determine extent/degree of shoreline impact for potential treatment.
- NWS (if in EU), provides spill-specific weather forecasts and analysis to support SITL / Operations.

Resources at Risk / Ecological Assessment and Protection

- Identify resources at risk and priority protection areas using ICS 232 (as appropriate). Initial resources include:
 - USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (iPaC)
 - NOAA Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) atlases
 - State and local agencies
- Identify the need for and obtain permits, consultations (e.g., ESA / EFH, NHPA, SHPO, Tribal Liaison, THPO) and other authorizations, including governmental / agency provisions.
- Consult with Natural Resource Trustees to address the protection of environmental sensitive wildlife and other resources to include recommended Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Identify sensitive areas and recommend response priorities; review existing geographic response strategies for accuracy and provide input on implementation of strategies.
- Coordinate with the Wildlife Branch (if established) to develop a Wildlife Management Plan.

Data Analysis / Quality Control

- Support the Situation Unit in establishment of a GIS-based data management team and a Common Operating Picture (COP); support development of environmental maps / charts (e.g., extent of discharge / release, shoreline impacts, trajectories, wildlife surveys).
- Ensure that all data and information products are reviewed for accuracy and quality assurance. Prepare environmental data and information presentations / packages and provide to SITL / DOCL to support situation awareness and documentation (e.g., sampling / monitoring locations and results, SCAT data, wildlife rescue / recovery data, overflight maps, chemistry data, trajectories).

Support of Response Operations

- Develop incident-specific BMP recommendations for the Operations Section Chief based on agency input; Note that there may be existing templates to work from or existing general BMPs for initial implementation during the initial response.
- Coordinate with Operations Section Chief / Air Operations Branch to recommend establishment of flight restrictions, as necessary, for sensitive wildlife and sensitive areas.
- Recommend staging areas and access points that will minimize potential environmental impacts.
- Under the SCAT Program (if established), develop shoreline assessment and cleanup plans, including endpoint recommendations by habitat, Shoreline Treatment Recommendations (STRs), and recommend final inspection and signoff forms and procedures.
 - Coordinate with the Operations Section Chief to ensure they clearly understand the shoreline treatment recommendations.
 - Recommend Operations Section Rep in the EU for complex shoreline treatment conditions.
- Coordinate with the Wildlife Branch (if established) under the Operation Section to provide input on wildlife protection / recovery priorities and strategies.
- Develop waste / disposal and decontamination plans.
- Monitor the effectiveness of response measures; evaluate the opportunity to use other response technologies that may be more effective and/or have less impact.
- As appropriate, provide recommendations on fishery closures; State has the lead for fishery closures / openings in State waters and NOAA has the lead for fishery closures / openings in Federal waters.
- Be aware of navigational closures, as they might affect operational activities, transportation for responders, wildlife recovery, etc.
- Assist with the decision on closures by land managers, such as National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, USFWS, State Park managers, etc.
- Assess and work with the Safety Officer and Liaison Officers to address stakeholder concerns about environmental, safety, health risks and hazards, and closures and advisories.
- Coordinate with NRDA Trustees.

* **Note:** In accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS), additional Environmental Unit Leader tasks and guidance may be found in Agency specific Incident Management Handbooks, Environmental Unit Job Aids, and/or Guides. Many of the Environmental Unit tasks involve close coordination and/or potential overlap with the Operations Section, Logistics Section, Liaison Officer, and Public Information Officer to ensure environmental related issues and concerns are appropriately addressed by the Incident Management Team. It is important to remember that the EU is not a decision maker in the UC but rather their role is to provide sound recommendations based on available scientific data and subject matter expertise.

ENVL QRG (Side 2)

- General Tasking
- Trajectories, Fate, Behavior, and Forecasts
- Resources at Risk / Ecological Assessment and Protection
- Data Analysis / Quality Control
- Support of Response Operations

Note: Additional tasks and guidance may be found in Agency Specific handbooks, job aids, and/or guides.



Questions?

Thank you



Frank Csulak
Frank.Csulak@noaa.gov



732-371-1005
24/7 Hotline 206-526-4911