

WILDLIFE PARAPROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is working with Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research 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 FWS 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 FWS 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 FWS 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 or private rehabilitators can help now by providing the following information if you would be available to assist in the oil spill response efforts. You must include your name, address including city and state, phone number (prefer cell phone and alternate numbers), email address, if you have prior oil spill experience, and how far you can travel, as well as:

- a. If you are a Rehabilitator with at least 6 months of experience;
- b. 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;
- c. If you have a minimum of 4 hours of HAZCOM certification;
- d. If you have Rabies pre-exposure shots;
- e. Your availability. (this can be a rough estimate by identifying dates available)

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

A paraprofessional is defined as individuals that:

1. Either possesses, 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.

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 Wildlife Hotline at 1-866-557-1401 so we can coordinate recovery/rescue.

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

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

Division of Law Enforcement

State Emergency Operations Center

Tallahassee, Florida

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