

**OR&R**

**GUIDELINES FOR SSCs DEALING WITH MARINE MAMMAL ISSUES DURING AN OIL SPILL RESPONSE**

**Jim Jeanssonne – NOAA Scientific Support Team**

*Special Thanks to Mike Zaccardi and Shawn Johnson for use of their material*

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**Material to be Covered by this SSC Training Call**

- ❑ **The Issues: Recent Incidents Involving Marine Mammals**
- ❑ **Guidelines for SSC-SST Actions to support the FOSC/Unified Command for dealing with potential or actual marine mammal issues**
- ❑ **Useful Information for Coordination with NMFS Protected Resources – Summary of Johnson & Ziccardi Workshop**

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**Recent Incidents Involving Marine Mammals**

- Chevron – Arthur Kill, NJ Oil Spill – 2006
- CITGO Calcasieu Estuary, LA –
- Bayou Perot, LA Well Blowout - Jan 2007
- Wayward Humpback Whales, Sacramento R. – May 2007

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**Chevron – Arthur Kill, NJ Oil Spill – 2006**

- 14,000 gal of Dabo Crude
- State Lead NRDA
- Chevron was a cooperative RP
- Necropsy with tissue samples
- Sample analysis would have cost \$20,000
- Instead, RP agreed to \$20,000 worth of marine mammal restoration projects – but did not admit blame (a common agreement)

**Main Point: Good documentation is very valuable!**

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**CITGO, Lake Charles, LA Oil Spill (20June06)**  
**Recovery of Bottlenose Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus* on 2 July 06, NMFS Case #LA-08**

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on 2 July 06, NMFS Case #LA-08**



**Main Points:** 1) NOAA SST may need to take custody  
2) Poor documentation-CoC of tissue samples

**Bayou Perot, LA Crude Oil Well Blowout (19 Jan 07)  
Bottlenose Dolphins, *Tursiops truncatus* in cleanup zone**

- 1 - Distressed dolphin observed on 22 February 2007, died before MMSN team arrived
- 2 - Second distressed dolphin observed 8 March 07



**Bayou Perot, LA Crude Oil Well Blowout (19 Jan 07)  
Two dolphins observed, one died before response team  
could get on-scene. Second dolphin's fate unknown.**



**Main Points:** 1) Remoteness is a problem  
2) Not often oil related injury, but still need to treat as potential oil injured animal.

**Wayward Humpback Whales,  
Sacramento R., CA – May 2007**



**Main Point:** NMFS Marine Mammal Program staff are not familiar with ICS.

**Recommended SSC Actions if  
Marine Mammals are a Potential Issue  
(DRAFT)**

1. Contact ARD and MMSN regional coordinator (see list) if marine mammals (MM) are a potential issue!
2. SSC & MMSN coordinator should prepare recommendations to FOSC for MM response issues.
3. ARD (vs. ERD), in consult with MMSN, will normally be the lead for ensuring that documentation and necropsy procedures are established and followed. However, ARD may request assistance from the SSC-SST members on-scene.

**Marine Mammal Considerations for Response  
(DRAFT)**

1. Are MM's at risk and in what way (direct oiling, response vessels, booms, food contamination or scarcity)?
2. What steps should be taken to protect MM's? (Prepare simple protocols)
3. Protocols should:
  - Highlight safety issues related to dealing with MM's
  - Include actions if distressed or dead animals are sighted (documentation photos & location (GPS) are priority)
4. Alert & train response crews & field teams using protocols



**The following presentation is a brief summary of the 8 hour workshop presented by Drs. Mike Ziccardi and Shawn Johnson for the NMFS Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Network.**

