ECWR Response to Oiled Wildlife Update

Today I have been in contact with incident command in Pensacola, specifically with BP's Wildlife Response coordinator for our area. I (the ECWR) am now their the POC for local response to oiled wildlife. I have also put in a request with BP's training coordinator to conduct volunteer training for the general public in our area, but have not received a response as yet.

There is a bird wash station being set up by Tri-State, the contracted response group, in Pensacola and I have been in contact with them and hope to visit the site soon. We are also actively working to set up our own holding and possibly washing stations locally as well.

I want to re-emphasize that we are ready and able to respond to oiled wildlife, and are on call 24/7. Oiled wildlife will be suffering from shock, hypo or hyperthermia, and stress and is typically stabilized for 24 - 48 hours before washing begins. Calling us directly at 850-650-1880 will save valuable time in the treatment process.

If you find a suspected oiled animal please call us immediately. We will provide rescue and supportive care until the animal is ready for transport to one of the regional wash and rehab stations. The BP Oiled Wildlife Hotline is not manned and will be checked for messages hourly, thus delaying response time.

Please remember that once the oil is on the beach only individuals with specific training will be allowed onto the beach to conduct rescues, and under no circumstances should you handle a suspected oiled animal.

In support of our holding and stabilization areas we are asking for donations of the following items:

Baby blankets
Towels
Heating pads (w/o auto shut off if possible)
Large Rubbermaid containers with lids
Heating lamps
Rubbermaid troughs (can be purchased at Tractor Supply in Crestview or on-line)
Large backyard portable pools like found at Wal-Mart

I realize that the information about volunteering has been confused and at time inaccurate, for our part we are logging everyone who calls and will forward any solid information as we get it. As our response duties and needs become clearer, we will of course contact you with those needs.
Our biggest need at this time is for people who are willing to answer the phone at the refuge. You will respond to callers' frequently asked questions and add names to the volunteer list. Remember, every effort is important and valuable. Please contact Susan at 650-1880 if you are able to come in to answer the phone.

Now more than ever, the ECWR also needs the assistance of our trained volunteers in day-to-day operations. Please check your calendars and give Susan a call if you have some extra time to lend a hand.

Thank you all for your patience and support, I have been in personal contact with a friend that has worked spills all over the world, and she thinks this may be the one of the worst ever...so we will need you.

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Patrick Gault
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ECWR