

Abstract

Strategic Decision Making During an Oiled Wildlife Response

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During the first hours of an oiled wildlife event, as well as throughout the life of the response, there are decisions to be made that may well determine the outcome of the response in many ways such as how many animals are able to be rehabilitated, how much the wildlife operation will cost, how many people obtained hands-on experience and what lessons were learned, as well as many other outcomes. When faced with the chaos of an unfolding, large-scale wildlife response, the success or failure of a response may be determined by a few critical decisions so it is most successful to have plans in place that allow responders a framework within which to work that will alleviate the need for some of the largest decisions such as where to locate a wildlife center, who will manage the actual care of the animals, how many animals can be treated, are there proven protocols agreed upon for use during a large-scale event that incorporate heard health strategies and who will provide the personnel. This paper will explore the critical decisions that can be made in the early phase of responding to an oiled wildlife event and how those decisions will affect the outcome of the response, including strategic decision making to adapt to the event at hand and the reality of the situation on the ground.