

## **Abstract**

### **Potential Place of Refuge (PPOR) Sites in the San Francisco Bay Area**

Kathleen Jennings<sup>1</sup>, Jordan Stout<sup>2</sup>, Yvonne N. Addassi<sup>1</sup>, Carl Jochums<sup>3</sup>, Christina Jones<sup>4</sup>, and Linda Scourtis<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>California Department of Fish and Game, Office of Spill Prevention and Response, 425G Executive Court North, Fairfield, CA 94534; <sup>2</sup>NOAA Emergency Response Division, Coast Guard Island, Bldg 50-7, Alameda, CA 94501-5000; <sup>3</sup>California Department of Fish and Game, Office of Spill Prevention and Response, 1700 K Street, Suite 250, Sacramento, CA 95814; <sup>4</sup>U.S.C.G Station San Francisco, Yerba Buena Island, San Francisco, CA 94130; <sup>5</sup>San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), 50 California Street, Suite 2600, San Francisco, CA 94111

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Response to marine oil spills requires decision-makers to evaluate the environmental injuries associated with the event and the consequences resulting from decisions made in response to the event. This is especially true in addressing the potential for large oil releases from disabled vessels, as evidence in the 2002 Prestige oil spill off the coast of Galicia. As three sovereign jurisdictions refused to allow the disabled vessel to make port, the integrity of the single hulled oil tanker deteriorated quickly and a storm caused the vessel to split in half, releasing over 20 million gallons of oil and affecting tens of thousands of seabirds. In response to this event, the State of California and the United States Coast Guard initiated development of a decision-making process for the approval of potential places of refuge (PPOR) for disabled vessels. Furthermore, workgroups were established for the San Francisco Bay and Delta (SFBD) Area of Responsibility (AOR) to provide a PPOR decision-making process and a framework for developing pre-incident information on PPOR sites for inclusion in Area Contingency Plans (ACPs). During 2007, 94 PPOR sites were identified within SFBD and included in the California Statewide PPOR Database. A subcommittee including pilots, natural resource agencies, and port authorities chose these 94 sites. These participants were later involved with providing physical, navigational, human health and safety, and economic information for 22 designated deep draft PPOR sites for the SFBD AOR. Additionally, a natural resource workgroup branched off from this PPOR subcommittee to address natural resource concerns for these 22 sites, ensuring validation of information with natural resource trustees within the SFBD AOR.