

## Interspill Abstract – Wildlife Management

### Building a Solid Foundation: Understanding Oiled Wildlife Response for Better Planning

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In the past 20 years, there has been increasing international awareness of the individual and population-level impacts of oil on wildlife. Industry has acknowledged this critical element of spill efforts through the inclusion of oiled wildlife response (OWR) in the Tiered Preparedness and Response wheel and investment in OWR in JIP 2020 projects. These efforts have shown that successful OWR endeavours require local, regional, national, and international preparedness, similar to other response-related elements. Knowledge of the critical elements of OWR, including efforts directed at primary (“keeping oil away from animals”), secondary (“keeping animals away from oil”), and tertiary (“active recovery and rehabilitation”) techniques, is crucial to build and implement a comprehensive oil spill plan. Planning, training, and exercising are critical elements in complete preparedness to ensure an efficient and effective oiled wildlife response.

The Global Oiled Wildlife Response Service (GOWRS) is an international collaboration of 10 wildlife ecology, oiled wildlife and disaster response, and animal welfare organisations. GOWRS has developed the infrastructure for a global Tier 3 system for oiled wildlife cooperation, preparedness, and response, and has developed a service available to the industry to provide assessment and exercise services via OSRL. However, there are many elements intrinsic to delivery of this service that may not be visible to industry, nor is the integration of these services into Tier 1 and 2 capabilities and readiness.

This paper will illustrate the phases of oiled wildlife response, beginning with a wildlife assessment, which leads to better and more complete planning at regional, industry, national, and international levels. The paper will then emphasise international best practices for oiled wildlife preparedness actions (including assessment practices), personnel training, and the integration of oiled wildlife response into industry and national responses, planning and exercises.