

## **General In-Water Activities**

NOAA Fisheries recommends the following:

1. All workers associated with this project should be fully briefed on these recommendations and adhere to them for the duration of their involvement in this project to the maximum extent practicable.
2. Constant vigilance by an observer should be kept for the presence of any Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed marine species during all aspects of the proposed activities.
3. If practicable, all work should be postponed or halted when ESA-listed marine species are within 50 meters of the proposed work, and should only begin/resume after the animals have voluntarily departed the area.
4. When piloting vessels, vessel operators should alter course to remain at least 50 meters from marine mammals and sea turtles.
5. Reduce vessel speed to 10 knots or less when piloting vessels at or within the ranges described above from marine mammals and sea turtles. Operators should be particularly vigilant in watching for turtles at or near the surface, and if practicable, reduce vessel speed to 5 knots or less.
6. Marine mammals, sea turtles, and other ESA-listed motile species should not be encircled or trapped between multiple vessels or between vessels and the shore unless impracticable or contrary to the mission.
7. Do not attempt to intentionally interact with any ESA-listed marine species.
8. The project manager and heavy equipment operators should perform daily pre-work equipment inspections for cleanliness and leaks. All heavy equipment operations shall be postponed or halted should a leak be detected, and should not proceed until the leak is repaired and equipment cleaned.
9. Prepare a plan for how the transfer of fuel products is expected to occur and what contingencies will be taken in the event that a spill occurs or in the event of leaking or debris loss during the retrieval, and what steps will be taken for fuel recovery.
10. Ensure any equipment is secure during deployment and retrieval, and that ESA-listed animals do not become trapped or entangled.
11. Keep lines as taut as practicable, and deployed only as long as needed to properly accomplish the required task.
12. Use observers if available and practicable to ensure no presence of ESA-listed species in and around large debris pieces before recovery.

13. If environmental and other factors require operations to continue while an animal is present at the vessel, monitor and report behavioral responses from the animal(s) from the helicopter/response personnel.
14. Report any hazing or harassment to encourage ESA-listed animals to leave the area. We recommend you coordinate with the Pacific Island Regional Office's Acting Regional Administrator ([sarah.malloy@noaa.gov](mailto:sarah.malloy@noaa.gov)) and Acting Chief of Operations Management & Information ([anthony.imberi@noaa.gov](mailto:anthony.imberi@noaa.gov)) in the event this option is considered.
15. If an observer determines an ESA-listed animal has been disturbed, harassed, harmed, injured, or killed, report to NOAA Fisheries within one business day to [sarah.malloy@noaa.gov](mailto:sarah.malloy@noaa.gov) and [anthony.imberi@noaa.gov](mailto:anthony.imberi@noaa.gov), or to the stranding hotline at 1-888-256-9840.