



## **Environmental Sensitivity Index Guidelines Version 3.0**

Hazardous Materials Response Division  
Office of Response and Restoration  
NOAA Ocean Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



Seattle, Washington

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NOAA is responsible for protecting and restoring marine and coastal environments impacted by spills and hazardous substance releases. The Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) is the focal point for NOAA's spill preparedness, emergency response, and restoration programs. OR&R's Hazardous Materials Response Division and its contingent of on-scene Scientific Support Coordinators have earned a wide reputation for delivering scientifically valid solutions to the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (the U.S. Coast Guard in the coastal zone, or EPA in inland areas).

OR&R's Coastal Protection and Restoration Division and Damage Assessment Center are critical components of NOAA's natural resource trusteeship responsibilities. The CPR Division works closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to redress the environmental effects of hazardous waste sites across the United States. Coastal Resource Coordinators provide site-specific technical expertise in ecological risk assessment and coastal remediation issues. This expertise ranges from physical science to ecology, marine biology, and oceanography. In their NOAA trusteeship role, CRCs assess the longer-term risks to coastal resources (including threatened and endangered species) from Superfund-site contamination, support decision-making for site remedies and habitat restoration, and negotiate protective remedies with the responsible parties to ensure that cleanup, restoration, and recovery are appropriate and fully monitored.

While the HAZMAT and CPR divisions work to prevent and minimize injury to natural resources during spill response and waste site remediation activities, the Damage Assessment Center focuses on addressing the injury that remains after the cleanup or response. DAC's Rapid Assessment Program goes on-scene at oil or hazardous materials releases to assess damages to NOAA trust resources, including National Marine Sanctuaries and National Estuarine Research Reserves. DAC works with other trustees and NOAA's Office of General Counsel in pursuing compensation from responsible parties to restore injured resources. The compensation DAC receives is designed to benefit the natural resources injured by the release.

The Regional Programs section actively engages local and regional communities in integrating sound coastal resource management, oil spill prevention and response, and safe and efficient marine transportation. Administered collaboratively with the NOS Coastal Services Center, Regional Projects serves as liaison between NOS scientific and technical expertise and the needs of the maritime industry, port authorities, coastal resource managers, and other NOAA clients in the coastal zone. Regional Programs matches specific coastal-zone conditions and needs with tailored services, tools, and products from across NOS, including physical oceanographic real-time systems, electronic chart systems, coastal geographic information systems frameworks, photogrammetry, and digital hydrographic surveys.

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## NOTICE

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This report has been reviewed by the NOAA Ocean Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and approved for publication. Such approval does not signify that the contents of this report necessarily represent the official position of NOAA or of the Government of the United States, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for their use.

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