

Rehabilitation of Wildlife Oiled in Freshwater Spills.

Eileen Gilbert, Tri -State Bird Rescue and Research, Inc.

Tri-State Bird Rescue was founded in 1976 after a series of devastating oil spills on the Delaware River. Lynne Frink, late founder of Tri-State, formed multidisciplinary teams to address the problems of oiled birds: teams included organic chemists, biologists, federal and state wildlife trustee personnel, NOAA, USCG, EPA, etc. veterinarians and industry personnel. This approach led Tri-State to a very broad perspective attack on the problems facing oiled wildlife. In 1982, Tri-State opened a full time clinic to care for non-oiled orphaned and injured wild birds. The annual caseload for the clinic is around 3500 birds a year.

Tri-State Bird Rescue and Research has handled a variety of oil spills and contaminated animals in its twenty-three year history. This presentation will cover the challenges of a fresh water oil spill involving wildlife. The complexities of general oiled wildlife response will be discussed, including an overview of the internal and external effects of oil on wildlife and how oiled wildlife rehabilitation fits into the response structure in the United States.

Eileen Gilbert is the Senior Coordinator for Oil Spill Response and Training at Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research, Inc., Newark, Delaware. She is responsible for preparing federal and state oil spill contingency plans, pre-spill oil industry agreements, and coordinates oil spill response training. During emergency oil spill response, she heads the Logistics team , and is a member of the Medical team. She has been on the Oil Spill Response Team since joining Tri-State in 1989.