

**Guidance for Post Storm Demolition and Debris Cleanup and Removal Activities in Areas
with Federally Protected Coastal Species (Beach Mice, Nesting Sea Turtles, Wintering
Piping Plover, and other shorebirds)**

**U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Effective May 2014**

These guidelines are intended to facilitate structure demolition and debris clean-up and removal adjacent to or within beach and dune habitats (primary, secondary, and scrub dunes) post-Hurricanes. They do not apply to the new construction or expansion of developments or structures. New/expansion construction should be coordinated with both the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

Where development existed pre-storm

- From May 1 and October 31, during the sea turtle nesting season no work is authorized on the beach unless authorization is provided. The Service will work closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide needed authorizations.
- From March through August, coordination concerning protection of shorebird nesting areas is needed with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Contact – Regional Biologist, FWC, Panama City, Florida (850) 265-3676.
- Rope off dune habitat on site and protect from impacts.
- All demolition, clean-up, and debris removal should occur within or as close as possible to the footprint of the original facilities. Use equipment with grapples located on existing hard top or impacted sites to remove debris within habitat.
- Locate debris collection/pick up sites off the beach and outside of dune habitat and public lands.
- Locate staging/storage areas for clean-up equipment and debris outside of dune habitat and public lands.
- Designate and locate parking areas for clean-up crews off the beach and outside of dune habitat and public lands.
- No on-site burial of debris on the beach, dunes and public lands. Debris should be quickly moved to the roadway or designated collection sites for pick up.

If uncertain about the need for habitat protection, individual site consultations are available. Contact: Patty Kelly, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (850) 769-0552 x228 or Kristi Yanchis x252; and the Regional Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at (850) 265-3676. Persons overseeing or conducting the clean up are responsible for obtaining required Federal and State authorization if a “take” will occur.

Undeveloped Areas

- From May 1 and October 31, during the sea turtle nesting season no work is authorized on the beach unless authorization is provided. The Service will work closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide needed authorizations.
- From March through August, coordination concerning protection of shorebird nesting areas is needed with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Contact – Regional Biologist, FWC, Panama City, Florida (850) 265-3676.
- Designate and rope off ingress and egress corridors where clean-up traffic and debris collection would minimally impact beach or dune habitat. Consider creating one-way traffic corridors to reduce the need for equipment turn around.
- Conduct demolition and debris removal within dune habitats as much as possible by hand. Chainsaw, pick up, and carry the debris to place into piles rather than using traditional methods of land clearing and pushing debris into piles.
- Use the minimal size and amount of equipment to maneuver in dune habitats (i.e., tracked bobcats with grapples and clamps). Minimize impact footprint of equipment by working from one location with a grappling device. Where possible work equipment from existing hard top or impacted sites to remove debris within habitat.
- Locate debris collection/pick up sites off the beach and outside of dune habitat and public lands
- Locate staging/storage areas for clean-up equipment and debris outside of dune habitat and public lands.
- Designate and locate parking areas for clean-up crews off the beach and outside of dune habitat and public lands.
- No on-site burial of debris on the beach, dunes and public lands. Debris should be quickly moved to the roadway or designated collection sites for pick up.

Where habitat impact is unavoidable, restoration should be completed as soon as possible following clean up activities using native dune vegetation.

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