

Guidance for Post Hurricane Property Stabilization and Reconstruction of Damaged/Destroyed Structures In Areas with Endangered Beach Mice & Other Imperiled Species

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Effective July 2005

These guidelines are intended to facilitate emergency structure and clean-up after hurricane and other catastrophic storm events. They do not apply to the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing structures.

Demolition and reconstruction of damaged/destroyed structures should not result in “take” of beach mice or other protected species if these activities (1) take place within the confines of the pre-storm structure, (2) are completed before dune habitat reclaims the pre-storm structure site, and (3) will not negatively impact dune habitat.

Persons desiring to build new structures, reconstruct damaged/destroyed structures that will include impacting areas outside the confines of the pre-storm structure, or in situations other than those described above should contact the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to determine if Section 10 Incidental Take permits would be necessary.

Emergency Cleanup, Debris Removal, and Property Stabilization Activities

- No debris should be buried in place, but should be removed from beaches and dune areas.
- Equipment access to beaches should be limited to pre-hurricane designated beach access points. All measures should be taken to avoid impacts to dune habitats. Avoid driving or operating heavy equipment in dune habitat. Any necessary use of pre-existing pathways or heavily degraded areas for access should be clearly marked. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) or Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) should be contacted immediately if there are questions regarding identification of appropriate beach access points.
- Staging/storage areas should be identified for cleanup and debris removal activities and should be located outside of existing/remaining beach mouse habitat or public park properties. The FWS or FWC should be contacted immediately if there are questions regarding identification of appropriate parking areas.

- No fill material (i.e., sand) should be deposited on or removed from existing/remaining beach mouse habitat. Fill material must be free of debris, rocks, clay, or other foreign matter and should be similar in color and grain size to pre-storm beach sand.
- No sand should be bulldozed, dredged, or removed from seaward of the mean high water line or Coastal Construction Control Line without authorization.

Reconstruction of Damaged/Destroyed Structures within Pre-storm Structure Footprint Activities

The following guidelines are in addition to those listed above for Emergency Clean-up, Debris Removal, and Property Stabilization. Both sets of guidelines apply to Reconstruction Activities.

- Keep reconstruction footprints (i.e., building parking, ancillary structures and other amenities) to pre-hurricane footprints.
- Use silt fencing to designate construction areas and keep all equipment and activities inside these areas.
- All trash should be disposed of properly in covered trash receptacles.
- Maintain all non-developed areas within the development in their natural condition. Landscape using only native dune vegetation; turf grass and/or sod should not be used.
- For area impacted by construction, restore all habitats to their natural configuration and vegetation.
- Install “sea turtle friendly” lighting, glass, and window fixtures that reduce the direct and ambient lighting of dune habitats within and adjacent to the proposed site.
- Beach access over dunes should be limited to as few access points as possible and should consist of boardwalks, which should be built with top down construction where possible.

Contact Information

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Jon Hemming (850) 769-0552
 FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) – John Himes (850) 265-3676