

## THE GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGY SITE SELECTION PROCESS

The Geographic Response Strategy (GRS) site selection process begins by identifying candidate sites. At a minimum, this involves consultation with: residents of nearby communities, natural resource managers, oil spill response professionals, industry representatives, and regional citizens' advisory council member, where appropriate. Candidate sites are identified based on three major criteria:

- environmental sensitivity;
- risk of being impacted from waterborne spills; and
- feasibility of successfully protecting the site with existing technology.



Potential GRS locations are placed into a Site Selection Matrix and ranked based on the following criteria, which are described in the applicable subarea plan:

1. Proximity to threatened or Endangered Species/Habitats
2. Subsistence Harvest Areas
3. Marshes
4. Eel grass beds
5. Sheltered Tidal Flats
6. Sheltered Rocky Shores
7. Seal Haulouts
8. Sea Lion Rookeries and Haulouts
9. Walrus Rookeries and Haulouts
10. Large Seabird Colonies
11. Waterfowl and Shorebird Spring, Fall, or Winter Concentration Areas
12. Large Anadromous Fish Streams
13. Intertidal Salmon Spawning Areas
14. Herring Spawning Areas
15. Federal Wilderness Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Natural Landmarks
16. State Refuges, Sanctuaries, and Critical Habitat Areas
17. Cultural Resources/Archaeological Sites
18. Intertidal Sites
19. High Use Commercial Fishing Areas
20. High Use Recreational Areas



When funding becomes available after site selection ranking is complete, a tactics and operations group is formed to develop protective strategies for each site. After draft strategies are developed, they are loaded onto the appropriate GRS subarea webpage (<http://dec.alaska.gov/spar/ppr/grs/home.htm>) and made available for public review. Feedback is always welcome and is actively sought during the appropriate subarea contingency plan's next update cycle. After undergoing review and modification, as necessary, the strategies are considered final.

Public involvement is essential to ensure sites and strategies reflect the environmental protection priorities of local communities, stakeholders, and resource users, who are encouraged to participate in the selection and development process. If you have questions, comments, or want to get involved, please contact us at [dec.spar.grs@alaska.gov](mailto:dec.spar.grs@alaska.gov).

You can learn more about GRS by reading our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).