

**SOUTHEAST
SUBAREA CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGIES
SECTION**

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Go online to see the SE GRS at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/se/home.htm>

GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGIES: PART ONE – INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

These Geographic Response Strategies (GRS) are designed to be an actual field supplement to the Southeast Subarea Contingency Plan for Oil and Hazardous Substances Spills and Releases, commonly referred to as the Southeast Subarea Contingency Plan (SCP). The GRS provide unified (public, responders, and agencies) priorities and response tactics for the protection of selected sensitive areas for assisting first responders to an oil spill. The GRS list the sensitive resources of an area and the response strategies, equipment, personnel and logistical information necessary to protect the identified sensitive areas. Because the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard already have approved the GRS, they can serve as pre-approved strategies for the Unified Command during the emergency phase of an oil spill response.

Implementation of these Geographic Response Strategies is the third phase of an oil spill response. The first and primary phase of the response is to contain and remove the oil at the scene of the spill or while it is still on the open water, thereby reducing or eliminating impact on shorelines or sensitive habitats. If some of the spilled oil escapes this tactic, the second phase, which is no less important, is to intercept, contain and remove the oil in the nearshore area. The intent of phase two is the same as phase one: remove the spilled oil before it affects sensitive environments. If phases one and two are not fully successful, phase three is to protect sensitive areas in the path of the oil. Phase three efforts endeavor to protect the selected sensitive areas from the impacts of a spill or to minimize that impact to the maximum extent practical.

The sites selected for development of Geographic Response Strategies are not meant to be exclusive; other sensitive sites may require protection during any given oil spill. The fact that a GRS may not have been developed for a certain sensitive site does not mean that site should not be protected if it is threatened by an oil spill. Sensitive areas include not only locations of environmental concern, but those of cultural or human use value, as well.

These GRS are intended to be flexible to allow spill responders to modify them, as necessary, to fit the prevailing conditions at the time of a spill. Seasonal constraints, such as ice or weather, may preclude implementation of some of the strategies. It is not intended that all the sites be automatically protected at the beginning of a spill, only those that are in the projected path of the spill. The strategies developed for the selected sites were completed with a focus on minimizing environmental damage, utilizing as small a footprint as needed to support the response operations, and selecting sites for equipment deployment that will not cause more damage than the spilled oil.

To test these GRS, each site may be visited and equipment deployed according to the strategy, to ensure that the specified tactics are effective in protecting the resources at risk at the site. Revisions will be made to the GRS that appear in this document, if changes are indicated by site visits, drills, or actual use during spill responses. In the future, strategies may be developed for additional sensitive areas.

B. HOW THE GRS WERE DEVELOPED

These GRS were developed through a cooperative, workgroup process involving federal, state, and local spill response experts working with representatives from the oil production and transportation industry, citizens' groups, and natural resource agencies, as well as multiple local stakeholders (see below for a list of invited participants). The Subarea Committee chose to divide the Southeast Subarea into nine geographic response zones (divisions developed by SEAPRO) in order to better facilitate the organization and development of the GRS (see figure G-1).

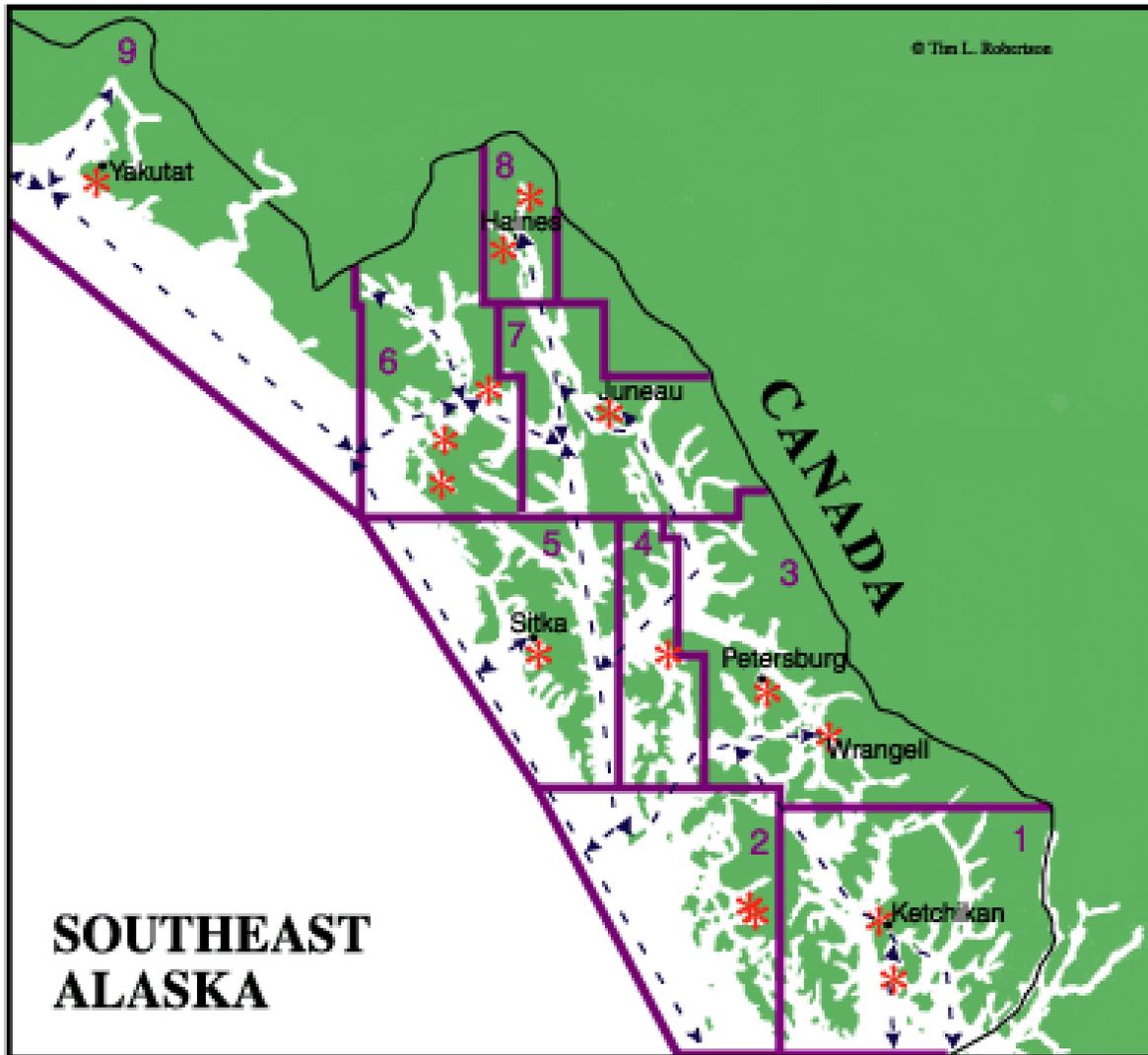
Workgroup participants identified all sensitive areas with potential to be classified as “Areas of Major Concern” under the criteria established in the Southeast SCP. These potential sites were evaluated by the additional criteria of 1) the risk of being impacted from a water-borne spill; and 2) the feasibility of successfully protecting the site with existing technology. Using this process, the workgroup selected a preliminary list of sites that was released for public input. Feedback on the site selection was solicited from local inhabitants (if applicable), tribal representatives, user groups, environmental organizations, and the general public. Based on the feedback received, the workgroup made the final site selections for each zone within the subarea. Additional sites may be selected in the future.

A Southeast Tactics Committee, composed of spill response professionals and personnel from natural resource agencies, formed to develop draft strategies for each selected site. The entire workgroup reviewed each draft strategy and then gave approval to the final draft, before it was then forwarded to the Southeast Subarea Committee with the recommendation that it be adopted as part of the Southeast SCP.

The introduction section () lists each zone’s workgroup members. The following agencies and groups usually provided representation to the workgroup:

- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC)
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)
- Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR)
- Alaska Office of the Governor, Division of Governmental Coordination, Alaska Coastal Management Program (DGC/ACMP)
- Southeast Alaska Petroleum Resource Organization (SEAPRO)
- United States Department of Commerce
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- United States Department of Interior (DOI)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&W)
- United States Coast Guard (USCG)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes (CCTHITA)

Figure G-1: Southeast Subarea Geographic Response Zones



C. HOW TO USE GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGIES

The GRS are an important addition to the Southeast SCP. The GRS are intended for use by response professionals already familiar with spill response techniques. Each GRS contains basic protection and recovery strategies, with directions for implementation in the field. Each description contains the response objective, deployment depictions, equipment and personnel required to implement the strategy, and deployment limitations and considerations. These general strategies may be adapted to produce a protection scheme for almost any non-selected site in the Southeast Subarea. The specified response tactics are taken from the State of Alaska’s oil spill response tactics guide, *Spill Tactics for Alaska Responders* (STAR Manual). Responders should refer to the STAR Manual for more detailed information about the tactics identified in the GRS. The STAR manual, published by ADEC, is available online at: <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/star/docs.htm>.

These site-specific response strategies appear in Part Two of the Geographic Response Strategies Section. An index at the beginning of each subsection shows the location of the GRS-selected sites. Each GRS consists of two parts: 1) a graphic page showing a map, deployment diagram, picture and implementation notes; and 2) a matrix giving the location description, response strategy, response resources, staging area, site access, natural resources being protected, and any special considerations.

D. WHO TO CONTACT FOR INPUT

Comments and recommendations on these GRS are welcomed. Please send your comments to either of the following agencies:

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Prevention and Emergency Response Program
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

United States Coast Guard
Captain of the Port, Sector Juneau
709 West 9th Street, 223B
Juneau, AK 99801

GEOGRAPHIC RESPONSE STRATEGIES:

PART TWO – INDEX MAPS & SITE DOCUMENTS

Please go online to the Southeast Subarea GRS homepage:

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/grs/ci/home.htm>

for viewing the GRS developed for the nine zones.

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