



Accuracy, Integrity, Service

Sea Turtle & Protected Species Observers

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Clean-up

Clients:

National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD
Tel: 301-713-2328

BP Exploration & Production Inc.
501 West Lake Park Boulevard
Houston, TX 77079
Tel: 281-366-8156

Performance Period:

July 2010 to April 2011

Key Services Provided:

- Marine species surveys
- Burn monitoring
- Developed training curriculum
- Data collection and dissemination
- Worker Training Program



A.I.S., Inc. (AIS) was contracted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for several projects as a result of the BP Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

In this project, observers were responsible for monitoring areas within a containment boom being towed by two vessels that were collecting oil to burn. During the project, the observers were based on work platforms or vessels. They coordinated with team leads and deployed on igniter boats in front of the vessels towing the boom to look for turtles that might be in the path. Oil collected within the boom was monitored for any trapped turtles. The area outside the boom was also inspected.

Once the area was cleared the oil was ignited by the ignition team. Observers were responsible for documenting the in-situ burn and monitoring effort. Deployments lasted from two days to several weeks at a time. All data were edited during a debriefing conducted by the Project Manager and then delivered to NMFS along with any digital images and chain of custody forms.

Due to the nature of this project, rapid response was imperative. Under the guidance of NMFS, AIS developed a curriculum and administered training, which consisted of an introduction to the skimming and in-situ burn operations, marine species identification, sea turtle and sea bird handling, and instruction on how to monitor and fill out the data forms. AIS worked with NMFS to procure the necessary equipment, develop data forms, provide logistical support and coordinate the deployment of several observers from July 2010 to April 2011. Throughout the response AIS provided consultation to NMFS and the Incident Command on best management practices for successful monitoring of the various technologies used in the clean-up and assisted in identifying the technologies with the highest potential for negatively impacting sensitive marine species.

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