

Mendy Garron, MA, MS

Marine Mammal Emergency Response Coordinator, Protected Resources
Division, NOAA

COMPETITIVE DIVISION – ACADEMIC

Assessing Views and Capabilities of Emergency Responders toward Preparedness for Wildlife Response and Conservation Initiatives during Disasters

Many wildlife species are vulnerable to impacts from hundreds of natural and anthropogenic disasters that occur globally on an annual basis. Response to wildlife during a disaster can vary worldwide from local levels to international responses. Furthermore, emergency response infrastructure varies across geographic regions, and priorities specific to wildlife responses and conservation monitoring are even more variable within and across infrastructures.

The views of emergency response practitioners toward preparedness for wildlife response during disasters are likely to influence how conservation challenges are addressed during disaster responses. This exploratory study examined the views and capabilities of emergency response practitioners toward preparedness for wildlife response and conservation initiatives during disasters.

A structured survey method was used to survey members of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and employees

of state and federal emergency management agencies. The Animal and Human Solidarity Measure (Amiot and Bastian, 2017), the Wildlife Value Orientation Scale (Fulton, Manfredi, and Lipscomb, 1996), and additional Likert-scale survey questions were used to assess wildlife views, along with a collection of relevant demographic data. Quantitative data analysis was performed to explore relationships between wildlife priorities and emergency response decision-making. The results of this study can impact contingency planning and conservation programs by integrating identified wildlife views and resource needs into planning efforts by emergency response entities.

The need for this type of data is increasing to mitigate climate change impacts to wildlife and biodiversity, and results can benefit global emergency response professionals as well as wildlife research and conservation communities.

Presentation Theme: Graduate level research

Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research: Christy Hoffman, PhD; Interim Program Director, Anthrozoology; Associate Professor; Animal Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation; Canisius College, Buffalo, NY

Institutional Review Board Proof of Regulatory Committee Approval:
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