Guidelines for Collecting Ephemeral Data in the Arctic: GRAVEL BEACH INTERTIDAL COMMUNITIES

September 2014

Note: These guidelines are limited data collection aides that do not necessarily consider all possible scenarios under which samples may be collected. Use best professional judgment to modify these guidelines according to area-specific field conditions.

Guidelines Objectives

The primary objective of this document is to provide guidelines on collecting samples from gravel beaches during the early stages of an oil spill in the Arctic to support Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) exposure and injury evaluations. Most beaches in this category are composed of mixed sand and gravel along the outer shore, with the gravel component mostly pebbles and cobbles in size. Intertidal gravel beach habitats in the high Arctic generally do not support resident faunal organisms because they are subject to high wave energy, freezing temperatures and ice scour. Gravel beaches south of the Bering Strait and gravel beaches composed of larger cobble may have associated communities of intertidal organisms. Methods for collecting oil and gravel sediments for chemical analysis are described in the Stranded Oil and Intertidal Sediment guidelines respectively.

Sampling Objectives

Characterize oil

- Determine the concentration and composition of oil compounds in gravel beach intertidal habitats compared to background concentrations
- Determine the source of contamination via chemical fingerprinting analysis and characterize oil weathering and fate
- Characterize other sources of oil or hydrocarbons in the environment

Describe habitat

- Estimate the areal extent and degree of oiling in gravel beach habitats
- Support oil environmental transport modeling by documenting where oil stranded onshore

Study exposure

- Document the presence/absence and species composition, and estimate the abundance or density of the gravel beach intertidal community
- Document the extent and duration of exposure to the spilled material
- Measure oil related compounds in biological tissues
- Support exposure modeling

Quality assurance/quality control

- Ensure the integrity of the sample(s) throughout sampling, transport, and storage
- Ensure the reliability of chemical and biological characterizations

Collaboration

- Support other assessment efforts (see Intertidal Sediment and Shellfish Tissue guidelines)

Before Field Sampling

- Assure that all personnel have required safety training and protective equipment for Arctic field work (not described in this guideline).
- Arctic weather conditions (e.g., wind direction and speed) are variable within a short timeframe. Be prepared for changing weather conditions, be aware of your surroundings, and take precautions to ensure the safety of the sampling team.

Study design

- It is important to have a defined sampling strategy prior to conducting fieldwork. Gravel beach intertidal communities are difficult to sample because of the inherent heterogeneity of oil distribution over space, depth, and time.
- The following terminology is used to define general to specific sampling geographies:
  - Area = general area of uniform characteristics, such as degree of oil exposure, physical setting, habitat types present, etc.
  - Location = a specific location that is representative of the area and contains the type of habitat to be sampled, such as an gravel beach or lagoon
  - Transect = a line through a site along which samples are collected or observations are made
  - Site = a specific point at which samples are collected or observations are made
- Plan ahead the number of locations and number of sites per location, taking into account level of effort, potential logistical limitations, weather conditions, and other issues that may compromise sample integrity.
- Consult ESI maps, state wildlife guides and other resources to determine what fauna may be present in the sampling area. Adjust the sampling strategy to target key species of interest, if present.
- Review the guideline and resolve any area-specific issues. Area-specific modification of the guideline may be needed based on environmental conditions, geography, access to remote areas, and shipping capabilities.
- Use a computer or conceptual model of the extent of gravel beach contamination or an appropriate power analysis to estimate the number of sampling locations and number of samples per location needed to respond to the sampling objectives.
- A stratified random sampling approach, which divides the sampling location into non-overlapping zones (strata) from which random samples are collected, is recommended if no other sampling strategy has been developed. This type of sampling improves the representative quality of samples by reducing sampling error (variability).
- Contact the laboratories that will be receiving field samples for analysis and assure that they have the capacity to receive and analyze samples from the study. Follow relevant guidelines from the laboratory and consult with them about necessary modifications.
- Shoreline visualization tools (e.g., ESI maps, satellite images, ShoreZone) should be used to develop a sampling strategy and estimate distances, number of sampling transects, transect spacing, sampling zone width, etc. before going into the field.
- The sampling strategy should have flexibility to be adjusted based on conditions in the field.
- Consult appropriate guidelines for the collection of other environmental media and biota concurrent with gravel beach infauna sampling. Tarballs, sheens, or other oil residues can be collected opportunistically for chemical analysis and fingerprinting.

Equipment

- Review the list of sampling equipment/containers, make adjustments as needed, and assure that all essential field materials are ready to be taken to the field.
- If not all sampling equipment is available, consult the alternative equipment guidelines or determine if other appropriate options are available.

- Consider area-specific conditions for remote Arctic regions and make adjustments in methodology and equipment as necessary.
- It may be necessary to coordinate with the laboratory that will receive the samples to assure that acceptable materials and conditions are used for sampling and sample storage and shipping.
- Do as much material preparation prior to field deployment, including: labeling sample jars using permanent markers or laboratory labels (e.g., peel and stick waterproof labels); solvent rinsing of jars and aluminum foil for sample storage, etc.
- Make sure that all essential equipment is in working order and operational under Arctic field conditions, and that spare equipment and/materials are available.
- Store solvents carefully to prevent spillage. Follow regulations regarding the shipment and storage of chemicals.

Sampling Areas and Timing

- Follow a sampling plan/work plan if one is available.
- If a sampling plan is not available for ephemeral data collection immediately after a spill, data collection should focus on collecting samples from a range of unoiled, likely to be oiled, and already oiled areas.
- It is important to obtain reliable data that account for spatial and temporal variations of oil impacts.
- When sampling in remote areas with limited shipping capabilities, plan ahead to make sure that the integrity of samples is not compromised by ensuring that the processing laboratory receives the samples within their recommended holding time. Remember that it may take multiple days for shipments from remote areas to reach a laboratory facility. This last stage is the most important and requires due diligence until the samples are safely delivered.
- The number of locations and number of sites per location need to be considered accordingly, making sure that there is enough space in the coolers to accommodate all samples without sacrificing their integrity.
- Plan all sampling strategies within daylight hours; sampling in the dark, even with headlamps, is not recommended. This guideline may not apply during winter or much of the fall.
- The challenges of collecting samples in remote areas, particularly during winter, are great and require adequate planning and careful field implementation to attain the data quality required to meet the objectives of the sampling plan.

Area selection

- Sampling locations should be representative of areas that have been or may be oiled and unoiled reference areas.
- Use trajectory models, conceptual models, overflight information, SCAT data, or other tools to determine what locations have been oiled and which ones are likely to be oiled.
- Samples should also be collected from locations known or suspected to be impacted by other natural or anthropogenic sources of contamination (e.g., oil seeps, coal, peat, mining, combustion engines), as these will be important to differentiate background sources and levels of contamination.
- It may be necessary to prioritize sampling locations. In this case, highest priority samples are to be collected from oiled gravel beaches that are sensitive habitats, biologically productive, or highly relevant for human use. Collecting pre-oiling samples from sensitive/productive areas that are likely to be oiled by the spill in the near future is also a priority. Sampling at unoiled “control” areas and sampling other sources of contamination should be prioritized based on the ephemerality of the data and relative importance to developing a NRDA case.
- Gravel beach intertidal community samples should be collected pre-oiling, if possible, as soon as possible after oiling and periodically thereafter. Sampling frequency is a function of oil persistence,

biological community, habitat importance, and resource availability and should be defined in the study design.

- The number of locations and number of sites per location should be defined in the study design. A minimum guideline for sampling gravel beach intertidal communities is at least three samples per tidal zone per location of relatively uniform oiling exposure. If logistical limitations are a concern, prioritize sample collection by selecting a minimum of one reference/pre-oiling location and two heavily oiled locations.
- Sample along exposure gradients, starting in the cleanest zone, at regular intervals proportional to the exposure area.
- Oiled locations should be selected to represent different degrees of oiling (Heavy, Moderate, Light) that have similar degrees of exposure to wave energy because in gravel beaches oil persistence and the intertidal communities can vary widely in exposed versus sheltered settings. When choosing locations, consider that oiling may not be visible, especially on beaches with larger gravel or cobble.

Collaboration

- Gravel beach intertidal community samples can be collected in conjunction with intertidal and subtidal sediment sampling, nearshore water sampling, and stranded oil sampling.
- Close collaboration and coordination with other ongoing ephemeral sampling efforts are important.

Field Sampling Methods

Sampling Equipment/Containers

Note: The amount of equipment required depends on the sampling plan, desired sample volumes, and logistics. Analytical laboratories may provide required sampling and sample storage and transport materials – contact the receiving lab before preparing to collect samples in the field.

- Coolers – for sample storage and transport
- Ice packs/collapsible jugs − for storage temperature regulation (if ambient temperature exceeds 4°C)
- Thermometer or temperature logger (1 per cooler)
- Disposable nitrile gloves (preferred), insulated nitrile-coated gloves (less ideal)
- Insulated shoulder-length rubberized gloves preferred for infauna sampling under extreme cold conditions
- Plastic bags
- Surveying supplies – site markers (appropriate for substrate type), surveying flags and tape, quadrats (0.5 m^2 and 1.0 m^2), 30 m fiberglass tape measure marked in cm, hand counter
- Pencils, waterproof pens, waterproof labels, markers
- Large tub or bucket
- Pre-cleaned aluminum foil
- Sample bags/jars
- Shovel
- Hand coring device
- Sieve with 0.5 mm screen
- Tripod or quadrapod
- 10% buffered formalin (in seawater) (preferred), or in 95% ethanol (less ideal) – preservation; and a stain (such as Rose Bengal) if appropriate
- Field Sample forms (template in Appendix A)
- Chain of Custody forms (see Chain of Custody guideline)
- Evidence tape (see Chain of Custody guidelines)
- GPS, camera (with spare batteries), and photo scales
- Shoreline terminology code list and shoreline assessment survey guidelines (see Stranded Oil guideline)

- Field sample forms (gravel beach fauna identification field guides/charts), field notebook (waterproof paper), shoreline oil terminology code list, other guidelines as needed (Field Photography, Subtidal and Intertidal Sediment guidelines)
- Packaging materials for glass jars (e.g., bubble wrap, sorbent pads, tape) – may be provided by the analytic laboratory
- Suitable disposal bags for oiled PPE and disposable sampling materials

Good Sampling Practices and Decontamination

- Good field practices and the development of a consistent sampling routine will help provide for the integrity of the samples and their validity in environmental assessments.
- Disposable nitrile gloves should be worn when sampling and changed between each sample collected or as necessary to prevent cross contamination.
- Disposable nitrile gloves can be worn over low-profile insulated gloves (e.g., neoprene gloves) in cold conditions and should be changed between samples to prevent cross contamination if they become contaminated or damaged. If nitrile gloves are not available or will not fit over insulated gloves in cold conditions, insulated nitrile-coated gloves may be an alternative, but extra precautions will have to be taken to prevent sample contamination; gloves will need to be cleaned with soap and clean water between samples and should not come in contact with the sample or with the surfaces of glassware or tools that will be in direct contact with the sample. Similar precautions should be taken when using insulated shoulder-length rubberized gloves.
- To reduce the need for field decontamination, use pre-cleaned and/or disposable equipment and tools.
- The only equipment to be used between sites are a shovel and a hand corer, which should be cleaned with soap and clean water. Repeated digging in clean sediments can be a last resort for cleaning the shovel if soap or clean water are not available. Alternatively, use a clean dry towel or other dry material to clean the shovel before its next use. Additional cleaning may be required when working at oiled sites (see below).
- If disposable sampling equipment are not available, reusable sampling equipment MUST be decontaminated between samples:
  - Wash sampling utensil with laboratory-grade detergent and clean with a triple clean-water rinse. Cleaning with laboratory-grade water is preferred, though store-bought distilled water is a less ideal alternative and, as a last resort, “background” water from an up-current clean area can be used
  - Rinse with methanol or acetone, followed by hexane (Capillary GC Pesticide Residue Grade or equivalent). Collect solvent rinsate for proper disposal or shipment to the lab as a rinsate blank. Allow solvents to evaporate from equipment before use. Do not work with solvents downwind of exhaust or other airborne hydrocarbon source. If solvents are not available, use a diluted detergent solution and fresh water, followed by a distilled water rinse. If transporting solvents is not feasible, use single-use sampling material
- Take precautions to avoid cross-contamination of the site from oil on boots, shovels and other equipment. Sampling unoiled areas first, then lightly oiled areas and finally heavily oiled areas can minimize cross contamination. Personal equipment should be exchanged or cleaned between sites if it becomes contaminated.

Study Design Implementation

- If recent SCAT data are available, it may not be necessary to conduct and overflight or ground survey. Otherwise, if practical, conduct an overflight of the entire affected area within two hours of low tide (before or after) to locate gravel beaches and observe the extent of visible contamination. Note that weather, particularly fog, may dictate survey times that may not coincide with tides. Tides may not be a consideration along high Arctic shorelines where tidal range is small and water level is primarily wind driven.

- If an aerial survey is not feasible, survey from the ground. Use topographic maps, nautical charts, vertical aerial photographs, or other detailed maps to record observations. Set a GPS in track mode and take a photograph of the date/time screen so photographs can be geo-referenced later. Observations should include:
  - Locations and approximate lengths of gravel beaches in the oiled area
  - Approximate degree of oiling of these habitats (following standard SCAT terminology; see Stranded Oil guideline)
  - Locations of access points, major landmarks, and potential ground-truth and reference stations
- Consider the accessibility of the locations and methods of access (e.g., plane, helicopter, boat, foot, etc.), and take all necessary precautions to ensure that access can be achieved safety.
- At each selected sampling location, conduct a preliminary visual survey of the shoreline and draw a field sketch showing:
  - Shoreline orientation, gravel size, supratidal washovers, etc. (see photographs)
  - Extent and degree of shoreline oiling (use shoreline oil terminology codes and % cover charts)
  - Type or degree of shoreline cleanup, if already performed (particularly note sediment disturbance or removal, flushing of oil and/or sediments into down-slope areas, etc.)

- At each selected site, establish at least three transects at a minimum of 30 m spacing apart.
- If no other sampling strategy has been developed, use a stratified random sampling approach by randomly selecting the first transect starting point and expanding the sampling site (other transects) systematically into a grid from that initial point. Randomly select sampling sites within each intertidal zone intervals.

- When establishing ground transects:
  - Record transect location using a GPS, but also accurately plot the transect on a map or aerial photograph (if available)
  - Permanently mark transect locations using “front and back” stakes that line up along the transect lines, and consider stake placement carefully to minimize loss to vandalism, erosion, ice-scouring, etc. Label the stakes to clearly identify the site as a NRDA sampling location. Assure that stakes do not present a hazard to people traveling by ATV or snow machine. On high-energy gravel shorelines, it may only be feasible to place one stake in the supratidal zone
  - Record the transect angle with a compass so it can be re-surveyed at a later date, even if one stake is lost; note whether the angle reading is magnetic or corrected to true north
  - Take photographs of the transect at the beginning, middle and end, including upslope, downslope, and alongshore images. This takes little time and establishes a reference for future work
- If possible, run transects so that the lower intertidal area can be sampled within two hours of low tide (before or after). In the Chukchi and Beaufort seas the tide range is small (<30 cm); wind-driven storm surge is the most determinant factor in water height and should be considered for sampling. Tides are only a consideration south of the Bering Strait where the tidal range is greater than 1 m.

- Transects should be run perpendicular to the shoreline and encompassing the entire intertidal zone, including the supratidal zone (Figure 1). This is important because in the Arctic storms are likely to push oil into the suptratidal zone.

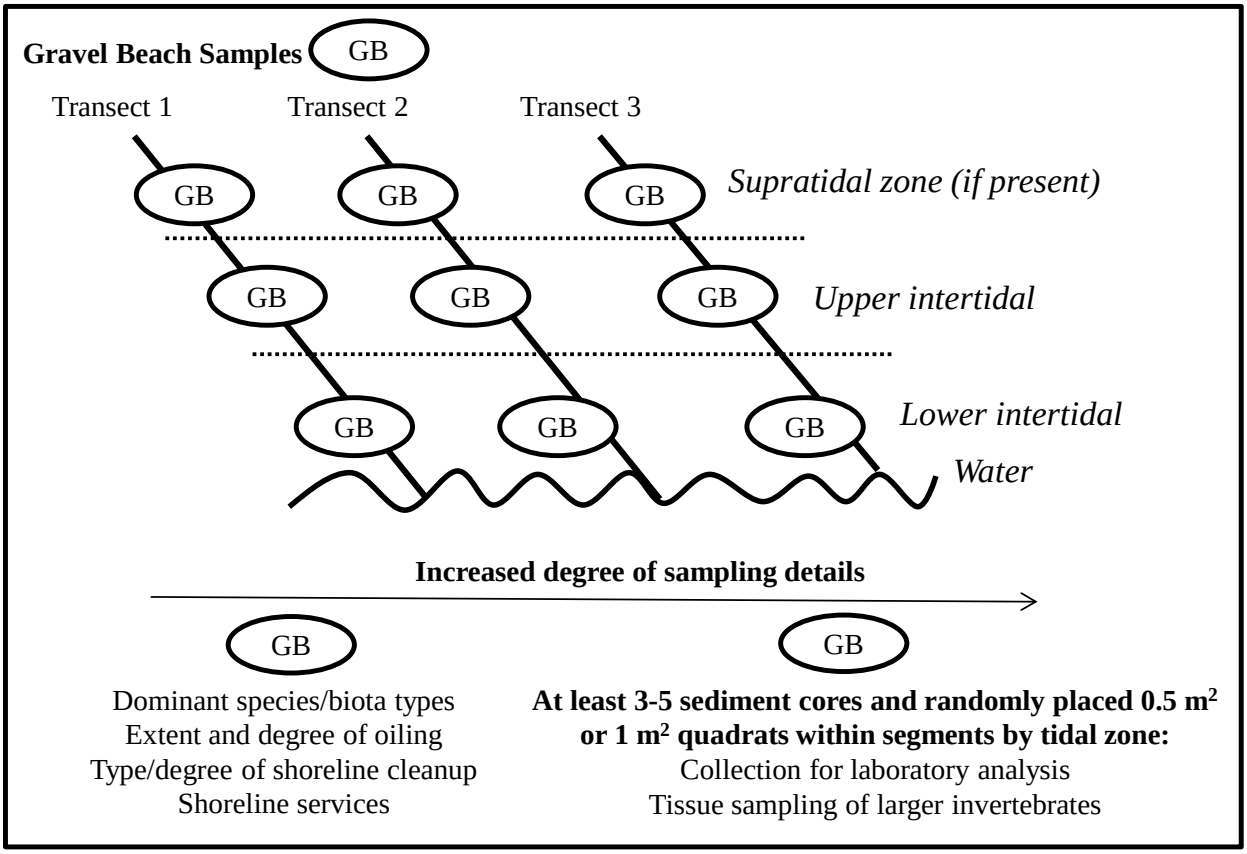

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the recommended gravel beach sampling strategy, including transects and sampling sites. Dashed lines represent approximate tidal zones. GB= gravel beach. Area-specific modifications may be needed. For example at locations with very narrow intertidal zones, only one or two sampling intervals may be used.

- On some high-Arctic shorelines, the intertidal zone may be very narrow. If this is the case, two sampling intervals can be defined on each transect, in the upper (or storm surge) and lower intertidal zone, or just one station if the intertidal zone is very narrow.
- Along each transect, use standard oiling terminology codes and estimation charts to record in field sample forms or field notebooks:
  - Date, time, weather conditions (e.g., wind direction and speed), tide level (as observed), and initials of observers
  - Distance of the interval
  - Physical setting (shoreline orientation, exposure to wave energy and tidal currents, etc.)
  - Length of the transect (in meters) and of the sampling zone
  - Sediment type and gravel average size (diameter in cm)
  - Dominant species or types of biota present (including signs of gravel intertidal organisms
  - Presence, condition, and/or altered behavior of visible biota such as amphipods, gastropods, crabs, etc.

  - Extent and degree of shoreline oiling (use shoreline oil terminology codes and % cover charts; see Stranded Oil guideline) and depth of oil penetration into the sediments, if any (using a shovel or coring device)
  - Type or degree of shoreline cleanup, if already performed (particularly note sediment disturbance or removal, flushing of oil and/or sediments into down-slope areas, etc.)
  - Presence of snow or ice along shoreline
  - Presence of biological resources and other relevant information
- Collect samples from each intertidal zone (described below) and record the distance along the transect and GPS coordinates of each sampling site.

Sample Collection Methods

- Use field data forms included in the work plan, if one is available. Otherwise, use forms in Appendix A. Coordinate data form development/modification with the data management group.
- Because GPS units will be used to record locations and times, make sure that all units are using the same coordinate system, datum, reporting units, and correct time. Follow the recommended GPS datum of the study plan, if one is available. Alternatively, set the default to WGS84.
- Record GPS coordinates for each sample site.
- Photograph the sampling site prior to sample collection to document the site conditions, as well as the sample collected. Make sure each photograph or series can be later associated with the corresponding sampling locations (e.g., through use of GPS Photo link software or by keeping a detailed photo log with waypoints and/or lat/long). Do not delete or alter any photographs. The numbering sequence of photographs uploaded from your camera must not have any gaps (see Field Photography guideline).
- If time allows, a calibration exercise is recommended prior to field sampling to ensure that all field teams consistently perform gravel intertidal community sampling.
- If sampling sites are covered by snow or ice, carefully remove the snow/ice without mixing or disturbing the sediment underneath and proceed with infauna sampling. Note snow and ice conditions on the field data sheet. If snow or ice in the intertidal zone are impacted by oil (as opposed to deposited on top of oiled sediments), it may be desirable to collect snow/ice samples for chemical analysis (see the Snow and Ice guidelines).
- If plant or animal life is expected to occur, or is found during data collection, sampling can be conducted to document the presence, composition, and general abundance of organisms.
- If highly quantitative density estimates are needed, or detailed comparisons of oiled vs. un-oiled locations are planned, an experienced gravel beach ecologist and statistician should be consulted to plan more detailed studies. If one is not available, the following sampling should be performed.
- For semi-quantitative surveys of selected shoreline transects or habitat locations:
  - Record the distance along the transect and GPS coordinates of each collection site
  - For species presence/absence, composition, or density estimates use quadrats (0.5 m^2 or 1.0 m^2). Randomly place the quadrat 1 and 2 m to the left and right of each transect by tidal zone (high, middle, low), for a n=4 per tidal elevation. Quadrats should be placed within 5 m of the transect line. One approach to random sampling is as follows:
    - Place two tape measures at a 90°angle along two sides of the sampling location
    - Use a random numbers table to randomly select two numbers
    - Place the center of the quadrat at the intersection of the two numbers on the tape measure
  - Photo-document the sampling locations, sample collection methods, organisms observed, any obvious oil impacts, etc. and keep a good record of the quadrat-photo sequence
  - Take high-resolution vertical photographs of each quadrat, if possible using a tripod or quadrapod, and record GPS coordinates. This will facilitate computer-based analyses of individual quadrats. When taking photographs observe the following:
    - If the presence of large or abundant motile invertebrates block the view of sessile invertebrates, carefully remove these organisms from the quadrats prior to taking photographs

and without disturbing less motile invertebrates, but make sure to document the removal of organisms in the field sample form
        - High-resolution photographs must include all four sides of the quadrat as these will be used to digitally count individuals and measure their coverage on a computer screen
        - When photographing highly dense quadrats, quadrat frames can be split into 2-sided frames to facilitate computer-based analyses
        - Photographs need to be relatively flat so that the entire quadrat falls within a similar focal plane, with minimal shadowing from crevices or projections. Photographs should be directly perpendicular to the quadrat
        - Ideally, photographs should be taken during the lowest tide and best light conditions (e.g., closest to midday or when overcast). Avoid shooting into the sun and avoid including sky, ocean, or tidepools in the view
        - If possible, use a quadrapod apparatus to support the camera at a constant height (1 m with a 35 mm lens) from the quadrat and position it to capture all four corners of the quadrat:
            - A quadrapod consists of a gray PVC or gray Schedule 80 PVC pipe frame with a photoplot-size bottom (0.5 m^2 or 1.0 m^2 internal dimensions) connected by 4 poles to the frame supporting the digital camera
            - Strobes mounted laterally and away from the camera can enhance lighting on the quadrats and reduce shadows
        - The best quality photographs are obtained by optimizing the ISO, aperture, and shutter speed
        - Remember that all quadrat images must be of sufficient quality to allow a positive identification and enumeration of the species in the quadrats
    - Estimate the percent cover of sessile species and algae within each quadrat
    - If time allows, identify (to the lowest taxonomic level practical), count and/or measure the size of mobile organisms (crabs and snails) captured either on the surface or under the rocks, and release them live; alternatively, place samples in plastic bags or jars and freeze, or preserve for identification in 10% buffered formalin (in seawater) (preferred), or in 95% ethanol (less ideal), and stain (such as Rose Bengal) if appropriate
    - Photo-document the sampling locations, sample collection methods, organisms observed, any obvious oil impacts, etc. and keep a good record of the quadrat-photo sequence
- If the gravel beach is conducive to coring (e.g., locations with mixed sand/gravel or where gravel over finer sediments can be easily moved to the side), or if requested in the sampling plan, use a hand coring device, typically a cylinder with an open cross-sectional area of 0.01 m^2 and a small hole on the top, to sample macroinfauna. A special corer type (clam corer) may be required to sample gravel beaches:
    - Prior to collecting cores, carefully remove large gravel, debris, shells, and other material without disturbing the sediments
    - Randomly place the corer 1 and 2 m to the left and right of each transect by tidal zone for a n=4 per tidal elevation sampled (note that all tidal elevations may not be sampled in this manner) Random selection of the sampling site can be performed following the guideline provided above
    - Take photographs and record the GPS coordinates of each sediment core site
    - Insert the corer into the sediment (in a vertical position) to a depth of 25 cm. Mark the outside of the corer so the depth of the core sample can be recorded, and so that cores do not exceed 25 cm in depth
    - Place a finger or thumb over the small hole (or insert a rubber stopper) to create a vacuum and extract the core
    - Empty the contents of the core into a labeled container, such as a large plastic bag
    - Describe the sediment composition and grain size, and sediment oiling, including depth of oil penetration

  - If the sediment size allows oil to penetrate deeper than the core depth, use a shovel to dig until the barrier layer (sand, mud or bedrock) is reached and describe oil penetration depth (see Stranded Oil guideline)
  - Core samples can be initially sieved in the field (using a 0.5 mm screen). When sieving, gently force water up through the bottom of the sieve, by bobbing the sieve up and down in a large bucket or tub of water, this prevents forcing animals into or through the bottom of the sieve
  - After sieving, place samples in a sample bag or jar and preserve with 10% buffered formalin
  - If field sieving of cores is not possible, preserved whole in 10% buffered formalin (in seawater) (preferred), or in 95% ethanol (less ideal), and stain (such as Rose Bengal) if appropriate
  - Place a waterproof label with the station location, sample number, and date inside the sample container
- To sample larger macroinfaunal target species, such as bivalves, if any, from gravel beaches conducive to this type of sampling:
  - Randomly place the quadrat 1 and 2 m to the left and right of each transect by tidal zone (high, middle, low), for n=4 per tidal elevation. Random selection of the sampling site can be performed following the guideline provided above
  - Take high resolution photographs of each quadrat, if possible using a tripod, and record GPS coordinates. High resolution photographs must include all four sides of the quadrat as these may be used to digitally count individuals and measure their coverage on a computer screen. Quadrat frames can be split into 2-sided frames to facilitate computer-based analyses. The best quality photographs are obtained by optimizing the ISO, aperture and shutter speed. Follow general guideline provided above
  - Record the quadrat GPS coordinates
  - Prior to removing quadrat contents, carefully remove large gravel, debris, shells, and other material without disturbing the sediments
  - Use a shovel to excavate the sediments within the quadrat to the appropriate depth, commonly 20-30 cm
  - If practical, sieve the excavated sediments using a 5 mm screen (or larger, depending on the size range of the target species)
  - Alternatively, spread out the excavated sediments and carefully pick all target species in the sample
  - Identify, count, weigh, and/or size the captured organisms in the field, and release them live, or, place samples in plastic bags or jars and freeze, or preserve in 10% buffered formalin (in seawater) (preferred), or in 95% ethanol (less ideal), and stain (such as Rose Bengal) if appropriate
  - Place a waterproof label with the station location, sample number, and date inside the sample container
- If tissue analyses are planned for organisms, such as mussels, follow the Shellfish Tissue guideline. Tissue samples may be collected particularly from areas with obvious oiling impacts. Briefly:
  - Wrap each individual specimen in pre-cleaned aluminum foil, and freeze the sample as soon as practical
  - Take care to avoid cross contamination during sampling and handling
  - Clean sampling equipment, such as shovels, between collections
  - Ship biological samples on ice overnight, if possible to the laboratory conducting the analyses
- If collection of gravel for chemical analyses is required by the sampling plan, avoid placing samples in large glass jars because these may break during sampling, transport, or storage. Alternatively, use the smallest possible glass jars, and pack them with enough small gravel to fill the entire jar without leaving room for gravel movement. Cap the jars and carefully wrap them individually in bubble wrap or other protective material, and store them in a box with cardboard dividers leaving every other

space empty. Alternatively, use small Teflon bottles (less ideal). For larger gravel size, double wrapped gravel in clean aluminum foil and put in a bag (see Intertidal Sediment guideline).

Sample Labeling and Record Keeping

- Verify that all samples are properly labeled, and that field sample forms are properly filled out.
- Follow chain of custody procedures for securing samples and complete chain of custody forms (See Chain of Custody guidelines).
- Complete the Chain of Custody form, noting where each intertidal sample was collected, sampling equipment used, time/date of collection, size and container type, and sampler name.
- Make special notation on the Chain of Custody form about any problems or observations during sampling.
- Maintain strict chain of custody during sample storage and transportation.
- Record the sample number on both the sample jar label and lid. Record the following on the field sample form:
  - Sample collection site (NRDA sample grid ID and GPS coordinates)
  - Sample matrix (fauna)
  - Sample #, date/time
  - Sampling method (core), sample collection depth, and core size (m^2)
  - Sediment oiling conditions (using standard shoreline assessment terminology), tidal elevation, weather conditions (e.g., wind direction and speed), presence of biota, vegetation or debris, odors and other relevant information on the field data sheet
  - Sediment characteristics: gravel size, texture, color, biota, vegetation, debris, odor, etc.
- All sample numbers must be unique. Use the sample number convention provided by data management if available. Otherwise, the sample number should consist of a sample team ID and sequential numbers. For example AKA-0001, AKA-0002, etc.
- Documenting oil distribution in gravel beaches is best accomplished with photography, video, and good field notes and sketches using standard shoreline assessment methods. These data may be collected by SCAT teams and available to support environmental assessments. Samples may be needed for fingerprinting or monitoring weathering, to correlate a degree of oiling term with oil loading, to confirm the presence of oil, or for bioassay purposes.
- Make a quick sketch in a field logbook or sketch form showing the sampling locations in enough detail that the location could be re-occupied by someone else.
- Keep a detailed photo log so that each photograph can be labeled.
- Note any deviations from the recommended guidelines in the field book.

Sample Preservation, Recommended Holding Times and Shipping

- Follow chain of custody procedures for sample storage and shipping.
- Ship highly oiled samples separate from lightly or unoiled samples to reduce risk of cross-contamination.
- Samples should be received by the laboratory for processing within 7 days of collection.
- Immediately place all invertebrate samples in cooler and keep at 4°C. DO NOT FREEZE samples preserved in formalin. Tissue samples for chemical analysis can be frozen.
- Ship any samples preserved in formalin or other chemicals as hazardous goods.
- Tape lids on sample bottles so that they do not accidentally come off.
- Use packing material, such as bubble wrap or sorbent pads, around glass jars to prevent breakage during transport and shipping.
- Ship samples directly to the laboratory as soon as practical, overnight (preferred), with completed Chain of Custody forms. If necessary, samples can be stored under specified conditions and with complete chain of custody until they can be shipped. Assure that samples are packaged to protect

them from breakage, shipping containers are sealed, and use ice packs or dry ice to maintain storage temperatures during shipment to the lab.

- NEVER discard any samples even if these have exceeded their recommended holding times or storage temperatures.

Analytical Methods

- Refer to those under Shellfish Tissue and Intertidal Sediment guidelines.

Key References

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Appendix A
Supporting Documentation - Field Data Form Examples

Unique field data forms may be included in the work plan if one has been developed, otherwise, use the attached form.

- Adapt the form as needed prior to use.
- Print the form on weather-resistant paper (if available). Make more than enough copies of the form before going into the field.
- Fill out forms with waterproof pen or permanent marker. Do not use pencil, biro (erasable) ink.
- Make any additional notes that do not fit on the form in a field notebook and indicate the presence of associated additional notes on the field data form.
- Fill in blanks with "N/A" if data are not applicable or not available. Avoid leaving blank values on data forms.
- Do not erase or black out erroneous entries on the field data forms. Errors should be corrected by crossing out the entry with a single line and signing and dating the strike-through.
- Electronic versions of field data forms are available. Coordinate data entry with NRDA data management personnel.

Attached Forms:

- Beach Survey Field Data Form – 3 parts: Survey set-up, Surface quadrat, subsurface quadrat or core

Gravel Beach Survey Field Data Form - Set-up (one per transect)

1 Date: ___ Time: ___ Site ID: _____ Team ID: _____

2 Data Recorder / Affiliation: _____

3 Other team members / Affiliations: _____

_____

4 Transect ID: _____

Total Transect Length (m): _____

5 Front Stake Way Point # _____ Latitude (DD) _____ Longitude (DD) _____

Back Stake Way Point # _____ Latitude (DD) _____ Longitude (DD) _____

6 Distance from shoreline to the midpoint of plots in each zone (m):

Supratidal _____ Middle Intertidal _____

Upper Intertidal _____ Low Intertidal _____

7 **Photos**

Front stake looking inland: _____ Back stake looking shoreward: _____

Back stake looking right: _____ Front stake looking left: _____

Offshore looking inland: _____

8 **Plotwide Sediment and Topography**

Primary sediment type: _____ Secondary sediment type: _____

Presence of erosional scarps: yes / no Max. vertical relief (cm) _____

9 **Oiling Impact Extent**

Sediment surface oiling coverage (%): _____

Surface oil thickness (circle one): Pooled Cover Coat Stain N/A

Surface oil character (circle one): Fresh Mousse Surface residue Tar Asphalt N/A

10 **Transect Sketch**

Bearing to inland stake: _____

Drawing Legend	
FS	Front Stake
BS	Back Stake
----------	Transect
~~	Water line
□	Surface Quadrat
■	Subsurface Quadrat
○	Core Sample
X	Other sample

Notes: including but not limited to presence, condition, and/or altered behavior of visible biota such as bivalves, etc.

Gravel Beach Survey Field Data Form - Surface Quadrat (one per quadrat)

1 Date: ___ Time: ___ Site ID: _____ Team ID: _____

2 Data Recorder / Affiliation: _____

3 Other team members / Affiliations: _____

4 Transect ID: _____ Quadrat ID: _____

Quadrat location: Supratidal/High /Middle /Low Intertidal Quadrat size (m^2): _____

Quadrat photo: _____

Direction from transect: Left / Right Distance from transect: _____

(looking from water towards shoreline)

5 Sediment Type

Primary: _____ Secondary: _____

6 Oiling Impact Extent

Sediment surface oiling coverage (%): _____

Surface oil thickness (circle one): Pooled Cover Coat Stain N/A

Surface oil character (circle one): Fresh Mousse Surface residue Tar Asphalt N/A

7 Quadrant Fauna Information

Photo Only Yes / No Photos:

Species Name	Number	Species Name	Number	Additional Information:

Notes:

Gravel Beach Survey Field Data Form - Subsurface Quadrat or Core (one per sample)

1 Date: ___ Time: _____ Site ID: _____ Team ID: _____

2 Data Recorder / Affiliation: _____

3 Other team members / Affiliations: _____

4 Transect ID: _____ Quadrat/Core ID: _____

Sample type (Circle One): Subsurface quadrat Core

Quadrat location: Supratidal/ High /Middle /Low Intertidal Quadrat size (m^2): _____

Quadrat photo: _____

Direction from transect: Left / Right Distance from transect:

(looking from water towards shoreline)

Sample depth (cm): _____

5 **Sediment type**

Primary: _____ Secondary: _____

6 **Oiling Impact Extent**

Sediment surface oiling coverage (%): _____

Subsurface oil evident: yes / no

7 **Subsurface sample**

Sample retained: yes / no Sample No.: _____

Sieved: yes / no Sieve screen size (mm): _____

Sample preserved: yes / no Preservation type: Formalin Frozen Other

Species	Size Units:	Weight Units:	Sex	Count	Additional Information:

Notes: