



## Zoo and Aquarium Animal Management During a Crisis

Crisis situations come in many forms and may require the unexpected movement of many animals quickly. Whether a disaster related to weather (hurricanes, fires, and floods), the economy, or a pandemic, AZA is here to help member facilities. This document provides suggestions and resources for zoos and aquariums that may find themselves in one of these situations.

AZA facilities regularly prepare for crisis situations. You should refer to the detailed documents you already have that cover your facility's plan of action in a variety of situations. When a facility finds itself needing to move animals unexpectedly, it may be a permanent situation in which the facility can no longer maintain the animals or a short-term situation to get the animals out of harm's way with the intent of returning them after the threat has passed; these short-term plans will sometimes need to change into longer term plans.

The primary goal of any crisis-related animal transfer is to avoid a negative welfare state from either a pending disaster or suboptimal care. A secondary goal of the transfer should be to maintain the affected animal(s) in AZA-managed animal care programs where possible so that population sustainability of that species is not adversely affected. All moves should be in accordance with the [AZA Policy on Responsible Population Management](#) and the facility's acquisition and disposition policies.

### Short-term Recommendations

- Ideally most of these recommendations should be accomplished before a crisis occurs. The [Zoo and Aquarium All Hazards Partnership \(ZAHP\)](#) has many resources available to help facilities with risk assessment and contingency planning for preparedness and response.
- Assess to determine which animals need to be relocated, which are better off to shelter in place (e.g., are housed in a secure, well-built block building) and which are unable to be relocated (e.g., giraffe, whales, etc.).
- Identify the closest 5-10 facilities that could help with housing or moving animals. These could include other zoos and aquariums. Examples of non-accredited facilities are fairgrounds, farms, non-accredited zoos and aquariums, and shelters. Obtain cell phone numbers for contacts at each facility. For natural disasters, however, keep in mind that closer facilities are more likely affected by the same conditions.
- Contact the Taxon Advisory Group (TAG) Chairs for help with temporary placement of animals. TAGs are responsible for producing Regional Collection Plans (RCPs) and assessing space availability, and are in close contact with the SSP Coordinators, so TAG Chairs can refer you to these resources, as needed. TAG Chairs can be found [here](#). Should you need assistance in contacting a particular TAG, please reach out to the AZA office at [animalprograms@aza.org](mailto:animalprograms@aza.org). It is the AZA staff's responsibility to oversee AZA's cooperatively managed Animal Programs and advise and support the Program Leaders and participants of Taxon Advisory Groups, Species Survival Plan® (SSP) Programs, and Studbooks. The AZA staff also work closely with the Animal Population Management Committee.
- Contact the AZA office at [animalprograms@aza.org](mailto:animalprograms@aza.org) to help relay needs and information to other facilities.
- For aquatic collections, we encourage you to also contact colleagues on the AquaticInfo listserv. The listserv is an excellent resource to communicate with other aquatic professionals and can be

a catalyst for distributing surplus animals if a facility closes. The listserv is open to any employee engaged in husbandry at a public aquarium or a zoo with an aquatic component. If you would like to become a member of the listserv, please contact Brian Nelson at the National Aquarium at [bnelson@aquaria.org](mailto:bnelson@aquaria.org).

### Long-term or Permanent Relocation

- All permanent moves should be in accordance with the [AZA Policy on Responsible Population Management](#) and the facility's acquisition and disposition policies.
- Contact the SSP Coordinator and/or the appropriate TAG Chair to inform them of the need for relocation and for assistance with placement of animals. AZA Animal Program Leaders can be found [here](#). Guidelines for Animal Program Leaders during a crisis can be found [here](#). If you are having trouble reaching an animal program leader, please contact the AZA office at [animalprograms@aza.org](mailto:animalprograms@aza.org).
- If unable to place animals in an AZA-accredited facility, it is preferable to place those animals on loan if going to a non-accredited facility.
- If animals must be sold, it is preferable to sell to an AZA-accredited facility. If this is not possible, the facility purchasing the animal should be inspected to ensure that it meets all disposition policies.

## Crisis Collections Planning Resource Links

### State and Federal Contacts

- See Appendix 1 for FEMA Area Command and Regional Emergency Coordinators
- State Emergency Management Agencies: <https://www.dhs.gov/state-homeland-security-and-emergency-services>
- State Animal Health Officials: <https://www.usaha.org/federal-and-state-animal-health>
- State Public Health Veterinarians: <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/StatePublicHealthVeterinariansByState.pdf>
- State and Territorial Public Health Departments: <https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>
- ESF 11 Coordinators: [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/emergencyresponse/sa\\_esf11/sa\\_contacts](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/emergencyresponse/sa_esf11/sa_contacts)
  - Emergency Support Function 11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources Annex: [https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema\\_ESF\\_11\\_Ag-Natural-Resources.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_ESF_11_Ag-Natural-Resources.pdf)
- USDA Regional Emergency Coordinators: Not publicly listed – see Appendix 1
  - Note: Neighboring RECs have been assigned to FEMA regions where positions are vacant as indicated in the REC map. Inspectors should be able to connect facilities with current REC if this list changes.

### Zoo and Aquarium Resources

- American Association of Zoo Veterinarians
  - Animal Health and Welfare Committee (The Disaster Preparedness Committees has been rolled into this committee) <https://www.aazv.org/page/12>
- Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3)
  - ZDR3 is an industry-based initiative that maintains a wide network of contacts with zoos, aquariums, and sanctuaries. For more information about ZDR3 or for assistance with placement recommendations for animals, see [www.zdr3.org](http://www.zdr3.org) or contact [communications@zdr3.org](mailto:communications@zdr3.org).

- European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA)
  - EAZA Animal Management and Covid-19 Information sheet  
<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/EAZA-Documents-Other/InfoSheet-AnimalManagement-second-draft.pdf>
  - SARS-CoV-2: Transmission between humans and wild animals held in zoos and aquaria  
<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/EAZA-Documents-Other/COVID19Docs/Covid-zoonoses-sheet-7APR.pdf>
  - EAZA Statement on Culling of Animals During the COVID-19 Crisis  
<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/EAZA-Documents-Other/COVID19Docs/EAZA-Culling-COVID-statement.pdf>
  - Reducing negative implications of COVID-19-related economic challenges for Members on population management in EAZA  
<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/Mailing-uploads/2020/2020-05-EAZA-zoos-corona-consequences-animal-pops-final.pdf>
  - REOPENING A ZOO OR AQUARIUM AFTER LOCKDOWN  
<https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/EAZA-Documents-Other/COVID19Docs/Reopening-a-zoo-EAZA-good-practices-guidance-28-04-2020-1.pdf>
- AZA COVID resources (incl. Federal Resources, CARES Act information and AZA specific COVID information) <https://www.aza.org/covid-19-resources>
  - Population Management during COVID  
[https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/2020\\_aza\\_population\\_management\\_during\\_covid19.pdf](https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2332/2020_aza_population_management_during_covid19.pdf)
- Zoo and Aquarium All Hazards Partnership (ZAHP) <https://zahp.org/>
  - Facility Preparedness Resources <https://zahp.org/facility-preparedness/>
  - COVID Resources <https://zahp.org/covid/>
    - Considerations for Non-Domestic Species in Human Care <https://zahp.org/covid-19-animal-care/>
- Aquarium Specific Resources
  - Whittaker, G., A. Aiken, K. Yates. 2013. Disaster Challenges in Aquatic Collection Management (Panel Discussion). 27<sup>th</sup> Regional Aquatics Workshop, Atlanta, GA  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/disaster-preparedness.html>
  - Ellsworth, B. 2017. Preparing for the Unexpected: How One “Garden Variety” Storm Made us Rethink our Disaster Preparedness. 31<sup>st</sup> Regional Aquatics Workshop, Boston, MA.  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/disaster-preparedness.html>
  - Keebler, R. 2018. The Nightmare Before Christmas: Losing Automation on a Holiday Weekend. AALSO Symposium, Niagara Falls, NY  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/aalso-2018-papers-tuesday.html>
  - Graziano, L. and L. Smith. 2013. Surviving Superstorm Sandy. 27<sup>th</sup> Regional Aquatics Workshop, Atlanta GA  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/disaster-preparedness.html>
  - DeNardo, D. 2013. Disaster Prep and Recovery at New York Aquarium. 27<sup>th</sup> Regional Aquatics Workshop, Atlanta, GA  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/raw-2013-natural-disaster-preparation-and-recovery.html>
  - Duke K. 2017. Fires Happen!! ...How Prepared are You? 31<sup>st</sup> Regional Aquatics Workshop, Boston, MA.  
<https://www.animalprofessional.com/disaster-preparedness.html>

## General Preparedness and Response Resources

- List of State Animal Response Teams <http://sartusa.org/sart-state-links/>
- National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs (NASAAEP) <https://www.thenasaaep.com/>
  - Species Evacuation and Transport Guide: [https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05\\_4757683ce32a4a4ab2c404820bebbe4f.pdf](https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05_4757683ce32a4a4ab2c404820bebbe4f.pdf)
  - Emergency Animal Sheltering Best Practices: [https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05\\_8e7c7b6c833e44c5810f582a94de1dfd.pdf](https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05_8e7c7b6c833e44c5810f582a94de1dfd.pdf)
  - Planning and Resource Management Best Practices: [https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05\\_30852eded52b4acfabff0a736dbde7f2.pdf](https://af343bb9-16a5-4f13-b57a-c0776a6dcaac.filesusr.com/ugd/8b3e05_30852eded52b4acfabff0a736dbde7f2.pdf)
- Florida State Animal Response Team (FL SART)
  - Training Modules: [https://flsart.org/training/sart\\_training/](https://flsart.org/training/sart_training/)
- ASPCA Pro Resource Library (pre-search for cruelty and disaster tools and job aids) <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource-library?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A3081&f%5B1%5D=type%3A3226>
- Disaster response planning tools, webinars, and resources: <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource-library?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A3081&f%5B1%5D=type%3A3226>
- IAAPA Developing a crisis communications plan <https://members.iaapa.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=CRISIS%20COMM&Category=MARKETING&WebsiteKey=da6e6269-b818-45d5-b71a-4595e6fe4b98>

### **General Planning and Preparedness Resources**

- AVMA Disaster preparedness and training resources: <https://www.avma.org/disaster-preparedness-disaster-training>
  - Help writing a disaster plan: <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/disaster-preparedness>
- Preparing livestock for a hurricane <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/library/ranching/hurricane-preparedness-for-livestock/>
- Preparing for a wildfire <http://idahofirewise.org/evacuation/evacuating-pets-large-animals/>
- IAAPA Developing a crisis communications plan <https://members.iaapa.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=CRISIS%20COMM&Category=MARKETING&WebsiteKey=da6e6269-b818-45d5-b71a-4595e6fe4b98>

## Appendix 1

### FEMA Area Command and Regional Emergency Coordinators\*

\*Please note these contacts frequently change and it is best to click on the link to your state to get the current coordinator contact information.

FEMA Reg	States	AC-REC	Contact Info	ESF11 Coordinator	ESF11 Contact Info
I	<a href="#">NH, ME, VT, MA, RI, CT</a>	vacant		Christine Sullivan	<a href="mailto:christine.sullivan@usda.gov">christine.sullivan@usda.gov</a> 508-963-7406
II	<a href="#">NY, NJ, PR, USVI</a>	Mario Mercado	<a href="mailto:mario.l.mercado@usda.gov">mario.l.mercado@usda.gov</a> 919-855-7100	Holly Chmil	<a href="mailto:holly.chmil@usda.gov">holly.chmil@usda.gov</a> 646-228-6461
III	<a href="#">DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV</a>	vacant		Tony DiMarco	<a href="mailto:anthony.v.dimarco@usda.gov">anthony.v.dimarco@usda.gov</a> 919-923-0573
IV	<a href="#">AL, FL, GA, MS, KY, NC, SC, TN</a>	Brenton Cox	<a href="mailto:brenton.j.cox@usda.gov">brenton.j.cox@usda.gov</a> 507-269-9315	Andy Wilson	<a href="mailto:andrew.b.wilson@usda.gov">andrew.b.wilson@usda.gov</a> 470-559-7564
V	<a href="#">MN, WI, MI, IL, IN, OH</a>	vacant		Eugene (Gene) Deener	<a href="mailto:eugene.deener@usda.gov">eugene.deener@usda.gov</a> 224-337-2930
VI	<a href="#">TX, LA, AR, NM, OK</a>	Cindy DiGesualdo	<a href="mailto:cynthia.l.digesualdo@usda.gov">cynthia.l.digesualdo@usda.gov</a> 301-547-1711	Jimmy Wortham	<a href="mailto:jimmy.w.wortham@usda.gov">jimmy.w.wortham@usda.gov</a> 970-217-4075
VII	<a href="#">NE, IA, KS, MO</a>	Katy Vernon	<a href="mailto:katy.h.vernon@usda.gov">katy.h.vernon@usda.gov</a> 240-308-2571	Rosalynn Days-Austin	<a href="mailto:rosalynn.days.austin@usda.gov">rosalynn.days.austin@usda.gov</a> 970-631-3380

<b>FEMA Reg</b>	<b>States</b>	<b>AC-REC</b>	<b>Contact Info</b>	<b>ESF11 Coordinator</b>	<b>ESF11 Contact Info</b>
VIII	<a href="#">CO, MT,</a> <a href="#">ND, SD,</a> <a href="#">UT, WY</a>	Kevin Dennison (interim)	<a href="mailto:kevin.m.dennison@usda.gov">kevin.m.dennison@usda.gov</a> 970-494-7433	Elizabeth Kelpis	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.d.kelpis@usda.gov">elizabeth.d.kelpis@usda.gov</a> 720-471-9564
IX	<a href="#">CA, NV, AZ,</a> <a href="#">HI, Islands</a>	Bev Hicks	<a href="mailto:beverly.g.hicks@usda.gov">beverly.g.hicks@usda.gov</a>	Todd Smith	<a href="mailto:todd.l.smith@usda.gov">todd.l.smith@usda.gov</a> 970-631-3279
X	<a href="#">AK, WA, OR,</a> <a href="#">ID</a>	Kevin Wilken	<a href="mailto:kevin.r.wilken@usda.gov">kevin.r.wilken@usda.gov</a> 919-855-7100	Mike Riedy	<a href="mailto:michael.riedy@usda.gov">michael.riedy@usda.gov</a>
0 (HQ)		vacant			

# REC Regions



## FEMA Regions

