

(d) For permits relating to any activity in both the land and marine environments, applicants must submit applications to the WPO. WPO will forward the application to NMFS for review and processing of those activities under its jurisdiction. Based on this review and processing, WPO will issue either a permit or a letter of denial in accordance with its own regulations.

(e) For permits relating to any activity in a marine environment and that also requires a permit under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (TIAS 8249, July 1, 1975) (50 CFR part 23), applicants must submit applications to the WPO. WPO will forward the application to NMFS for review and processing, after which WPO will issue a combination ESA/CITES permit or a letter of denial.

**§ 222.310 Permit authority for designated agents and employees of specified Federal and state agencies.**

(a) This section constitutes a programmatic permit, pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1539(a)(1)(A), that authorizes activities by agents and employees of Federal and state agencies, as described in paragraph (b) of this section, to aid stranded endangered sea turtles, and to salvage, collect data from, and dispose of, dead carcasses of endangered sea turtles in the marine environment. For purposes of this section, 'stranded' means endangered sea turtles, in the marine environment, that are alive but sick, injured, or entangled.

(b) If any member of any endangered species of sea turtle is found stranded or dead in the marine environment, any agent or employee of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, or any other Federal land or water management agency, or any agent or employee of a state agency responsible for fish and wildlife who is designated by his or her agency for such purposes, may, when acting in the course of his or her official duties, take such endangered sea turtles if such taking is necessary to aid a stranded sea turtle, or dispose of or salvage a dead sea turtle, or collect data from a dead sea turtle

which may be useful for scientific and educational purposes. Live turtles will be handled as described in § 223.206(d)(1). Whenever possible, live sea turtles shall be returned to their aquatic environment as soon as possible. The following data collection activities for live turtles while they are in the marine environment are allowed:

(1) Turtles may be flipper and passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagged, prior to release. Flipper tags would be applied to the trailing edge of either the front or rear flippers with standard tagging applicators after the tagging area has been cleaned with alcohol or iodine solution. PIT tags would be inserted according to best practice, approved scientific protocols, after cleaning the insertion site with alcohol or iodine solution. Before application of flipper tags or insertion of PIT tags, all flippers and the neck/shoulder area will be examined and scanned for the presence of any pre-existing flipper or PIT tags.

(2) Turtles may also be weighed, measured, and photographed prior to release.

(3) When handling turtles exhibiting fibropapilloma, all equipment (tagging equipment, tape measures, etc.) that comes in contact with the turtle shall be cleaned with a mild bleach solution.

(c) Every action shall be reported in writing to the Assistant Administrator, or authorized representative, via the agency or institution designated by the state to record such events. Reports shall contain the following information:

(1) Name and position of the official or employee involved;

(2) Description of the sea turtle(s) involved including species and condition of the animal;

(3) When applicable, description of entangling gear, its location on the turtle, and the amount of gear left on the turtle at release;

(4) Method, date and location of disposal of the sea turtle(s), including, if applicable, where the sea turtle(s) has been retained in captivity; and

(5) Such other information as the Assistant Administrator, or authorized representative, may require.

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