

**Endangered Species Act Protocols per the 2025 Biological
and Conference Opinion on the Federally Regulated Oil and
Gas Program in the Gulf of America**

May 2025

Table of Contents

A.0 Compliance with Biological Opinion Terms and Conditions and Reasonable and Prudent Measures	3
A.1 Operational National Mitigation Protocols for Geophysical Surveys	3
A.2 Marine Debris Protocol.....	3
A.3 Vessel Strike Avoidance and Injured and/or Dead Aquatic Protected Species Reporting Protocols	3
A.4 In-water Line Precaution Protocol	4
A.5 Moon Pool Monitoring Protocol	4
A.6 Vessel Transit within the Rice’s Whale Area as identified in the 2020 Biological Opinion’s Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (2020 RWA)	4
A.7 Sea Turtle Resuscitation Guidelines Protocol	4
A.8 Explosive-Severance Scenario Mitigation Protocol	4
A.9 Pile Driving Monitoring and Reporting Requirements Protocol	5
A.10 Site-clearance Trawling Protocol	5

A.0 Compliance with Biological Opinion Terms and Conditions and Reasonable and Prudent Measures

This approval is conditioned upon compliance with the Reasonable and Prudent Measures and implementing Terms and Conditions of the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. This includes mitigation, particularly any Terms and Conditions applicable to the plan, as well as record-keeping and reporting sufficient to allow BOEM and BSEE to comply with reporting and monitoring requirements under the BiOp; and any additional reporting required by BOEM or BSEE developed as a result of BiOp implementation. The NMFS Biological Opinion may be found here:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/biological-and-conference-opinion-bureau-ocean-energy-management-and-bureau>. The BiOp Attachments and Appendices may be found here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.1 Operational National Mitigation Protocols for Geophysical Surveys

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 1 (A.1): Operational National Mitigation Protocols for Geophysical Surveys found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.2 Marine Debris Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 2 (A.2): Marine Debris Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.3 Vessel Strike Avoidance and Injured and/or Dead Aquatic Protected Species Reporting Protocols

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 3 (A.3): Vessel Strike Avoidance and Injured and/or Dead Aquatic Protected Species Reporting Protocols found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.4 In-water Line Precaution Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 5 (A.4): In-water Line Precaution Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.5 Moon Pool Monitoring Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 6 (A.5): Moon Pool Monitoring Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.6 Vessel Transit within the Rice's Whale Area as identified in the 2020 Biological Opinion's Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (2020 RWA)

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 4 (A.6): Vessel Transit within the Rice's Whale Area as identified in the 2020 Biological Opinion's Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (2020 RWA) found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.7 Sea Turtle Resuscitation Guidelines Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 10 (A.7): Sea Turtle Resuscitation Guidelines Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.8 Explosive-Severance Scenario Mitigation Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 8 (A.8): Explosive-Severance Scenario Mitigation Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.9 Pile Driving Monitoring and Reporting Requirements Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 7 (A.9): Pile Driving Monitoring and Reporting Requirements Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.

A.10 Site-clearance Trawling Protocol

The applicant will follow the protocols provided under Attachment 9 (A.10): Site-clearance Trawling Protocol found in the Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on May 20, 2025. The protocols can be accessed on NOAA Fisheries internet website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/attachments-and-appendices-2025-gulf-america-oil-and-gas-biological-opinion>.