

## Deepwater Horizon (MC 252) Oil Spill

### Guidance for Transferring Digital Photographs from Wildlife Operations and NRDA Field Teams to the USFWS Data Management Group

#### Background

This guidance describes procedures for the collection and handling of digital photographs by Wildlife Operations and NRDA field teams. It is intended to protect the legal integrity of digital photographs stored on digital memory cards (SD cards), as well as the legal integrity of the SD card itself. SD cards will be issued to field members in order to record photographic images of bird carcasses collected in the field and transfer those images to the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer.

#### Carcass Photograph Overview

To photo-document a bird carcass at the time of collection, field teams will:

- Complete the appropriate Evidence Seizure Tags and a *Bird Search Effort and Birds Collected Data Form*.
- Photograph the carcass with the blue Evidence Identification Tag (and white board for NRDA personnel) clearly visible in the frame.
- Record the Photo ID Number (from the camera) on the *Bird Search Effort and Birds Collected Data Form*.
- Record the SD Card ID Number (e.g. "WO-x") in the Field Comments section of this form.

#### **Notes:**

- ***At no time will information stored on a digital memory card or camera internal memory be erased or over-written.***
- ***Digital photo files must be stored sequentially on the SD card and not renamed.***
- ***Digital photos taken by NRDAR personnel should be uploaded to a secure database at the end of each day. Please refer to "Data Entry Instructions: Uploading Photographs" for this specific information.***

## Chain of Custody

At the time of issuance of the SD card by the Supply Unit, details of each SD card will be recorded on the appropriate *SD Digital Memory Card Tracking Log* (see example below) by the Supply Unit. Wildlife Operations and NRDA tracking logs should be kept separately, at each sector IC or headquarters.

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SD Digital Memory Card Tracking Log  
Wildlife Operations - Mobile

Date	SD Card ID#	Brand	Memory Capacity (GB)	Issued By	Issued To	Returned? (Y/N & Date)
06Jul10	WO- 1	Kingston	2 GB	John Doe	Bill Smith	
07Jul10	WO- 2	SanDisc	1 GB	John Doe	Fred Hoodie	
	WO- 3					
	WO- 4					
	WO- 5					
	WO- 6					
	WO- 7					

*Example of Tracking Log showing two SD cards issued*

**Note: SD Card ID Numbers are assigned sequentially and each respective card will have a unique number which will not be repeated.**

The unique SD Card ID Number (“WO-x” for Wildlife Operations, “NB-x” for NRDA Birds, and “SL-x” for Sensitive Lands) is assigned by the Supply Unit. The Supply Unit will legibly print the SD Card Number on the SD card with a permanent marker (e.g. Sharpie). The individual SD card will then be issued by the Supply Unit to a field team member using a *Chain-of-Custody* form (see example below) issuing the SD card from the Supply Unit to the field team member.

US Department of the Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Law Enforcement			<b>CHAIN OF CUSTODY RECORD</b>		FILE NO. INV.
DATE AND TIME OF SEIZURE: N/A		REGION: 4	EVIDENCE/PROPERTY SEIZED BY: N/A		
SOURCE OF EVIDENCE/PROPERTY (person and/or location): <input type="checkbox"/> TAKEN FROM: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RECEIVED FROM: <i>John Doe, USFWS</i> <input type="checkbox"/> FOUND AT: <i>Wildlife Ops, Supply Mobile, AL</i>			CASE TITLE AND REMARKS: <i>Deepwater Horizon (MC-252) Oil Spill USFWS NRDA / Wildlife Operations Bird Carcass Photographs</i>		
ITEM NO.  1	DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE/PROPERTY (include Seizure Tag Numbers and any serial numbers):  <i>SD Digital Memory Card</i> <i>Brand or Manufacturer: <u>Kingston</u></i> <i>Card Serial # or ID <u>WO-1</u></i> <i>Capacity (in GB): <u>2 GB</u></i> <i>Field Team ID: <u>Team 18</u></i> <i>State/Operational Area: <u>FL/Pensacola to Panama City</u></i> (ACP Grid or geographic location) <i>Date Range Memory Installed: _____</i> <i>Card was in Use: Removed: _____</i>				
ITEM NO.  1	FROM: (PRINT NAME, AGENCY) <i>John Doe, USFWS</i>	RELEASE SIGNATURE: <i>John Doe</i>	RELEASE DATE: <i>06Jul10</i>	DELIVERED VIA: <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. MAIL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN PERSON <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:	
	TO: (PRINT NAME, AGENCY) <i>Bill Smith, APHIS</i>	RECEIPT SIGNATURE: <i>Bill Smith</i>	RECEIPT DATE: <i>06Jul10</i>		

**Example of Chain-of-Custody form for the first SD card issued (WO-1) at time of issue**

Two SD cards can be issued for each field team (using separate *Chain-of-Custody* forms) so that one SD card is always on hand when cards are swapped out of the camera. So that the labeled SD card and *Chain-of-Custody* form do not become separated, place them together in a 1-gallon ziplock-type bag. A blank *Chain-of-Custody* form is attached to this protocol (and is fillable using Excel, if viewing this protocol electronically).

**Note: Ensure only one SD card and one Chain-of-Custody form per bag.**

At the time the SD card is installed in the camera, the field team member will record the date on the *Chain-of-Custody* form in the space labeled "Installed". The *Chain-of-Custody* form should then be placed back in the ziplock-type bag and safeguarded for later use.

The SD card should remain in the camera for approximately two weeks or until it approaches its storage capacity. As personnel rotate in and out of the field teams, the out-going and incoming team members must transfer custody of the SD card by completing the appropriate section of the *Chain-of-Custody* form. When it is time to replace the SD card, the field team member in custody of the card will remove it from the camera and move the locking tab to the "Locked" position. On the *Chain-of-Custody* form, the date will be recorded in the space labeled "Removed". The SD card and *Chain-of-Custody* form should then be placed back in the ziplock-type bag and returned by a team leader directly to the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer or returned to an Evidence Custodian at a field Intake Center. The Chain-of Custody form will

be completed by the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer or the Evidence Custodian, making sure to indicate if a Wildlife Operations or a NRDA field team turned in the SD card.

If a “runner” is used to return the SD card and *Chain-of-Custody* form, the appropriate “From” and “To” boxes on the *Chain-of-Custody* form must be completed each time custody changes. If the SD card is sent via FedEx, ensure that the appropriate “From” box on the *Chain-of-Custody* form is completed; the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer will complete the “To” box upon receipt. SD cards should be shipped to:

Homewood Suites Inn  
29474 North Main Street  
Daphne, AL 36526  
ATTN: USFWS-NRDA Bird  
Blakely Conference Room 2  
(251) 621-0721 (*This is the Hotel’s phone number, use for delivery purposes only*)

### **Procedure for Retrieving Original SD Cards Already in Use**

Some cameras issued to field crews have SD cards that were not assigned a unique SD Card ID Number at the beginning of field operations. For NRDA field crews that possess an un-numbered SD card, a new replacement SD card will be issued to one of the members of the field team, as described in the procedure above. Included with the new SD card and *Chain-of-Custody* form (both in a ziplock-type bag) will be a blank *Chain-of-Custody* form in a separate bag.

Upon receipt, the NRDA field team will remove the un-numbered SD card from the camera and record the details of the SD card on the blank *Chain-of-Custody* form (leaving the “SD Card ID Number” space blank). The SD card and *Chain-of-Custody* form will then be sealed in the ziplock-type bag and returned to the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer (see procedures above). Remember, the appropriate “From” and “To” boxes on the *Chain-of-Custody* form must be completed each time custody changes. Upon receipt, the NRDA Bird Data Quality Officer will complete the *Chain-of-Custody* form, assign a unique SD Card ID Number, and label the SD card with a permanent marker.

For Wildlife Operations field teams that possess an un-numbered SC card, a number will be issued to the team in the field by the Supply Unit. The team leader will legibly print the SD Card ID Number on the SD card with a permanent marker (e.g., Sharpie) and continue to use the SD card.

## Appendix A: Chain-of-Custody Form