

direction of an Onsite Coordinator for an unusual mortality event;

(ii) for reimbursing any stranding network participant for costs incurred in preparing and transporting tissues collected with respect to an unusual mortality event for the Tissue Bank; and

(iii) for care and maintenance of marine mammal seized under section 1374(c)(2)(D) of this title; and

(B) shall remain available until expended.

(2) Pending claims

If sufficient amounts are not available in the Fund to satisfy any authorized pending claim, such claim shall remain pending until such time as sufficient amounts are available. All authorized pending claims shall be satisfied in the order received.

(c) Deposits into Fund

There shall be deposited into the Fund—

(1) amounts appropriated to the Fund;

(2) other amounts appropriated to the Secretary for use with respect to unusual mortality events; and

(3) amounts received by the United States in the form of gifts, devises, and bequests under subsection (d).

(d) Acceptance of donations

For purposes of carrying out this subchapter and section 1374(c)(2)(D) of this title, the Secretary may accept, solicit, and use the services of volunteers, and may accept, solicit, receive, hold, administer, and use gifts, devises, and bequests.

(Pub. L. 92-522, title IV, § 405, formerly title III, § 305, as added Pub. L. 102-587, title III, § 3003(a), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5064; renumbered title IV, § 405, and amended Pub. L. 103-238, §§ 6, 16(b), 24(b), (c)(2), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 542, 559, 565, 566.)

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103-238, § 16(b), substituted “an interest bearing fund” for “a fund”.

Subsec. (b)(1)(A)(i). Pub. L. 103-238, § 24(c)(2), made technical amendment to reference to section 1421c(b) of this title to reflect renumbering of corresponding section of original act.

Subsec. (b)(1)(A)(iii). Pub. L. 103-238, § 6(1), added cl. (iii).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 103-238, § 6(2), inserted “and section 1374(c)(2)(D) of this title”.

§ 1421e. Liability

(a) In general

A person who is authorized to respond to a stranding pursuant to an agreement entered into under section 1382(c) of this title is deemed to be an employee of the government for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, with respect to actions of the person that are—

(1) in accordance with the agreement; and

(2) in the case of an unusual mortality event, in accordance with—

(A) the contingency plan issued under section 1421c(b) of this title;

(B) the instructions of an Onsite Coordinator designated under section 1421c(c) of this title; or

(C) the best professional judgment of an Onsite Coordinator, in the case of any matter that is not covered by the contingency plan.

(b) Limitation

Subsection (a) does not apply to actions of a person described in that subsection that are grossly negligent or that constitute willful misconduct.

(Pub. L. 92-522, title IV, § 406, formerly title III, § 306, as added Pub. L. 102-587, title III, § 3003(a), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5064; renumbered title IV, § 406, and amended Pub. L. 103-238, § 24(b), (c)(3), (4), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 565, 566.)

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsec. (a)(2)(A), (B). Pub. L. 103-238, § 24(c)(3), (4), made technical amendment to references to section 1421c of this title to reflect renumbering of corresponding section of original act.

§ 1421f. National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank and tissue analysis

(a) Tissue Bank

(1) In general

The Secretary shall make provision for the storage, preparation, examination, and archiving of marine mammal tissues. Tissues archived pursuant to this subsection shall be known as the “National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank”.

(2) Guidance for marine mammal tissue collection, preparation, and archiving

The Secretary shall, in consultation with individuals with knowledge and expertise in marine science, marine mammal science, marine mammal veterinary and husbandry practices, and marine conservation, issue guidance, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for marine mammal tissue collection, preparation, archiving, and quality control procedures, regarding—

(A) appropriate and uniform methods and standards for those activities to provide confidence in marine mammal tissue samples used for research; and

(B) documentation of procedures used for collecting, preparing, and archiving those samples.

(3) Source of tissue

In addition to tissues taken during marine mammal unusual mortality events, the Tissue Bank shall incorporate tissue samples taken from other sources in the wild, including—

(A) samples from marine mammals taken incidental to commercial fishing operations;

(B) samples from marine mammals taken for subsistence purposes;

(C) biopsy samples; and

(D) any other samples properly collected.

(b) Tissue analysis

The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Marine Mammal Commission, the Secretary of the Interior, and individuals with knowledge and experience in marine science, marine mammal science, marine mammal veterinary and husbandry practices, and marine conservation,

issue guidance, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for analyzing tissue samples (by use of the most effective and advanced diagnostic technologies and tools practicable) as a means to monitor and measure overall health trends in representative species or populations of marine mammals, including—

- (1) the levels of, and if possible, the effects of, potentially harmful contaminants; and
- (2) the frequency of, and if possible, the causes and effects of abnormal lesions or anomalies.

(c) Data base

(1) In general

The Secretary shall maintain a central data base which provides an effective means for tracking and accessing data on marine mammals, including relevant data on marine mammal tissues collected for and maintained in the Tissue Bank.

(2) Contents

The data base established under this subsection shall include—

- (A) reference data on the health of marine mammals and populations of marine mammals; and
- (B) data on species of marine mammals that are subject to unusual mortality events.

(d) Access

The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, establish criteria, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for access to—

- (1) marine mammal tissues in the Tissue Bank;
- (2) analyses conducted pursuant to subsection (b); and
- (3) marine mammal data in the data base maintained under subsection (c);

which provide for appropriate uses of the tissues, analyses, and data by qualified scientists, including stranding network participants.

(Pub. L. 92-522, title IV, §407, formerly title III, §307, as added Pub. L. 102-587, title III, §3003(a), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5065; renumbered title IV, §407, Pub. L. 103-238, §24(b), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 565.)

§ 1421f-1. John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program

(a) In general

(1) Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall conduct a grant program to be known as the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program, to provide grants to eligible stranding network participants for the recovery or treatment of marine mammals, the collection of data from living or dead stranded marine mammals for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, and facility operation costs that are directly related to those purposes.

(2)(A) The Secretary shall ensure that, to the greatest extent practicable, funds provided as grants under this subsection are distributed equitably among the stranding regions designated

as of December 21, 2000, and in making such grants shall give preference to those facilities that have established records for rescuing or rehabilitating sick and stranded marine mammals in each of the respective regions, or subregions.

(B) In determining priorities among such regions, the Secretary may consider—

- (i) any episodic stranding or any mortality event other than an event described in section 1421h(6) of this title, that occurred in any region in the preceding year;
- (ii) data regarding average annual strandings and mortality events per region; and
- (iii) the size of the marine mammal populations inhabiting a geographic area within such a region.

(b) Application

To receive a grant under this section, a stranding network participant shall submit an application in such form and manner as the Secretary may prescribe.

(c) Consultation

The Secretary shall consult with the Marine Mammal Commission, a representative from each of the designated stranding regions, and other individuals who represent public and private organizations that are actively involved in rescue, rehabilitation, release, scientific research, marine conservation, and forensic science regarding stranded marine mammals, regarding the development of criteria for the implementation of the grant program and the awarding of grants under the program.

(d) Limitation

The amount of a grant under this section shall not exceed \$100,000.

(e) Matching requirement

(1) In general

The non-Federal share of the costs of an activity conducted with a grant under this section shall be 25 percent of such costs.

(2) In-kind contributions

The Secretary may apply to the non-Federal share of an activity conducted with a grant under this section the amount of funds, and the fair market value of property and services, provided by non-Federal sources and used for the activity.

(f) Administrative expenses

Of amounts available each fiscal year to carry out this section, the Secretary may expend not more than 6 percent or \$80,000, whichever is greater, to pay the administrative expenses necessary to carry out this section.

(g) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Designated stranding region

The term “designated stranding region” means a geographic region designated by the Secretary for purposes of administration of this subchapter.

(2) Secretary

The term “Secretary” has the meaning given that term in section 1362(12)(A) of this title.