



Wildlife Awareness and Reporting Guideline

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5.0	Revision replaced several legacy documents. For a list review Outline of Changes.	2020-03-09	HSER Programs Group Lead
4.0	Template change	2017-04-18	HSER Programs Group Lead

Click on the Outline of Changes to view all previous revisions.

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the *Wildlife Awareness and Reporting Guideline* is to provide Cenovus employees and contractors with information about wildlife behaviours and what to do when wildlife becomes a safety hazard at Cenovus operated sites. It also provides guidance on:

- Reducing the potential safety hazards from human-wildlife encounters
- Potential mitigations to prevent human-wildlife encounters
- Reacting appropriately after encountering wildlife
- Reporting encounters
- Following the *Government of Alberta's* BearSmart Program Manual.

2.0 Scope

The *Wildlife Awareness and Reporting Guideline* applies to all stages of Cenovus operations and activities where staff and contractors may encounter wildlife that poses a high-risk hazard.

Mitigative measures for reducing human-wildlife encounters and encounter protocol response may vary between locations.

This guideline should not be treated as an exhaustive summary of bear, wolf, or cougar safety and should be supplemented with additional reading and resources. For more information, refer to 9.2 Related Information.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The following responsibilities apply to this guideline.

Table 1: Roles and Responsibilities

Role:	Responsible to:
Functional Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the implementation of the principles included in this guideline • Ensure wildlife risk is assessed and documented • Ensure site inspections include wildlife risks and determines the frequency in which site inspections will be completed
Functional Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure workers are complying with Cenovus’s safe work procedures, operating practices, and rules
Health and Safety Field Operations Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the functional team in complying with this guideline and all associated procedures or plans • Respond to questions or concerns relating to the interpretation of this guideline (in conjunction with the Environment Team) • Provide field teams with information and documentation to mitigate potential risks to workers from wildlife • Assist functional supervisors with hazard assessments to determine additional measures needed to mitigate risks • Work collaboratively with the Environment Team
Environmental Advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide field teams with information to mitigate potential risks to wildlife as outlined in the regulatory or environmental commitments • Respond to questions or concerns related to the interpretation of this guideline (in conjunction with Health and Safety Field Operations) • Assist functional supervisors with hazard assessments to determine additional measures needed to mitigate risks • Work collaboratively with the Health & Safety Field Operations team to mitigate risks to workers
Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a clean worksite by controlling wildlife attractants (e.g. food, garbage and non-food attractants such as stained or contaminated materials) • Comply with applicable Cenovus’s safe work procedures, operating practices and rules • Complete required training and hold valid tickets, where appropriate, as per section 8.0 Training • Participate in field level hazard assessment and be aware of wildlife hazards where they perform work • Wear and correctly use the required PPE (e.g. bear spray) • Report all wildlife encounters to supervisors

4.0 Wildlife Basics

To safely coexist with wildlife, it is important for workers to understand wildlife behaviours and human conduct that can contribute to wildlife-human encounters.

4.1 Bear Basics

Black bears can live in various habitats but are most often in forested areas. Grizzly bears (also known as brown bears) are found on the western region of Alberta.

Typically, bears are active during April 1 to November 1 (active bear season), but can shift depending on several factors (weather, food sources, etc.). Until berry crops start to develop in July and August, wildlife relies primarily on other types of vegetation for food, such as grasses and sedges, which may draw them towards open areas near operations.

Bears are extremely curious and are attracted to a wide variety of smells and tastes, including petroleum products (gas, oil grease, and hydraulic fluids), antifreeze, paints, plastics, and even cigarette butts.

While naturally wary of humans and their environments, bears lose their fears when they obtain food and have repeated contact without negative experiences or consequences. This is known as becoming *habituated* and can happen to any wildlife.

Bears are individuals and there are several factors that can influence their behaviours. They will typically defend three things: their personal space, their cubs, and food sources.

4.1.1 Bear information resources

This guideline only provides a high-level overview of bears. For more in-depth information on bears including the difference between brown and black bears, their behaviours, and habitats refer 9.2 Related Information.

4.2 Other large mammals

Often called “bear country”, Alberta’s wilderness is populated with several other large mammals including, but not limited to, wolves, cougars (mountain lions), and ungulates (moose, elk, caribou, bison, and deer).

To learn more about each mammals’ behaviours, characteristics, and habitats, refer to *Energy Safety Canada’s Wildlife Fact Sheet*.

4.3 Legally protected nests, breeding ponds, and dens

There are laws and approval conditions that protect certain species and their nests, breeding ponds, or dens. These laws and conditions mean we do not hurt, harm, or harass any wildlife. In some cases, we establish a buffer around their nests or dens.

We need to use caution around nesting birds. If you find an active nest and it is impeding work or is a safety hazard, do not disturb it. Contact the field Environmental Advisor.

4.4 Injured wildlife

Everyone should recognize injured wildlife as a potential hazard. Many species have sharp teeth, beaks or claws which they will use to protect themselves. If you encounter wildlife and suspect the wildlife is injured, contact the field Environmental Advisor. Do not handle the wildlife yourself.

4.5 Driving and wildlife

While many of Cenovus's driving safety materials discuss wildlife, it is an important hazard to reiterate. Wildlife can use the same travel corridors. It is important to drive defensively and watch for wildlife on roads.

While wildlife may be present around roads throughout the day, pay close attention especially at dawn and dusk – plan your work day accordingly, if possible. Drive defensively by mentally rehearsing what you could do if an animal suddenly darted out on to the road. Watch for headlights reflecting off an animal's eyes or movement on the side of the road. Watch for flickering head or tail lights and the vehicles in front of you – it may be an animal crossing the road.

5.0 Prevention of Wildlife and Human Encounters

The best way to minimize conflicts with wildlife is by understanding wildlife risks, implementing measures to prevent encounters, planning the work, and having the knowledge to deal with an encounter.

5.1 Understanding wildlife risk

The first step in preventing human-wildlife encounters is understanding the risk. This is done by assessing how the asset is currently managing attractants, waste, deterrent methods, and response methods. Functional supervisors will assess wildlife hazards. The assessment includes a review of encounters and site inspection from previous years. Where gaps were identified, take appropriate corrective actions before the beginning of bear season.

5.2 Waste and attractant management

The single most important action anyone can take to prevent human-wildlife conflict is to never feed wildlife or make food/ food waste easily accessible.

There are several methods to manage waste and attractants. This includes bear-resistant garbage containers, incineration, and electric fences. Sites may have site-specific rules on how workers manage food items. Some attractant management best practices include:

- Only using bear-resistant containers when storing waste outside
- Fencing in waste management areas or facilities
- Never allowing waste containers to be full to the point that containers are not properly closed
- Never feed wildlife or make food items easily accessible
- Keep building doors closed during active bear seasons
- Put all waste, regardless if it is a food item or not, in bear-proof containers

- Limit consumption of food to inside of buildings. When not possible, ensure food remains in air-tight containers in the vehicle.
- Do not keep food and waste in the boxes or cabs of trucks. Dispose in bear-resistant garbage containers.
- Do not pour leftover coffee or juice/ pop outside the building.
- Manage vegetation in ditches and periphery of work locations.

Refer to the *Government of Alberta's Best Management Practices: Managing Waste Management Facilities for Bears and Wildlife*

!	Employees who feed wildlife (or practice careless housekeeping that allow wildlife access to food or waste), may face disciplinary action, up to and including removal from site, ban from all Cenovus sites, or termination.
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5.2.1 Waste management by camps

Camps or accommodation facilities attract wildlife, specifically bears and coyotes. Camps must take additional precautions to reduce human-wildlife conflicts. *Government of Alberta's Bear-Human Conflict Management Plan for Camps* outlines these additional requirements.

5.3 Site inspections

Functional leaders and supervisors will determine, based on risk, the type and frequency of site inspections. It is recommended that site inspections be completed prior to bear emergence and is based upon inspection criteria from the *Alberta's BearSmart Program*. Templates for inspections can be found in Appendix A: Wildlife Conflict Site Inspection Form and Appendix B: Camp Inspection Checklist Example. Information from the site inspections, if completed, must inform the pre-job planning and hazard assessment process.

5.4 Pre-job planning/ hazard assessment

It is important to incorporate wildlife considerations into pre-job planning and document the hazards and mitigations in a hazard assessment. The following items are the responsibility of the supervisor or their designate, and may be when a Safe Work Permit is issued:

- When working in remote locations, ensure workers have an appropriate method of deterring wildlife and a prompt response if an encounter occurs. Consult with the Environmental Advisor to determine appropriate deterrents and permissible response time.
- Ensure by working alone, there is not an increased risk for wildlife encounters (remote locations). Consider performing work in a group or schedule for a safer time (outside active bear season). For more information, refer to the Working Alone Standard.
- Review job location and account for terrain. Consider additional safeguards when terrain, such as rivers, berry bushes, and feeding areas increase the potential for human-wildlife encounters.

- Ensure all workers can remove themselves to a safe location if dangerous wildlife enters the worksite. A safe location may be a vehicle or a building. This may require temporary shutdown of work and/ or vacating the worksite until the situation has been resolved.
- Ensure workers who require basic wildlife awareness training are trained.
- Incorporate wildlife encounters into the emergency response plan.
- Incorporate waste management and general wildlife awareness into daily safety meetings.
- Ensure the worksite is clean and food and waste are appropriately stored or disposed daily.
- On the Safe Work Permit, please note if bear spray will be on-site or carried while work is being completed.

6.0 Preparedness

Being prepared when working in bear country, is one way to ensure all employees and contractors are respectful and confident when there is an interaction with a bear or other potentially dangerous wildlife.

6.1 Wildlife deterrents

There are several methods to deter wildlife from coming near humans and infrastructures. Deterrents can be categorized into passive proximity, active proximity, and personal deterrents. For more information, refer to *Government of Alberta's BearSmart Program Manual* (pages 57-61).

6.1.1 Bear watch and bear wardens

A bear watch can be any individual who has been trained in bear/ wildlife awareness and hands-on deterrent deployment and is assigned as a lookout for a work crew. This individual is not engaged in the work and can be outside of the group (such as an Environmental Advisor or a bear warden).

A bear warden refers to anyone who has been specially trained in aversion techniques, with/ without a specially-trained dog, that will respond to bear encounters.

6.1.2 Bear spray

Bear sprays are like personal protective equipment in that they are a last line of defence. Although called bear spray, it can be used in any wildlife encounter. It is important to be trained in the use of bear spray and make sure to follow the manufacturer's instruction. At a minimum, bear sprays must have a concentration of 0.85% capsaicin. For more information on choosing, using, storing, and precautions regarding bear spray, refer to the *Government of Alberta's The BearSmart Guide* (pages 24-27) and *BearSmart Program Manual* (pages 31-34).

Functional supervisors will determine which workers require bear spray as deemed necessary from the hazard assessment.

!	<p>The use of bear spray for anything other than its intended purpose (<i>i.e.</i>, protecting one’s self from wildlife) can lead to charges under the Criminal Code of Canada. Charges may include possession of a weapon, assault with a weapon, or administering a noxious thing.</p>
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7.0 Sightings and Encounters

To help tell the difference, Cenovus has two definitions for wildlife observations: sightings and encounters.

7.1 Sightings

A *sighting* is defined as an instance in which a sighted animal does not pose an immediate or potential threat to humans or property.

An example of this would be if you are travelling in a vehicle along a remote road and see a bear running across the road in the distance.

Do not treat sightings as an opportunity to observe or interact with wildlife. Restrain from standing around or taking pictures. By being passive, wildlife can become habituated to human presence.

7.2 Encounters

Encounters are situations where a wildlife’s behaviour or presence is perceived as posing a threat to human life or property. Some examples can include:

- Wildlife enters, is about to enter, or is already in the location with high levels of human activity such as camps and plant site.
- Workers feel threatened by the presence of wildlife or feel that wildlife may become a threat.
- Wildlife acts defensively or approaches you anywhere.

Smaller animals protecting their young in nests they have established on Cenovus worksites or buildings (*i.e.*, birds swooping) would be considered defensive behaviour, but not an encounter. If you need to access an area that wildlife is protecting, contact the field Environmental Advisor for advice on how to proceed.

If a bear den is disturbed, stop clearing activities immediately. Set up a minimum 100m buffer around the den site. Avoid clearing the buffered area until the spring and the bear is no longer a threat.

7.3 How to respond in an encounter

If a worker becomes face-to-face with wildlife, there are four key steps to take:

1. **Stop.** Despite the natural instinct to turn and run in the other direction, the safest movement is to stop so you can assess the situation and decide what behaviour is being exhibited by a bear or what the potential threat other wildlife may be posing. Running can entice bears, wolves or cougars to chase after you.

2. **Assess.** Is this a sighting or an encounter? Does the bear know I am here? For bears, is it acting defensively, non-defensively or passively? Is the animal moving away on its own?
3. **Decide.** Determine what the appropriate action is given the wildlife's behaviour and your situation.
4. **Act.** Act as decided in step 3. You may have to reassess your approach if your action didn't work. Adapt to the situation.

7.4 Understanding specific wildlife behaviour

Having prior knowledge of wildlife behaviour during an encounter will empower workers during the assessing process and enable workers to make a sound plan during an encounter.

There are several resources that provide in-depth information on wildlife behaviours:

- Bears – BearSmart Program Manual (pages 19-23), The BearSmart Guide (pages 16-23), *Energy Safety Canada's Spectrum of Bear Engagement - Field*
- Cougars – The BearSmart Guide (pages 32-37)
- Large Ungulates - *Energy Safety Canada's Wildlife Fact Sheet*
- Wolves and coyotes – *Energy Safety Canada's Wildlife Awareness: A program Development Guideline* (pages 24-26)

7.5 Reporting an encounter

Once you are out of immediate danger (such as in a vehicle, building, or an area some distance away from wildlife), be sure to do the following to ensure the safety of others:

- Inform others in the immediate area of the threat and have them move to a safe area.
- Inform your supervisor who will follow the site-specific protocol (see Appendix C: Wildlife Encounter Flowchart).
 - Part of the site-specific protocol may include the dispatch of trained individuals such as a designated bear monitor.
 - Upon receipt of a report of an encounter, wildlife incident responders (i.e. Environment team or a third-party/ contract company), will determine if any action needs to be taken to resolve the encounter or prevent future encounters. When available, only those trained to interpret animal behaviour, such as a bear warden, will take the lead in high-risk wildlife incidents.

When it is safe to do so, record key information about the encounter. This includes exact time and location, proximity to site, type and number of wildlife, and direction of travel in Intalex.

It is recommended that mock scenarios be used to review the site-specific protocol. Advanced training can be obtained to inform responders. Contact your Environmental Advisor for more information. Training, reference material, and any other assistance for identified responders to wildlife incidents can be arranged for the asset by the Health & Safety or Environmental Advisor.

8.0 Training

8.1 Training

It is expected that all personnel involved in work, related to this guideline, will have training and the appropriate competency to perform their roles. Training may include theoretical (classroom), practical education/ training and a competency review. Cenovus expectations related to training and competency is outlined in 5.4 Training and Competency Assurance COMS Standard.

8.2 Cenovus staff and service providers required training

It is the accountability of Functional Leaders to determine which workers, including service providers, and/ or what work scope requires the following training and the frequency in which the training must be completed. Functional leaders can consult Environmental Advisors for more information.

8.2.1 Wildlife Awareness Online (Energy Safety Canada)

This course provides field workers with the basic knowledge for working safely in remote and wilderness habitats, while promoting the safe co-existence with wildlife. This course also includes bear awareness online.

8.2.2 Bear Awareness Online (Energy Safety Canada)

Bear Awareness is a course that introduces the three types of bears in North America. The primary focus is to learn how to coexist successfully with these animals.

8.2.3 Bear Spray (Workday)

WorkDay describes several important characteristics of bear spray, such as how to store, transport, and efficiently and effectively deploy bear spray. It also provides first aid treatments if accidentally sprayed by bear spray.

!	Similar training provided by other vendors may be considered as equivalent. Consult with Environmental Advisors for training equivalency.
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9.0 References

9.1 Definitions and acronyms

The following terms and definitions are specific to this guideline.

Table 2: Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
Active bear season	April 1 to November 1.
Bear watch	Any individual who has been trained in bear/ wildlife awareness and hands-on deterrent deployment and is assigned as a lookout for a work crew.
Bear warden	Anyone who has been specially trained in aversion techniques, with or without a specially-trained dog, that will respond to bear encounters.

Term	Definition
Encounter	Situations where a wildlife’s behaviour or presence is perceived as posing a threat to human life or property.
Habituated	When wildlife becomes accustomed to human activity and no longer displays fear-based behaviour.
Sightings	An instance in which a sighted animal does not pose an immediate or potential threat to humans or property.

9.2 Related information

The following Cenovus references supports this guideline.

- [Alberta OHS Code](#) – Part 2 – Hazard Assessment, Elimination, and Control
- [Bear Biology](#)
- [Government of Alberta](#)
 - [Alberta BearSmart Program Manual](#)
 - [Bears and Industrial Workers](#)
 - [Bear-Human Conflict Management Plan for Camps](#)
 - [Bear Smart Brochure](#)
 - [Best Management Practices: Managing Waste Management Facilities for Bears and Wildlife](#)
 - [Black Bear Response Guide \(2019\)](#)
 - [Know Your Bears](#)
 - [The BearSmart Guide to Playing Safely in Bear and Cougar Country](#)
- COMS Standards
 - 3.1 Risk Management COMS Standard
 - 4.5 Operating and Maintenance Procedures COMS Standard
 - 5.4 Training and Competency Assurance COMS Standard
 - 7.2 Assurance COMS Standard
- [Energy Safety Canada](#)
 - [Safety Bulletin: Be Bear Aware](#)
 - [Spectrum of Bear Engagement - Field](#)
 - [Wildlife Awareness Development Guideline](#)
- HSER Program Revision Process
- HSER Programs & documentation
 - Working Alone Standard
- [Living with Wildlife](#) (interactive page with videos)

Appendix A: Wildlife Conflict Site Inspection Form



Site/ Facility:	LSD:
Operated By:	Site Contact:
Date:	Email:

Compliance Questions:	Comments	Actions Required & Timeline (see Deficiency sheets)
1) Is the facility within a bear proof enclosure?		
2) If the facility is not fenced, is garbage removed to bear resistant containers or an approved facility on a daily basis?		
3) Are the following contained and secured in a bear resistant container or facility:		
3 a) Garbage (bear resistant containers including small garbage receptacles and large bins)		
3 b) Waste water (totally enclosed system and disposed of at approved facility)		
3 c) Waste cooking grease bin		
4) Has any waste cooking grease been spilled on the sides of the bin or in the surrounding area?		
5) Are the grey or black water lines leaking?		
6) Is there waste water storage containment within a parking lot that is not enclosed in a bear proof fence?		
7) Are the following signs posted and not visually obstructed in the specific areas?		
7a) "General wildlife awareness" signs at camp entrance, main buildings and field shacks		

7b) "Report wildlife encounters" sign in parking lots, side of garbage containers/ waste areas		
7c) "Personal waste management" (do not litter and remove all waste from vehicles and dispose of it in waste containers within enclosed camp areas) at unenclosed parking lots		
8) Are camps located in open areas with good visibility (e.g. long lines of sight between buildings)?		
9) Is the camp arranged to minimize bear "cornering" situations and leave escape routes?		
10) Are portions of your camp in close proximity to offsite forested areas? If so, is the offsite vegetation thinned out enough to be fire smart compliant (enough such that wildlife in adjacent vegetation are easily visible)?		
9) Are there any waste disposal or storage facilities within 1 km of the facility? (exceptions include sensitive areas, such as caribou ranges).		
11) Is skirting in place on camp trailers?		
12) Is the camp inspected daily by staff for wildlife attractants and are these attractants removed if appropriate to do so?		
13) Is there a wildlife encounter call-out procedure in place?		
14) Are bear dogs used as a part of the bear deterrent program?		
Inspected By:		
Telephone Number(s):		
Signature(s):		

Wildlife Conflict Site Inspection Form - Deficiency Worksheet (complete one for each deficiency listed above)

Compliance Question #:

Deficiency:

[insert photo(s) of deficiency here]

Follow up actions & timeline:

Follow up documentation

[insert photo(s) of compliance here]

Appendix B: Camp Inspection Checklist Example

Camp Inspection Checklist

Wildlife daily checklist

Week of	
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Maintenance walkaround

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

Free/ clear of garbage and debris						
Exterior lights all working						
All fencing man doors are secure						
Garbage bins are closed; no loose debris						
Grease bin lids are closed; no residue or spills						
Wildlife reporting signs are in place and visible						
Decks/ stairs behind and around kitchen are clean						

Security walkarounds

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

Vehicles in parking lot have their windows closed						
Pickup truck beds are free of garbage and debris						

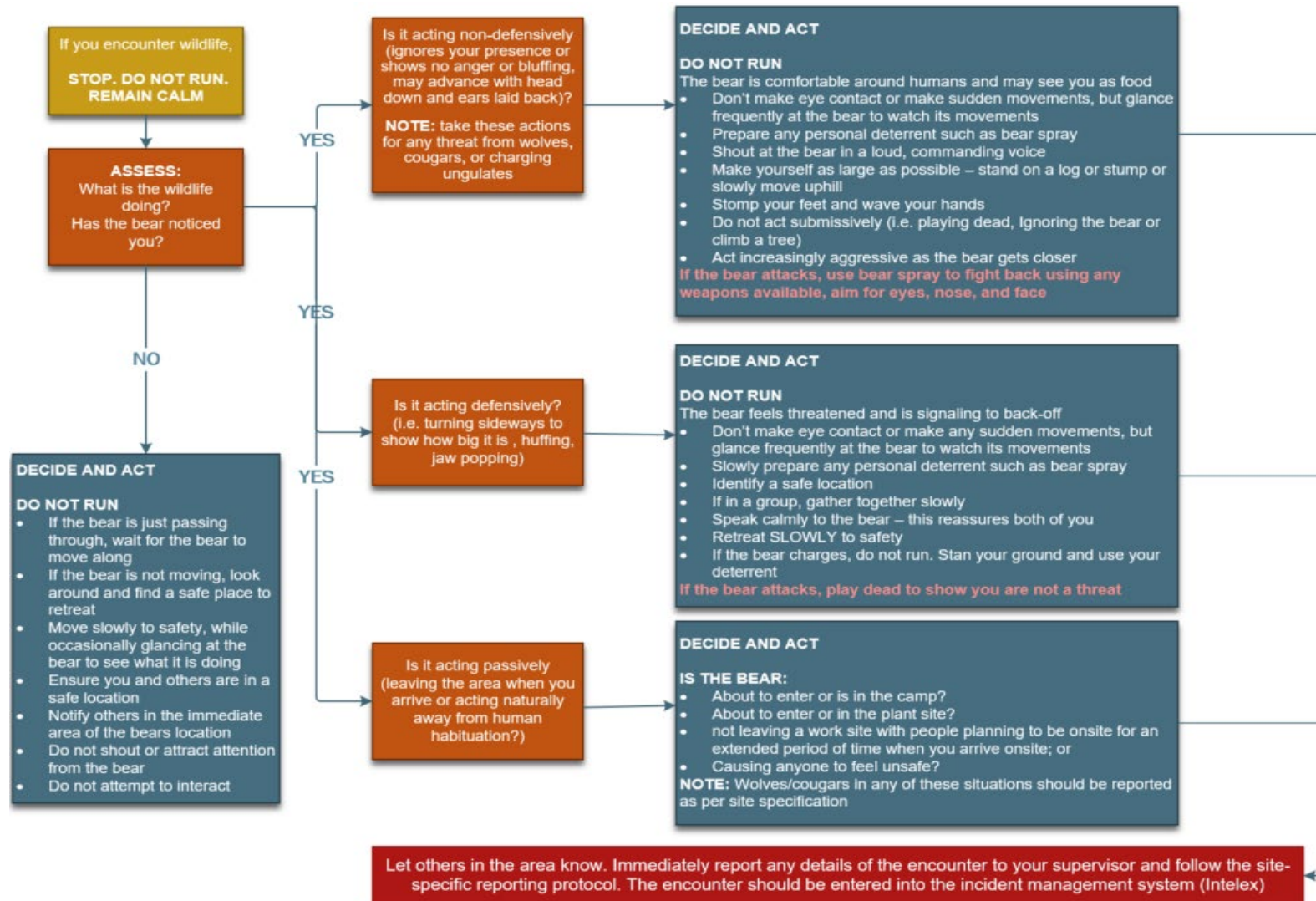
Kitchen staff daily operations

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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Buddy system when removing garbage/ used oil						
Garbage/ used oil teams have working, tested bear horns available						
Garbage/ used oil teams wear reflective clothing						
All kitchen staff have bear awareness training						
All refuse bags are double-bagged and tied						
All bin lids are closed, area clean after disposing of garbage/ used oil						

****Please complete this checklist daily between April 1 and November 1****

Appendix C: Wildlife Encounter Flowchart



Appendix D: Wildlife Signage Guideline

Table 3: Wildlife Crossing Signs


Purpose	Indicates that motorists are approaching an area that wildlife often cross the roadway. Physical conditions on the roadway section that inhibit the motorist’s ability to see and avoid encountering frequently approaching wildlife.
Specifications	width 900 mm X height 900 mm triangular, panel area 0.81 (m ²) black on yellow background 0.080 aluminium
Placement	Sign placement should be in accordance with the Government of Alberta Recommended Practices Placement of Signs guideline. Wildlife Crossing signs should be placed no closer than 8 km apart unless there is a major intersection within an 8 km section between signs. In this case it may be desirable to install an additional sign beyond the intersection. The first wildlife crossing sign of a sequence should be placed approximately 300 to 350 metres in advance of the start of the known wildlife crossing area.
Example	

Table 4: Bear Awareness Signs


Purpose	Signage posting for awareness with guidance of the precautions to be taken. Local telephone number provided by site.
Specifications	width 120 mm X height 120 mm triangular square white background, reflective paint 0.080 aluminium
Placement	Signage posting for awareness of bears and reporting bear sightings Local telephone number provided by site – sighting call number
Example	

Table 5: Bear Notice Signage with Sighting Telephone Numbers

Purpose	Signage posting for awareness of bears and reporting bear sightings Local telephone number provided by site – sighting call number
Specifications	width 30 mm X height 40 mm triangular white background, reflective paint 0.080 aluminium
Placement	Parking lots, sides of garbage containers.
Example	