

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Services



Abt Associates (Abt) offers the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) expert support through every phase of the NRDAR process, including emergency response and pre-assessment, case strategy and assessment planning, trustee council management support, injury and damage assessments, restoration planning and scaling, settlement, litigation support, post-settlement restoration planning, public document development, monitoring, and implementation oversight.

NRDAR Experience

Abt's Environment and Natural Resources Division, further enhanced by the recent merger of Abt and Stratus Consulting, brings 30 years of experience in economic and environmental analysis, including more than two decades of experience working on NRDARs for natural resource trustees at more than 100 sites across the United States. Since the 1980s, Abt team members have assisted DOI, tribes, and other federal and state natural resource trustees with scientific, economic, legal, and strategic support on more than 100 NRDAR cases (see map). Our team's experience ranges from small mine sites to major oil spills (including the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill) to the largest Superfund sites in the country. We have assisted trustees with ongoing support and have been brought in at case transition points when trustee councils need new or additional contractor support. Examples of our team's support to trustees include:

- Working on assessments that have successfully led to successful resolution of NRDAR claims, including at sites such as the Lower Fox River/Green Bay, the Coeur d'Alene Basin, and the Upper Arkansas River.
- Supporting trustees in emergency onsite ephemeral data collection using statistically sound sampling and data collection methods. For the *Deepwater Horizon* spill, our team supported the U.S. and multiple states by being onsite within 2 days of notification for the initial human use data collection and overall sampling plan development.

- Assisting trustees in developing expedited NRDAR claims for inclusion in bankruptcy claims. Our team supported the U.S. and multiple states on developing claims for the ASARCO bankruptcy case, and defending those claims through expert testimony at the bankruptcy trials.
- Providing trustees with comprehensive NRDAR litigation support. For example, our team played a lead role for the Coeur d'Alene Basin, Idaho, mine site NRDAR for more than a decade, providing technical, management, strategic, and litigation support to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the U.S. Department of Justice in one of the largest NRDAR cases ever litigated in federal court.

Abt Associates Offers a Full Range of NRDAR Expertise:

- Emergency response/ephemeral data collection
- Conceptual site model development
- Database review and development
- Data gap analysis
- Preparation of NRDAR documents:
 - Pre-assessment screens
 - Preliminary estimate of damages
 - Assessment plans
 - Field and laboratory sampling and analysis plans
 - Quality assurance project plans
 - Restoration plans
 - Expert reports
 - Monitoring plans
- Cooperative assessment activities
- Implementation of field and laboratory assessment studies
- Fate and transport modeling
- Synthesis of exposure and injury analysis
- Quantification of economic damages
- Liability analysis
- Support to trustees for settlement negotiations
- NRDAR litigation support, including expert witness testimony and preparation of witnesses
- Restoration implementation support and monitoring
- Trustee council management support
- Strategic communication and outreach

- Providing trustees with post-settlement support to help provide support to facilitate efficient use of recoveries from settlements for cost-effective restoration. Our team has helped trustees engage in public outreach, identify and evaluate restoration projects, develop programmatic and site-specific restoration plans, conduct appropriate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses, and develop monitoring plans.

- An extensive nationwide network of academic experts: Our team has long-standing relationships with academic and subject-matter experts in a broad range of fields, including resource economics and econometrics, remote sensing, toxicology, statistical design, and field ecology. In addition to designated consulting experts Dr. James Opaluch, Dr. John Loomis, and Mr. Robert Berman, we have a demonstrated track-record of working with trustees to identify, vet, and retain subject matter experts as needed to support specific NRDARs.



The map depicts geographic locations of the NRDAR cases Abt has supported.

Excellent Client Ratings

“Primary contractor lead was very attentive and provided exceptional service. Products were of high quality and responsive to trustees’ needs.”

- USFWS; Oil spill NRDAR case

“Abt excelled in meeting the program office’s need for economic and environmental assessment work under this contract.”

- US EPA Office of Water

Areas of Expertise

Our interdisciplinary in-house team of experts understands the technical, legal, and strategic challenges faced by trustees and can provide effective, targeted support. Close to 80% of our technical team has advanced degrees, including about 30% with doctorate degrees. We have expertise in fields such as:

Ecology	Restoration planning
Toxicology	NEPA analysis
Restoration ecology	Project management
Hydrology – surface and groundwater	Data management
Geochemistry	Public outreach
Geomorphology	Geographic information systems (GIS)
Resource economics	Remote sensing
Survey development	Environmental engineering

Additional Team Members

Additional expertise is brought with our team members, including:

- RPS Applied Science Associates (ASA), who brings more than 20 years of experience providing NRDAR services for numerous spills, assisting federal and state public trustees in claims against responsible parties.

Contact

For more information on Abt Associates and our work in NRDAR, contact:

Elena Besedin, Ph.D.

Abt Program Director for the Economic and Technical Support Contract to DOI
Abt Associates | Environment and Natural Resources Division
Elena_Besedin@abtassoc.com
617.349.2770

Kaylene Ritter, Ph.D.

Abt Deputy Program Director for the Economic and Technical Support Contract to DOI
Abt Associates | Environment and Natural Resources Division
Kaylene_Ritter@abtassoc.com
303.381.8243

Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 40 countries.

