**SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

* Firearms (see below for description)
* Appropriate Ammunition (see below for description)
* Trigger Lock and Storge Case
* First Aid Kit & ERP
* Hearing Protection (when practicing)
* Proper Carrying Device for Field Work
* Radio/Satellite/Cell/InReach

**KEY SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

* A valid Possession and Acquisition License (PAL)
* The ability to safety and proficiently use, handle, store, maintain and transport a firearm and ammunition
* Internal company firearms training to prove competency and authorization from Management to carry
* Communicate with other crew members

**BEFORE BEGINNING WORK**

1. The carriage of a firearm is authorized by Management on an individual basis for the protection of Geoterra employees while working in remote wilderness areas.
2. Types of Firearms and Ammunition:
	1. The firearm and ammunition carried must be of the type and calibre to stop and kill a large animal.
3. Training, Certification and Competency:
4. Any worker wishing to carry a firearm in the field must provide proof of valid Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) issued by the Government of Canada.
5. If a restricted firearm will be carried, a copy of a valid Authorization to Carry (ATC) and an accompanying Authorization to Transport (ATT) must be provided. Additional transportation and storage requirements apply as per the Firearms Act.
6. Worker must have BC First Aid Level 1
7. Worker must have completed the Geoterra Bear & Wildlife Awareness training (or equivalent)
8. In addition to the above training and certifications, the employee must have internal company firearms training to prove competency to Geoterra and be able to demonstrate safe handling, storage and transportation as per the Firearms Act.
9. Storage and Transportation:
10. All firearms must be unloaded when stored or transported.
11. Firearms must be unable to be fired (by using a secure locking device or by removing the bolt or bolt carrier) or locked in a sturdy, secure container or room that cannot be easily broken open or into.
12. Firearms must be stored in a place where ammunition for the firearm is not easy to obtain. Ammunition can be stored with the firearm if the ammunition is stored in a securely locked container that cannot be easily broken open or into.
13. In remote wilderness areas (e.g. satellite camps) points (a) and (b) do not apply. Firearms must still be unloaded.
14. Transportation of a restricted firearm must adhere to requirements in the Firearms Act.
15. Maintenance:
16. Firearms must be regularly cleaned and inspected to ensure safe working order.
17. A firearm that is damaged or has excessive wear must not be used.

**PROCEDURES**

1. Loading and Unloading:
2. Load and unload firearms away from the rest of the crew. Always point the firearm in a safe direction.
3. Be aware of how many rounds you put into your firearm. Store extra ammunition in a safe, dry place.

2. Field Transportation:

1. Carry firearms safely and ensure they do not get caught up on branches or other obstacles.
2. Have firearms readily accessible in the event of a wildlife encounter.
3. Protect the muzzle to prevent debris or moisture entering the barrel.
4. Always walk with the safety on and the chamber empty.

3. Discharge:

1. Depending on the situation, problem wildlife may be effectively warned off by firing a warning shot. Shooting problem wildlife should only occur after all other options are considered, and without compromising safety to yourself or other crew members.
2. If possible, communicate your intention and reason for discharging your firearm to other crew members.

**PROCEDURES CONT**

1. Pull out the firearm and get it in the ready to shoot position. Ensure you have a firm stance and are in a good position relative to your target.
2. Always be sure of your target and beyond before discharging a firearm.
3. Only discharge your firearm when you have a high percent chance of hitting your target.
4. fYou should always target the animal in the mid-section of the body; do not aim for the head. You will have a higher percentage change of hitting the animal in a vital area if you aim for more mass.
5. Every attempt must be made to ensure a shot animal is a dead animal. Do not leave injured animals in the bush.

4. Follow Up and Reporting:

1. In all situations when a firearm is discharged during a wildlife encounter, a Wildlife Encounter Report must be completed. Depending on the nature of the encounter, a Near Miss Report or an Incident Report and Investigation may also be required to be completed. See the Wildlife Encounter Report for further instruction.
2. Your Supervisor and Management must be informed after a situation where a firearm was discharged.
3. In the event of an animal being killed, the Supervisor must notify BC Conservation Services who will ensure proper disposal.