Revised 10/30/2007

RISSO'S DOLPHIN (*Grampus griseus*): California/Oregon/Washington Stock

STOCK DEFINITION AND GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

Risso's dolphins are distributed world-wide in tropical and warm-temperate waters. Off the U.S. West coast, Risso's dolphins are commonly seen on the shelf in the Southern California Bight and in slope and offshore waters of California, Oregon and Washington. Based on sighting patterns from recent aerial and shipboard surveys conducted in these three states during different seasons (Figure 1), animals found off California during the colder water months are thought to shift northward into Oregon and Washington as water temperatures increase in late spring and summer (Green et al. 1992). The southern end of this population's range is not well-documented, but previous surveys have shown a conspicuous 500 nmi distributional gap between these animals and Risso's dolphins sighted south of Baja California and in the Gulf of California (Mangels and Gerrodette 1994). Thus this population appears distinct from animals found in the eastern tropical Pacific and the Gulf of California. Although Risso's dolphins are not restricted to U.S. waters, cooperative management agreements with Mexico exist only for the tuna purse seine fishery and not for other fisheries which may take this species (e.g. gillnet fisheries). For the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) stock assessment reports, Risso's dolphins within the Pacific U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone are divided into two discrete, non-contiguous areas: 1) waters off California, Oregon and Washington (this report), and 2) Hawaiian waters.

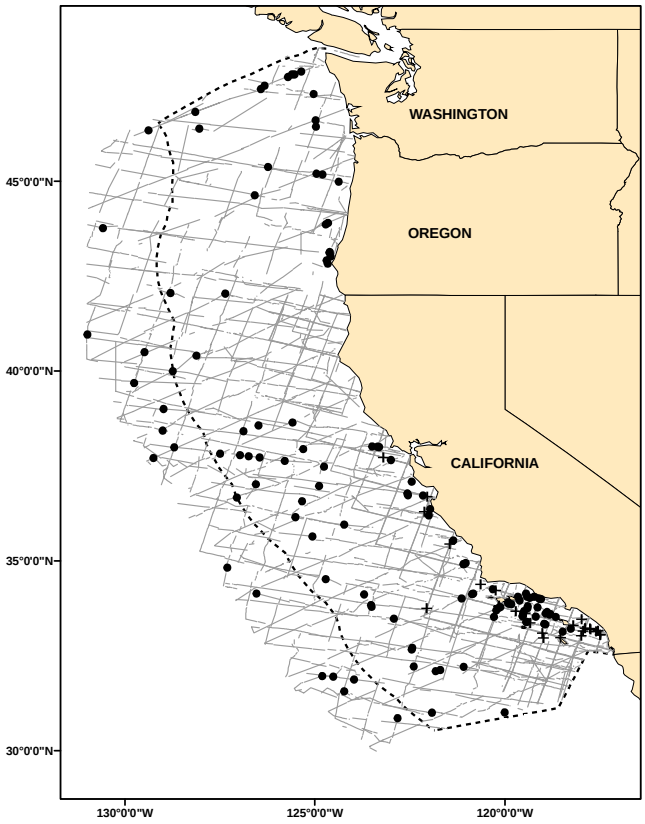

Figure 1. Risso's dolphin sightings based on aerial and shipboard surveys off California, Oregon, and Washington, 1991-2005 (see Appendix 2 for data sources and information on timing and location of survey effort). Dashed line represents the U.S. EEZ, thin lines indicate completed transect effort of all surveys combined. Key: • = summer/autumn ship-based sightings; + = winter/spring aerial-based sightings.

POPULATION SIZE

The previous best estimates of abundance for Risso's dolphins were based on three summer/autumn shipboard surveys conducted within 300 nmi of the coasts California in 1991 and 1993 (Barlow and Gerrodette 1996) and California, Oregon, and Washington in 1996 (Barlow 1997). More recently, two shipboard surveys within 300 nmi of the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington were conducted in summer/autumn of 2001 (Barlow, 2003) and 2005 (Forney, 2007). The distribution of

Risso's dolphins throughout this region is highly variable, apparently in response to oceanographic changes on both seasonal and interannual time scales (Forney and Barlow 1998). As oceanographic conditions vary, Risso's dolphins may spend time outside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, and therefore a multi-year average abundance estimate is the most appropriate for management within U.S. waters. The 2001-2005 geometric mean abundance estimate for California, Oregon and Washington waters based on the two most recent ship surveys is 12,093 (CV = 0.24) Risso's dolphins (Barlow 2003, Forney, 2007).

Minimum Population Estimate

The log-normal 20th percentile of the 2001-2005 weighted average abundance estimate is 9,947 Risso's dolphins.

Current Population Trend

The pooled abundance estimate from the most recent two surveys of California, Oregon, and Washington waters is 12,093 (CV=0.24), which is not significantly different from the estimate of 16,066 (0.28) from pooled 1996-2001 surveys (Barlow 2003). Inter-annual variability in the distribution of Risso's dolphin within the ship survey study area is likely responsible for the differences in estimated abundance between surveys. Currently, there is no evidence of a trend in abundance for this stock.

CURRENT AND MAXIMUM NET PRODUCTIVITY RATES

No information on current or maximum net productivity rates is available for this stock.

POTENTIAL BIOLOGICAL REMOVAL

The potential biological removal (PBR) level for this stock is calculated as the minimum population size (9,947) times one half the default maximum net growth rate for cetaceans (½ of 4%) times a recovery factor of 0.40 (for a species of unknown status with a mortality rate CV >0.80; Wade and Angliss 1997), resulting in a PBR of 80 Risso's dolphins per year.

HUMAN-CAUSED MORTALITY AND SERIOUS INJURY

Fishery Information

A summary of recent fishery mortality and injury for this stock of Risso's dolphin is shown in Table 1. More detailed information on these fisheries is provided in Appendix 1. Mortality estimates for the California drift gillnet fishery are included for the five most recent years of monitoring, 2000-2004 (Carretta and Chivers 2004 ; Carretta et al. 2005a, 2005b). After the 1997 implementation of a Take Reduction Plan, which included skipper education workshops and required the use of pingers and minimum 6-fathom extenders, overall cetacean entanglement rates in the drift gillnet fishery dropped considerably (Barlow and Cameron 2003). However, because of interannual variability in entanglement rates and the relative rarity of Risso's dolphin entanglements, additional years of data will be required to fully evaluate the effectiveness of pingers for reducing mortality of this particular species. Additional mortality and injury information from the former California shallow set longline fishery and unknown fishery-related strandings are included in Table 1. Mean annual takes in Table 1 are based on 2000-2004 data. This results in an average estimate 6.6 (CV = 1.02) Risso's dolphins taken annually.

Table 1. Summary of available information on the incidental mortality and injury of Risso's dolphin (California/ Oregon/Washington Stock) in commercial fisheries that might take this species. All observed entanglements of Risso's dolphins resulted in the death of the animal. Coefficients of variation for mortality estimates are provided in parentheses; n/a = not available. Mean annual takes are based on 2000-2004 data unless noted otherwise.

Fishery Name	Data Type	Year(s)	Percent Observer Coverage	Observed Mortality	Estimated Annual Mortality (CV)	Mean Annual Takes (CV)
CA/OR thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet fishery	observer	2000	22.9%	2	9 (0.71)	5.8 (1.02)
		2001	20.4%	0	0	
		2002	22.1%	0	0	
		2003	20.2%	4	20 (0.50)	
		2004	20.6%	0	0	

Fishery Name	Data Type	Year(s)	Percent Observer Coverage	Observed Mortality	Estimated Annual Mortality (CV)	Mean Annual Takes (CV)
CA shallow set longline fishery	observer	2001 2002 2003 2004 No fishery in 2005	n/a	1 animal released injured in 2003, hook not removed	n/a	0.25 (n/a)
Unknown fishery	stranding	2002 2003		2 1	n/a n/a	0.6 (n/a)
Minimum total annual takes						6.6 (1.02)

Drift gillnet fisheries for swordfish and sharks exist along the entire Pacific coast of Baja California, Mexico and may take animals from this population. Quantitative data are available only for the Mexican swordfish drift gillnet fishery, which uses vessels, gear, and operational procedures similar to those in the U.S. drift gillnet fishery, although nets may be up to 4.5 km long (Holts and Sosa-Nishizaki 1998). The fleet increased from two vessels in 1986 to 31 vessels in 1993 (Holts and Sosa-Nishizaki 1998). The total number of sets in this fishery in 1992 can be estimated from data provided by these authors to be approximately 2700, with an observed rate of marine mammal bycatch of 0.13 animals per set (10 marine mammals in 77 observed sets; Sosa-Nishizaki et al. 1993). This overall mortality rate is similar to that observed in California driftnet fisheries during 1990-95 (0.14 marine mammals per set; Julian and Beeson, 1998), but species-specific information is not available for the Mexican fisheries. Previous efforts to convert the Mexican swordfish driftnet fishery to a longline fishery have resulted in a mixed-fishery, with 20 vessels alternately using longlines or driftnets, 23 using driftnets only, 22 using longlines only, and seven with unknown gear type (Berdegué 2002).

Additional mortality of unknown extent has been documented for Risso's dolphins in the squid purse seine fishery off Southern California (Heyning et al. 1994). This mortality probably represented animals killed intentionally to protect catch or gear, rather than incidental mortality, and such intentional takes are now illegal under the 1994 Amendment to the MMPA. This fishery has expanded markedly since 1992 (California Department of Fish and Game, unpubl. data). In addition to mortalities observed in the drift gillnet fishery, there were three fishery-related strandings of Risso's dolphin during 2000-2004. Bullets or bullet fragments were removed from two of the three animals while the third animal showed evidence of gunshot wounds. Two animals had recently been feeding on squid. The timing, circumstances and location of the strandings suggests that the squid purse seine fishery may have been responsible for the mortalities.

STATUS OF STOCK

The status of Risso's dolphins off California, Oregon and Washington relative to OSP is not known, and there are insufficient data to evaluate potential trends in abundance. No habitat issues are known to be of concern for this species. They are not listed as "threatened" or "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act nor as "depleted" under the MMPA. Over the last 5-year period (2000-2004), the average annual human-caused mortality (6.6 animals) is estimated to be less than the PBR (80), and therefore they are not classified as a "strategic" stock under the MMPA. The total fishery mortality and serious injury for this stock is less than 10% of the calculated PBR and, therefore, can be considered to be insignificant and approaching zero mortality and serious injury rate.

REFERENCES

Barlow, J. 1997. Preliminary estimates of cetacean abundance off California, Oregon and Washington based on a 1996 ship survey and comparisons of passing and closing modes. Admin. Rep. LJ-97-11, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 271, La Jolla, CA 92038. 25p.

Barlow, J. and G. A. Cameron. 2003. Field experiments show that acoustic pingers reduce marine mammal bycatch in the California drift gillnet fishery. Marine Mammal Science 19(2):265-283.

Barlow, J., K. A. Forney, P. S. Hill, R. L. Brownell, Jr., J. V. Carretta, D. P. DeMaster, F. Julian, M. S. Lowry, T. Ragen, and R. R. Reeves. 1997. U.S. Pacific Marine Mammal Stock Assessments: 1996. U.S. Dep. Commer., NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-SWFSC-248. 223p.

Barlow, J. and T. Gerrodette. 1996. Abundance of cetaceans in California waters based on 1991 and 1993 ship surveys. NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-SWFSC-233. 15 pp.

Barlow, J. 1997. Preliminary estimates of cetacean abundance off California, Oregon, and Washington based on a 1996 ship survey and comparisons of closing and passing modes. Administrative Report LJ-97-11, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037. 25p.

Barlow, J. 2003. Preliminary estimates of the abundance of cetaceans along the U.S. west coast: 1991_2001. Southwest Fisheries Science Center Administrative Report LJ_03_03. Available from SWFSC, 8604 La Jolla Shores Dr., La Jolla CA 92037. 31p.

Berdegué, J. 2002. Depredación de las especies pelágicas reservadas a la pesca deportiva y especies en peligro de extinción con uso indiscriminado de artes de pesca no selectivas (palangres, FAD's, trampas para peces y redes de agallar fijas y a la deriva) por la flota palangrera Mexicana. Fundación para la conservación de los picudos. A.C. Mazatlán, Sinaloa, 21 de septiembre.

Carretta, J.V. and S.J. Chivers. 2004. Preliminary estimates of marine mammal mortality and biological sampling of cetaceans in California gillnet fisheries for 2003. Paper SC/56/SM1 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, June 2004 (unpublished). [Available from Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037, USA].

Carretta, J.V., S.J. Chivers, and K. Danil. 2005a. Preliminary estimates of marine mammal bycatch, mortality, and biological sampling of cetaceans in California gillnet fisheries for 2004. Administrative Report LJ-05-10, available from Southwest Fisheries Science Center, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, California, 92037. 17 p.

Carretta, J.V., T. Price, D. Petersen, and R. Read. 2005b. Estimates of marine mammal, sea turtle, and seabird mortality in the California drift gillnet fishery for swordfish and thresher shark, 1996-2002. Marine Fisheries Review 66(2):21-30.

Forney, K. A. and J. Barlow. 1998. Seasonal patterns in the abundance and distribution of California cetaceans, 1991-92. Mar. Mamm. Sci. 14:460-489.

Forney, K. A., J. Barlow and J. V. Carretta. 1995. The abundance of cetaceans in California waters. Part II: Aerial surveys in winter and spring of 1991 and 1992. Fish. Bull. 93:15-26.

Forney, K.A. 2007. Preliminary estimates of cetacean abundance along the U.S. west coast and within four National Marine Sanctuaries during 2005. U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SWFSC-406. 27 p.

Green, G., J. J. Brueggeman, R. A. Grotefendt, C. E. Bowlby, M. L. Bonnell, and K. C. Balcomb, III. 1992. Cetacean distribution and abundance off Oregon and Washington. Ch. 1. In: Oregon and Washington Marine Mammal and Seabird Surveys. OCS Study 91-0093. Final Report prepared for Pacific OCS Region, Minerals Management Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Los Angeles, California.

Green, G., R. A. Grotefendt, M. A. Smultea, C. E. Bowlby, and R. A. Rowlett. 1993. Delphinid aerial surveys in Oregon and Washington waters. Final Report prepared for NMFS, National Marine Mammal Laboratory, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE, Seattle, Washington, 98115, Contract #50ABNF200058.

Heyning, J. E., T. D. Lewis and C. D. Woodhouse. 1994. A note on odontocete mortality from fishing gear entanglements off Southern California. Rep. Int. Whal. Commn. Special Issue 15:439-442.

Holts, D. Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 271, La Jolla, CA 92038.

Holts, D. and O. Sosa-Nishizaki. 1998. Swordfish, *Xiphias gladius*, fisheries of the eastern North Pacific Ocean. *In*: I. Barrett, O. Sosa-Nishizaki and N. Bartoo (eds.). Biology and fisheries of swordfish, *Xiphias gladius*. Papers from the International Symposium on Pacific Swordfish, Ensenada Mexico, 11-14 December 1994. U.S. Dep. Commer., NOAA Tech. Rep. NMFS 142, 276 p.

Julian, F. and M. Beeson. 1998. Estimates of mammal, turtle and bird mortality for two California gillnet fisheries: 1990-1995. Fish. Bull. 96:271-284.

Mangels, K. F. and Gerrodette, T. 1994. Report of cetacean sightings during a marine mammal survey in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Gulf of California aboard the NOAA ships *McARTHUR* and *DAVID*

STARR JORDAN July 28 - November 6, 1993. U.S. Dep. Commer., NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-SWFSC-211. 88 pp.

Shane, S. 1994. Occurrence and habitat use of marine mammals at Santa Catalina Island, California from 1983-91. Bull. Southern California Acad. Sci. 93:13-29.

Sosa-Nishizaki, O., R. De la Rosa Pacheco, R. Castro Longoria, M. Grijalva Chon, and J. De la Rosa Velez. 1993. Estudio biologico pesquero del pez (*Xiphias gladius*) y otras especies de picudos (marlins y pez vela). Rep. Int. CICESE, CTECT9306.

Wade, P. R. and R. P. Angliss. 1997. Guidelines for Assessing Marine Mammal Stocks: Report of the GAMMS Workshop April 3-5, 1996, Seattle, Washington. U. S. Dep. Commerce, NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-OPR-12. 93 pp.