

Draft 2006 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Stranding Summary

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Summary

Strandings of cetaceans and pinnipeds that occurred in Alaskan waters and were reported to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Alaska Region are summarized here. Currently a total of 138 events are recorded involving 151 animals. This data is subject to change as more information becomes available and with further review of the records; at this time level A reports are not yet available for at least 4 events.

Stranding events include animals found dead (floating and beach-cast) and reports of live stranded, mass stranded, abandoned, sick or injured animals. Human interactions like collisions, fishery interactions and entanglements are included. Known subsistence takes are not included, but suspected subsistence animals are in some cases included here (e.g., animals reported shot). Fishery observer reports are not included unless the animal was observed outside of statistical reporting protocols (and thus would not be included by the observer program as part of their watch data set).

Stranding events where the animal(s) could not be examined are included in the numbers below as long as the animal was at least identified as either cetacean or pinniped. Both unconfirmed and confirmed reports are compiled here.

There are two reported events involving two or more animals. Two orcas were stranded in Okalee Spit, possibly due to extreme high tides. Twelve belugas were stranded in Knik Arm, but were later released with the tide. A single beluga was found dead in Nenana, apparently making its way up the Yukon River while chasing a large school of fish. This record is the furthest inland ever recorded in the NMFS Alaska Region files.

Further stranding information and references are available at the NMFS Alaska Region webpage:
<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/strandings.htm>.

Acknowledgements

This summary is made possible by the people who report stranding events and the efforts of the Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network.

Table 1. Draft 2006 Alaska Region Stranding Reports by Initial Sighting Month, Number of Events, and Number of Animals.

Month	Events	Animals
January	3	3
February	2	2
March	4	4
April	8	8
May	19	19
June	20	20
July	32	32
August	30	31
September	8	19
October	9	9
November	3	3
Summer	1	1
Total	139	151

Table 2. Draft 2006 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Strandings by Initial Condition, Species, and Number of Animals.

Species	Initial Condition			Total
	Alive	Dead	Unknown	
Baird's Beaked whale		1		1
Beluga	14	9	3	26
Grey	1	11		12
Cetacean, large unknown	1			1
Humpback	21	4	1	26
Orca		2	1	3
Dall's porpoise		1		1
Sperm		5		5
Harbor porpoise	3	5		8
Cetacean, unknown		9		9
<i>Cetacean total</i>	40	47	5	92
Steller sea lion	4	21		25
Elephant seal	1	2		3
Ringed seal	1			1
Spotted seal	1			1
Harbor seal	10	15		25
Pinniped, unknown		2		2
<i>Pinniped total</i>	17	40		57
Unknown		2		2
<i>Unknown total</i>		2		2
Total	57	89	5	151

Large cetacean includes possible belugas, beaked whales, orcas, and baleen whales. Unknown constitutes an animal that is unknown to be a cetacean or pinniped.

Table 3. Draft 2006 Alaska Region Live Strandings Handled by the Alaska Sea Life Center for Rehabilitation by Species, Outcome, and Number of Animals.

Species	Outcome	Animals
Harbor porpoise	Died	2
	<i>Harbor porpoise total</i>	2
Steller sea lion	Released	1
	<i>Steller sea lion total</i>	1
Elephant seal	Released	1
	<i>Elephant seal total</i>	1
Ringed seal	See outcome	1
	<i>Ringed seal total</i>	1
Spotted seal	Released	1
	<i>Spotted seal total</i>	1
Harbor seal	Died during rehabilitation	2
	Died after release	1
	Released	5
	<i>Harbor seal total</i>	8
Total		14

Table 5. Draft 2006 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Strandings by Area, Species, Initial Condition, and Number of Animals.

Area	Species	Initial Condition			Total
		Alive	Dead	Unknown	
Arctic	Gray		3		3
	Unknown cetacean		1		1
	<i>Arctic Total</i>		4		4
Gulf of Alaska	Steller sea lion		1		1
	<i>Gulf of Alaska total</i>		1		1
Interior	Beluga		1		1
	<i>Interior Total</i>		1		1
Kodiak	Gray		4		4
	Humpback	1	2		3
	Unknown cetacean		1		1
	Steller sea lion		2		2
	Harbor seal		1		1
	<i>Kodiak Total</i>	1	10		11
Southcentral Alaska	Baird's beaked whale		1		1
	Fin		1		1
	Beluga	1	7	1	9
	Gray		1		1
	Humpback	1			1
	Orca		1		1
	Sperm		3		3
	Harbor porpoise	2	4		6
	Unknown cetacean		3		3
	Steller sea lion		7		7
	Elephant seal	1	1		2
	Harbor seal	7	7		14
	<i>Southcentral Alaska Total</i>	12	36	1	49
Southeast Alaska	Gray		1		1
	Humpback	17	3		20
	Orca			1	1
	Sperm		2		2
	Harbor porpoise	1	1		2
	Unknown cetacean		4		4
	Steller sea lion	4	9		13
	Elephant seal		1		1
	Harbor seal	2	7		9
	Unknown pinniped		1		1
	Unknown		1		1
<i>Southeast Alaska Total</i>	24	30	1	55	
Western Alaska	Beluga	2	1	2	5
	Gray	1	2		3
	Unknown cetacean, large	1			1
	Humpback	2			2
	Dall's porpoise		1		1
	Steller sea lion		2		2
	Ringed seal	1			1
	Spotted seal	1			1
	Harbor seal	1			1
	Unknown		1		1
	<i>Western Alaska total</i>	9	7	2	18
Total		46	89	4	139