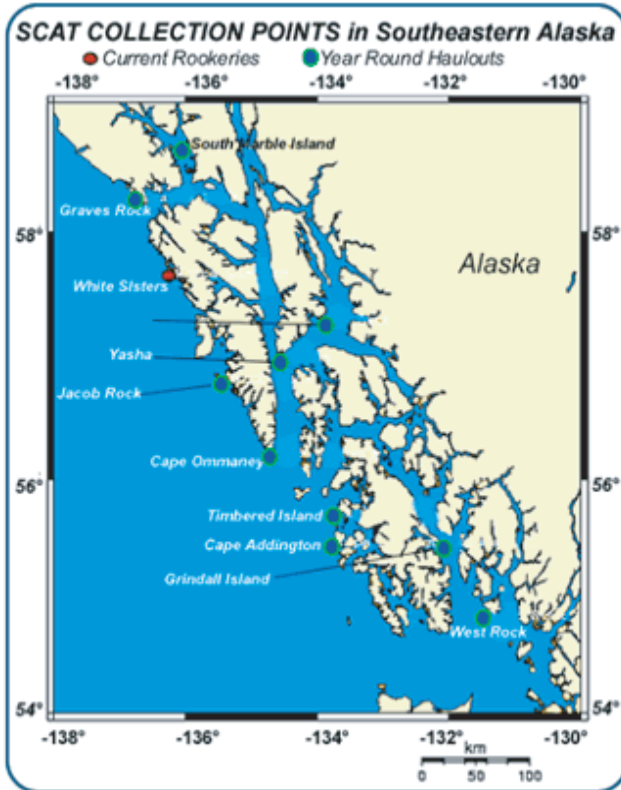




NORTH PACIFIC UNIVERSITIES MARINE MAMMAL RESEARCH CONSORTIUM



Dietary Analysis and Brand Resights of Steller Sea Lions

Monitoring diet is one of the most important research activities needed to better understand the decline and recovery of Steller sea lions.

The goal of this project is to determine the diet of the Steller sea lion in both southeast Alaska and British Columbia. The dietary data will be statistically analyzed to determine whether there is an area-specific change in diet over this region or whether any shift in diet has occurred over time.

Project Outline

Monitoring diet is one of the most important research activities needed to better understand the decline and recovery of Steller sea lions. Resighting known-aged sea lions is equally important and allows for survival rates and birth rates to be calculated. This study contributes to understanding how the diet of sea lions in the growing southeast Alaska and British Columbia population differs from the troubled populations in the Gulf of Alaska and Aleutian Islands. It will also provide insight into the diets of sea lions relative to the availability of prey.

One or two scat (feces) collectors will accompany the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) cruise in southeast Alaska, while one or two brand resighters from ADF&G or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be invited to participate in a Consortium cruise.

What Researchers hope to learn:

This study will contribute to a database of resighted branded sea lions, and to a database of dietary information. It will also help to:

- Determine the summer diets of Steller sea lions using rookeries and haulouts throughout southeast Alaska and British Columbia
- Determine diet at selected sites in southeast Alaska for comparison with assessment of fish available to Steller sea lions.
- Resight branded Steller sea lions at haulouts and rookeries to determine movement patterns and estimates of survival and birth rates.

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