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National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Enforcement Division

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT
ON INVESTIGATIONS
CONCERNING STELLER SEA LIONS**



April 2006

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Office for Law Enforcement
P.O. Box 21767
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This report can be viewed at:
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/Alaska/>

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1-800-853-1964**



STELLER SEA LION PROTECTION MEASURES

There were forty-five (45) cases opened in 2005 in the Alaska Enforcement Division concerning Steller Sea Lions. Twenty-nine (29) investigations pertained to Critical Habitat and sixteen (16) involved illegal takes/harassment. Twenty (20) of the critical habitat cases were initiated via VMS system notification. Sources for the other nine (9) cases ranged from NMFS initiated boardings to Coast Guard visuals. There were twenty-five (25) No-Transit area (50 CFR 233.202(a)(2)(i)) incursion investigations and four (4) Directed Fishing Closures (50 CFR 679.22(b)) investigations.

The following is a breakdown of each category:

Critical Habitat Area Investigations

Critical Habitat Violations = 29

Type Violation: 25 = No transit
4 = Closed to directed fishing

Source of Detection: 20 = VMS
9 = NMFS dockside boardings to CG visuals

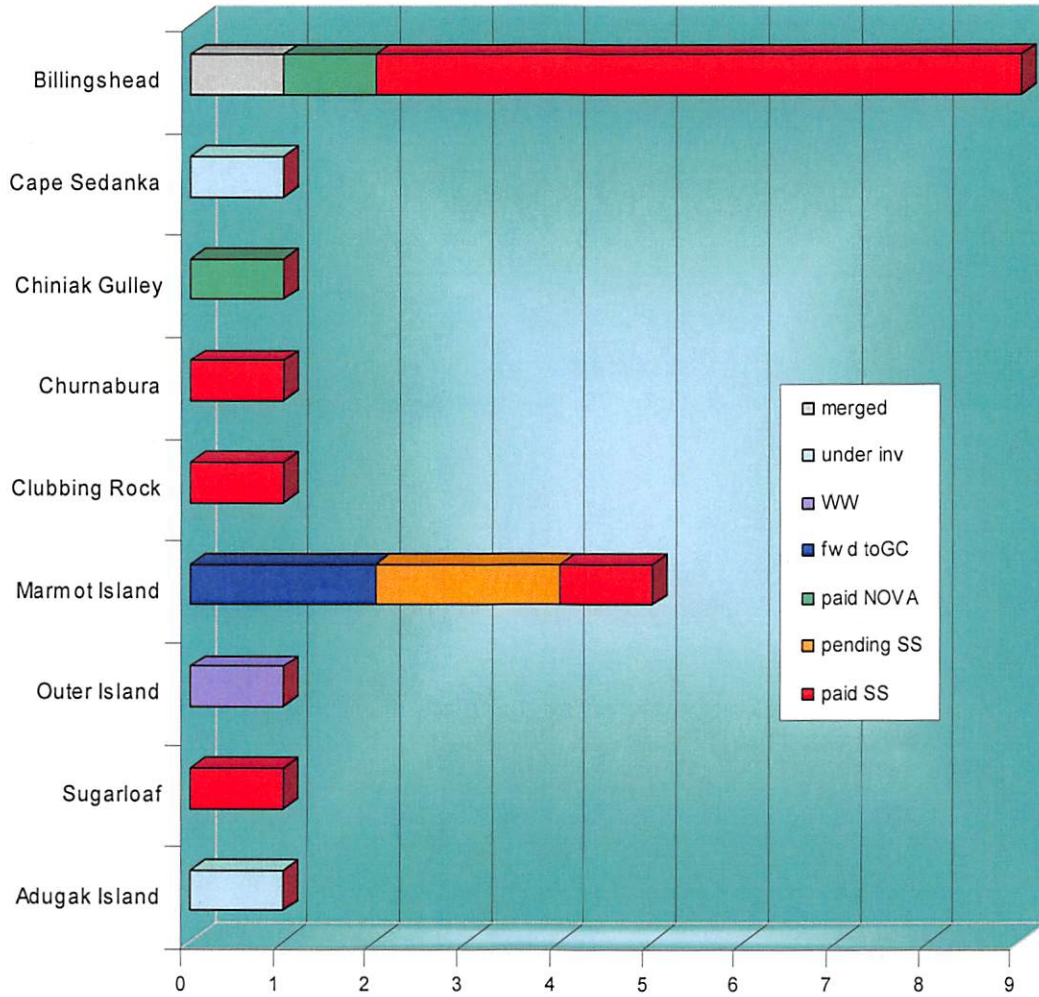
Results of Investigations

No Transit: 8 = Closed (unfounded)
1 = Written Warning
13 = Summary Settlements issued
- 11 Paid summary settlement offers
- 2 Paid NOVA's
2 = Still under investigation (two cases merged)
25 = Total

Directed Fishing Closure in Critical Habitat = 4 Total
2 = Closed (unfounded)
1 = NOVA issued
1 = Still under investigation

The graph below illustrates that the majority of critical habit incursions occurred in the vicinity of Billingshead Rookery (Eastern Aleutian Islands) and Marmot Island Rookery (Central Gulf of Alaska, Kodiak area). There were seven (7) other areas with one incursion each. All incursions but one has been committed by commercial fishing vessels. There has been equal representation of stern trawlers, long liners and pot vessels in all locales.

Figure (1)
Critical Habitat Incursions (21)



	Adugak Island	Sugarloaf	Outer Island	Marmot Island	Clubbing Rock	Churnabura	Chiniak Gulley	Cape Sedanka	Billingshead
■ paid SS	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	7
■ pending SS	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
■ paid NOVA	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
■ fw d toGC	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
■ WW	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ under inv	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
■ merged	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Steller sea lion Takes/Harassment

Illegal takes/harassment = 16

6 = Closed as unfounded

3 = Closed for lack of evidence

2 = Harassment

- 1 Verbal warning

- 1 Still under investigation

2 = Shooting

- 1 Paid Summary Settlement

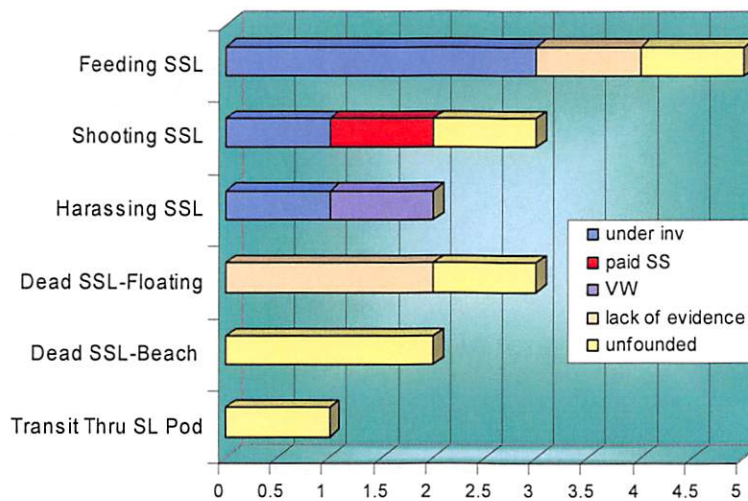
- 1 Still under investigation

3 = Feeding

- 3 Still under investigation

These illegal takes/harassments took place throughout Alaska from Ketchikan to Dutch Harbor. The illegal takes were characterized by six different attributes. Charter and sport fishing boats dominated the harassment cases. In the two cases involving the shooting of Steller sea lions, one vessel was a charter boat and the other a commercial fishing vessel. Investigations into the feeding of Steller sea lions ranged from dockside incidents, to commercial fishing vessels and charter boats.

Figure (2)
Illegal Steller Sea Lion Takes (16)



	Transit Thru SL Pod	Dead SSL-Beach	Dead SSL-Floating	Harassing SSL	Shooting SSL	Feeding SSL
unfounded	1	2	1	0	1	1
lack of evidence	0	0	2	0	0	1
VW	0	0	0	1	0	0
paid SS	0	0	0	0	1	0
under inv	0	0	0	1	1	3

HISTORY

The number of Steller sea lion cases investigated by NMFS since 2002 is shown in Table (1) below. The inception of VMS technology in June of 2002 has greatly factored into these figures. In 2005, VMS monitoring resulted in the opening of almost 70% of the Steller sea lion critical habitat investigations.

Steller Sea Lion Investigations

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Total cases	45	50	57	49
Referred to GC	3	7	10	14
Summary Settlements	14	11	14	7
Written Warnings	1	3	8	3
Verbal Warnings	1	1	2	5
Unfounded	15	25	21	17
Lack of Evidence	3	2	1	3
Pending	7	1	1	0

Table (1)

REPEAT OFFENDERS FOR INCURSIONS

Vessel	2002	2003	2004	2005
# 1-longline			XX	
# 2-pot		XX		
# 3- trawler			X	X
# 4-longline	XX			
# 5-pot	X	X		
# 6-pot		XX		
# 7-longline	XX			
# 8-longline	XX			
# 9-pot	X			XXX
# 10-pot			X	X
# 11-trawler		XXX		

X = represents a violation in that year