

Each proposal must identify one of the 3 categories and at least one national or regional funding priority under that category that is directly related to the project's goals and objectives. Proposals not clearly identifying one of the 3 categories will be returned to the applicant after initial review and will not be considered further in the 2003/2004 cycle.

Category A - Recovery or treatment of live stranded marine mammals (i.e., rescue of live stranded marine mammals including treatment, assessment, and/or rehabilitation)

1. National Funding Priorities

Enhance the response to live animal strandings including transport, treatment, rehabilitation, or euthanasia.

Enhance rehabilitation practices to protect wild animals in rehabilitation from exposure to novel pathogens and prevent introduction of new or altered diseases into the wild.

2. Regional Funding Priorities

a. Northeast Region

Enhance response to live strandings of large whales (excluding right whale) and mass strandings.

Enhance safe and efficient transport of live stranded marine mammals, especially cetaceans, including aerial transport.

Operational needs to improve access to veterinary care, including on-site (lab or field) equipment or instruments for more rapid assessment and treatment of medical condition(s) and for monitoring of treatment response.

b. Northwest Region

Enhance network operations to respond to, rescue, transport, and treat stranded marine mammals that are sick or injured.

Improve the handling, stabilization, or treatment of live stranded odontocetes.

Train responders to enhance the consistency and quality of assessments and improve documentation of live marine mammal strandings for the potential of human interactions and diseases.

c. Southeast Region

Enhance network preparedness to respond to live strandings of large whales (excluding right whale) and mass strandings of live cetaceans.

Enhance the capability to respond to live stranded marine mammals that are at risk from oil or other hazardous material spills.

Enhance all aspects of live stranded marine mammal response and transport.

Develop outreach and educational materials regarding live stranded marine mammals for both network members and the general public.

d. Southwest Region

California only

Enhance response, treatment, and transport of live stranded marine mammals.

Enhance capability to respond to live stranded marine mammals entangled in fishing gear⁴.

Enhance capabilities to respond to live strandings of marine mammals during El Nino years.

Equipment for routine transport of live stranded marine mammals.

Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands

Operational and staffing needs for increasing quality of care, including veterinary care, during live stranding events throughout the U.S. Pacific Islands (e.g., Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands).

Enhance coverage and response to live strandings of marine mammals throughout the U. S. Pacific Islands, particularly in remote or rural areas.

Outreach and training in the U.S. Pacific Islands (e.g., Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands) for response readiness and treatment of live stranded marine mammals.

Public outreach and education on protocols for communication and response to live stranding events.

Facility operation needs to improve access to veterinary care of stranded marine mammals, including facility improvements, on-site (lab or field) equipment, instruments for more rapid assessment of medical condition, and instruments for monitoring of treatment response.

Equipment needs to improve live stranded cetacean response and transport safety.

e. Alaska Region

Enhance response to live strandings of marine mammals throughout the state, particularly in remote and rural areas.

Enhance capability for the care and treatment of live stranded marine mammals.

Respond to live fur seal entanglements on the Pribilof Islands⁴

Facility operation or equipment needs for stranding response and live stranded marine mammal treatment.

⁴Authorization to conduct disentanglement activities on marine mammals can only be carried out under an MMPA Letter of Authority from NMFS or by state, local, or federal officials or employees under MMPA Section 109(h).

Category B - Data collection from living or dead stranded marine mammals (i.e., recovery of stranded marine mammals for collection of level A⁵ and level B and C⁶ data, specimens, and/or analyses)

1. National Funding Priorities

Collect specimens or data from stranded marine mammals to assess health trends in wild populations of cetaceans and pinnipeds, with emphasis on diseases that have potential for epizootics (e.g., morbillivirus), are endemic and may have a significant impact on survival/reproduction (e.g., herpes and other viruses), or have zoonotic potential.

Collect and assess human impact and post-Unusual Mortality Event data for baseline information on population demographics, life history, movement and distribution, and health, particularly from species of national concern such as beaked whales.

Enhance the quality and quantity of level B and C data⁶ collected from stranded marine mammals.

2. Regional Funding Priorities

a. Northeast Region

Equipment to enhance recovery, examination, and necropsy of large whales and mass stranded cetaceans, including transport of carcasses to salvage sites or facilities and ultimately disposal sites.

Collect data to enhance the assessment of the causes of single or mass stranded marine mammals through the use of biological, physiological, or medical diagnostic studies.

Collect data on post-release survival of marine mammals including releases from rehabilitation and/or beach releases.

Collect consistent level A data⁵, validate historic data, and improve the collection and sharing of level B and C data⁶ from stranded marine mammals.

Collect specimens and data from stranded marine mammals for the development of quality training materials on marine mammal anatomy and descriptive pathology.

Collect biological samples from stranded marine mammals in support of cooperative research projects using

⁵Level A data = Reporting which includes investigator's name, species, stranding location, number of animals, date and time of stranding and recovery, length and condition, and sex; marine mammal parts retention or transfer; annual reports. (Data collected through NOAA Form 89-864, OMB No. 0648-0178.)

⁶Level B data = Supplementary information regarding sample collection related to life history and to the stranding event. Level C data = Necropsy results. (Data collection is not required, but is collected on a voluntary basis by stranding network participants.)