

quality control techniques (e.g., serological, histopathological, and chemical analyses, and tissue banking).

Develop training for data collection to enhance the consistency and quality of assessing marine mammal strandings for human-induced injuries and mortalities.

Enhance the quality, using quality control techniques (e.g., serological), of biological sample collection from live stranded marine mammals for analysis in support of cooperative research projects.

Upgrade facility information management systems and capabilities to improve or allow access to the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response national databases.

b. Northwest Region

Collect data from stranded marine mammals to investigate the incidence of human interactions and diseases affecting marine mammals.

Collect data from stranded marine mammals to use in comparative studies of contaminant exposures and burdens in marine mammals.

Development of protocols for the identification, processing, and disposal of dead marine mammals that carry contaminant burdens exceeding allowable limits for disposal in the environment.

Collect data from stranded southern resident killer whales to investigate overall health parameters.

Collect data from stranded killer whales and harbor porpoise to clarify taxonomic and stock identification in the wild populations of these two species.

c. Southeast Region

Enhance network preparedness to collect information from strandings of large whales (excluding right whale) and mass strandings of cetaceans.

Collect and evaluate information from stranded marine mammals that can be used in assessing the incidence or prevalence of human-induced injury or mortality.

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

Enhance the capability to record information from stranded marine mammals impacted by oil or other hazardous material spills.

Collect biological samples from stranded marine mammals for analysis in support of marine mammal research projects through cooperative investigations using quality control techniques (e.g., serological, histopathological, and chemical analyses).

Collect post-Unusual Mortality Event data from stranded marine mammals for comparisons with mortality and disease observed during die-offs.

d. Southwest Region

California only

Collect specimens and data from stranded marine mammals to assess health trends in wild populations of cetaceans, with emphasis on diseases that have potential for epizootics (e.g., morbillivirus and others).

Full examination of dead-stranded California sea lions to determine the extent of purposeful human-induced mortality in the Southern California Bight.

Collect specimens and data from stranded marine mammals that will support baseline information on population demographics and life history (e.g., genetics, age-to-maturity, reproductive status, etc.).

Enhance the response to and collection of data from dead-stranded marine mammals.

Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands

Collect specimens and data from stranded marine mammals to assess the overall health trends in wild marine mammal populations.

Collect specimens and data from stranded, rehabilitated marine mammals to assess the conditions that affect releasability and identify health risks to wild populations.

Collect appropriate data to investigate the occurrence of epizootics (e.g., morbillivirus) in live stranded odontocetes.

Conduct thorough necropsies and collect biological samples that will enhance the ability to detect purposeful and incidental human-induced injuries and mortalities.

Collect consistent level A data⁵ throughout the jurisdiction, including remote areas, and collect level B and C data⁶ from strandings of dead marine mammals.

Development of partnerships with marine mammal experts and others, to respond to and conduct studies supporting MMHSRP objectives related to live strandings of marine mammals.

e. Alaska Region

Collect consistent level A data⁵ throughout the state, including remote areas.

Collect level B and C data⁶ from dead-stranded marine mammals.

Conduct necropsies and diagnostics of stranded marine mammals.

Collect tissue samples appropriate for genetic analysis from stranded harbor seals and Steller sea lions.

Operational needs to improve in-house sample tracking and archiving for participation in the National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank and the Marine

Mammal Health and Stranding national database.

Category C - Facility operations directly related to Categories A or B above (i.e., physical plant renovations, maintenance, facility modifications/upgrades and/or construction)

1. National Funding Priority

Enhance physical plant capabilities to increase the quality of care of live stranded marine mammals or enhance the safety and quality of data or sample collection from living or dead stranded marine mammals.

2. Regional Funding Priorities

a. Northeast Region

Facility operation needs to enhance and support existing rehabilitation facilities in general or to upgrade existing facilities to meet upcoming rehabilitation facility guidelines.

Facility operation 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 or upgrade facilities to handle and treat stranded marine mammals that must be kept in rehabilitation due to injury or disease.

Upgrade facilities for handling, stabilizing or treating stranded odontocetes.

Enhance or upgrade existing facilities in anticipation of NMFS guidelines on rehabilitation.

c. Southeast Region

Upgrade existing rehabilitation facilities, with special attention to active facilities (based on rehabilitation records and historic data) and facilities requiring improvements to meet upcoming NMFS guidelines on rehabilitation.

Enhancements or upgrades of necropsy facilities involved in analysis of samples collected from stranded marine mammals.

d. Southwest Region

California only

Facility operation needs or upgrades and renovations associated with veterinary care of stranded marine mammals.

Expansion and renovation of existing stranding and rehabilitation facilities.

Facility upgrades associated with treatment and feeding of stranded marine mammals.