

## **WANTED:**

### **Behavioral observation reports of marine mammals by fishermen, subsistence hunters and stranding network volunteers**

Many of you are aware that we have been collecting samples for harmful algal bloom (HAB) toxin analyses from stranded animals for the last several years in collaboration with NOAA's Wildlife Algal-Toxins Research and Response Network (WARRN-West). In an expanded and more organized effort Dr. Kathi Lefebvre (NWFSC/WARRN-West) and Donald Anderson (WHOI) have obtained ECOHAB funding to look at these toxins specifically in multiple layers of Alaskan food webs over a 5-year period with a focus on marine mammal health impacts. HAB toxins are transferred to marine mammals through prey at all levels of the food chain and high levels of exposure have been linked with severe illness and neurological symptoms. Toxicity can manifest differently in different species, but there are some general similarities. Please be on the lookout for ANY unusual behavior such as circular swimming, tremors, seizures, ataxia (loss of control of bodily movements—appear “drunk”), paralysis, confusion, disorientation, aggressiveness, diarrhea, vomiting and/or unresponsiveness. If you see any of these symptoms, please also make a note on the body condition of the animal. Further, if you see the above symptoms and the animal subsequently dies, it is especially important that we determine the cause of the symptoms to improve our data. This information can be reported to any of the stranding coordinators (contact information below). Attached is also a worksheet that will help guide through the behavioral observations.

Thanks for helping to make the most of our stranding data!

#### NOAA/NMFS Hotline 1-877-925-7773

Mandy Keogh- [mandy.keogh@noaa.gov](mailto:mandy.keogh@noaa.gov)  
Barbara Mahoney- [Barbara.mahoney@noaa.gov](mailto:Barbara.mahoney@noaa.gov)  
Kate Savage- [kate.savage@noaa.gov](mailto:kate.savage@noaa.gov)

#### North Slope Borough

Raphaela Stimmelmayer - [Raphaela.Stimmelmayer@north-slope.org](mailto:Raphaela.Stimmelmayer@north-slope.org) / 907-750-5486

#### ASLC Hotline 1-888-774-7325

Jane Belovarac- [wildliferesponse@alaskasealife.org](mailto:wildliferesponse@alaskasealife.org)

#### AVPS

Natalie Rouse- [avps.natalie.rouse@gmail.com](mailto:avps.natalie.rouse@gmail.com) / 402-499-9515

#### Alaska SeaGrant

Gay Sheffield- [ggsheffield@alaska.edu](mailto:ggsheffield@alaska.edu) / 907-443-2397

**Animal ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer Name and contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Please check off any of the following behaviors observed and note the time. If multiple observations are made, use time 2, time 3 etc to record your observations. Use the comments section to clarify any observations that may need more explanation. Observations should be included with other Level A data, or can be forwarded to one of the Alaska Stranding Coordinators (**mandy.keogh@noaa.gov**, **wildliferesponse@alaskasealife.org** or **avps.natalie.rouse@gmail.com**)

	Behavior	Time 1 (24hr)	Time 2 (24hr)	Time 3 (24hr)	Comment
<input type="checkbox"/>	paralysis				
<input type="checkbox"/>	unresponsiveness				
<input type="checkbox"/>	seizure				
<input type="checkbox"/>	tremors				
<input type="checkbox"/>	ataxia (acting "drunk")				
<input type="checkbox"/>	confusion				
<input type="checkbox"/>	disorientation				
<input type="checkbox"/>	diarrhea				
<input type="checkbox"/>	vomiting				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aggressiveness				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____				

Additional comments:

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