

**TRIP REPORT:  
SIGHTINGS OF BRANDED STELLER SEA LIONS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA  
5-8 March 2005**

**Alaska Department of Fish and Game - Steller Sea Lion Program  
Lauri Jemison**

Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) haulouts in northern Southeast Alaska were surveyed during March 2005 to observe branded animals, estimate numbers of animals on shore, and record entanglements. Resightings of branded individuals will be used to describe winter distribution based on sex, age, and natal rookery as well as to estimate survival rates. Haulouts in Stephen's Passage, Frederick Sound, Chatham Strait, Icy Strait, and Glacier Bay were surveyed. Poor weather precluded visiting sites along the outer coast. When the trip was completed, all photos had been processed and brand observations entered into an ACCESS database. All work was conducted under MMPA Permit 358-1564. Work in Glacier Bay was conducted under permit GLBA-2004-SCI-0015 and as required, a list of brands observed within Glacier Bay National Park is provided in Table 2.

**VESSEL:** Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) vessel *R/V Kestrel*, Captain Denny Heimdahl, Engineer Helmer Olson, and Boat Officer Kevin Kivisto.

**PARTICIPANTS:** ADF&G: Lauri Jemison, Grey Pendleton, Gay Sheffield, Greg Snedgen, and Dave Waters.

**SUMMARY:**

- 87 uniquely marked (branded and/or tagged) Steller sea lions
  - 84 unique brands (could not determine age of one animal)
  - 3 unique flipper tags (animals not branded)
- 31% (27/87) of all marked animals seen were pups
- 13 marked animals were seen suckling or with an adult female
  - Seven pups and six 1.7 year-olds
- Of 25 pups marked at their natal rookery (14 at White Sisters, 11 at Forrester Is. complex):
  - 10 of 14 White Sisters pups were observed at S. Marble Island
  - 10 of 11 Forrester Is. pups were observed in Stephens Passage-Frederick Sound
- 3 entangled animals were seen:
  - Packing-type band around neck (one pup & one juvenile)
  - Circular hook (halibut hook) embedded in lower lip (one juvenile)

Table 1. Summary of Steller sea lion branding location and branding year, number of animals initially branded, and number of unique brands observed during March 5-8, 2005.

<b>Brand location (branding year)</b>	<b>Number initially branded</b>	<b>Number unique brands observed March 2005</b>
“F” Forrester complex (1994/1995)	799	1
“F” Forrester complex (2001)	286	4
“F” Forrester complex (2002)	141	4
“F” Forrester complex (2003)	291	4
“F” Forrester complex (2004)	278	10
“H” Hazy Islands (2001)	212	12
“H” Hazy Islands (2003)	101	7
“W” White Sisters (2002)	127	4
“W” White Sisters (2004)	93	14
“V” Graves Rock (2002)	50	4
“=” (2001) – branded as older pup/juvenile	76	4
“=” (2002) – branded as older pup/juvenile	39	4
“=” (2003) – branded as older pup/juvenile	19	0
“=” (2004) – branded as older pup/juvenile	50	7
Other (NMML brands)		4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>83</b>

Table 2. Branded Steller sea lions observed at S. Marble Is., Glacier Bay National Park, 7-8 March 2005. Observations include animals branded by ADF&G at their natal rookery in the eastern stock: Forrester complex (F), Hazy Islands (H), White Sisters (W), and Graves Rock (V); animals branded by NMML at their natal rookery in the western stock: Sugarloaf Is. (X), and Seal Rocks (J) and in the eastern stock: St. George Reef in California (Y). Natal rookery of “=” branded animals are not known. Incomplete sightings are indicated by “\_” in the brand name.

Brand	Resight date	Sex	Nursing?	Date branded	Location branded
82Y	3/8/2005			13-July-02	St. George Reef, California
82Y	3/7/2005			13-July-02	St. George Reef, California
=203@	3/7/2005	M		10-May-01	Gran Point
=474	3/8/2005	F	Yes	21-Feb-04	Benjamin Is.
=53_	3/7/2005				Unknown
=53_	3/8/2005		Yes		Unknown
252F	3/8/2005	M		27-Jun-04	Forrester Is. complex
252F	3/7/2005	M		27-Jun-04	Forrester Is. complex
F1170	3/7/2005	F		28-Jun-01	Forrester Is. complex
F1206	3/7/2005	M		29-Jun-01	Forrester Is. complex
F1206	3/8/2005	M		29-Jun-01	Forrester Is. complex
F3079	3/7/2005	M		01-Jul-03	Forrester Is. complex
F3079	3/8/2005	M		01-Jul-03	Forrester Is. complex
H123	3/7/2005	M		01-Jul-01	Hazy Islands
H123	3/8/2005	M		01-Jul-01	Hazy Islands
H13	3/8/2005	F		30-Jun-01	Hazy Islands
H206	3/8/2005	M		02-Jul-01	Hazy Islands
H80	3/8/2005	M		01-Jul-01	Hazy Islands
H9	3/8/2005	M		30-Jun-01	Hazy Islands
H9	3/7/2005	M		30-Jun-01	Hazy Islands
H94	3/7/2005	M		01-Jul-01	Hazy Islands
J159	3/8/2005	F		04-Jul-03	Seal Rocks, Prince William Sound
V4	3/7/2005	F		03-Jul-02	Graves Rock
V7	3/7/2005	M		03-Jul-02	Graves Rock
V9	3/7/2005	F		03-Jul-02	Graves Rock
W106	3/7/2005	F		02-Jul-02	White Sisters
W200	3/8/2005	M		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W21_	3/8/2005				White Sisters
W211	3/7/2005	M		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W218	3/7/2005	M		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W228	3/7/2005	F		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W244	3/7/2005	F		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W244	3/8/2005	F		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W250	3/7/2005	F		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W263	3/7/2005	M	Yes	29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W268	3/8/2005	M	Yes	29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W270	3/7/2005	M		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W270	3/8/2005	M	Yes	29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W272	3/8/2005	F		29-Jun-04	White Sisters
W76	3/8/2005	M		02-Jul-02	White Sisters
X207	3/8/2005	M		07-Jul-02	Sugarloaf Is. near Kodiak Is.
X89	3/7/2005	F		03-Jul-00	Sugarloaf Is, Kodiak