




# The Alaska Marine Mammal Observer Program (AMMOP)

NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Regional Office  
Protected Resources Division  
Juneau, Alaska



# The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (Amended in 1994)

## ☞ Marine Mammal Authorization Program

- Provided an exemption for commercial fisheries to accidentally take marine mammals
- 48 hr reporting requirement
- Certificate on all vessels

## ☞ List of Fisheries

- Categorize fisheries (I,II,III)

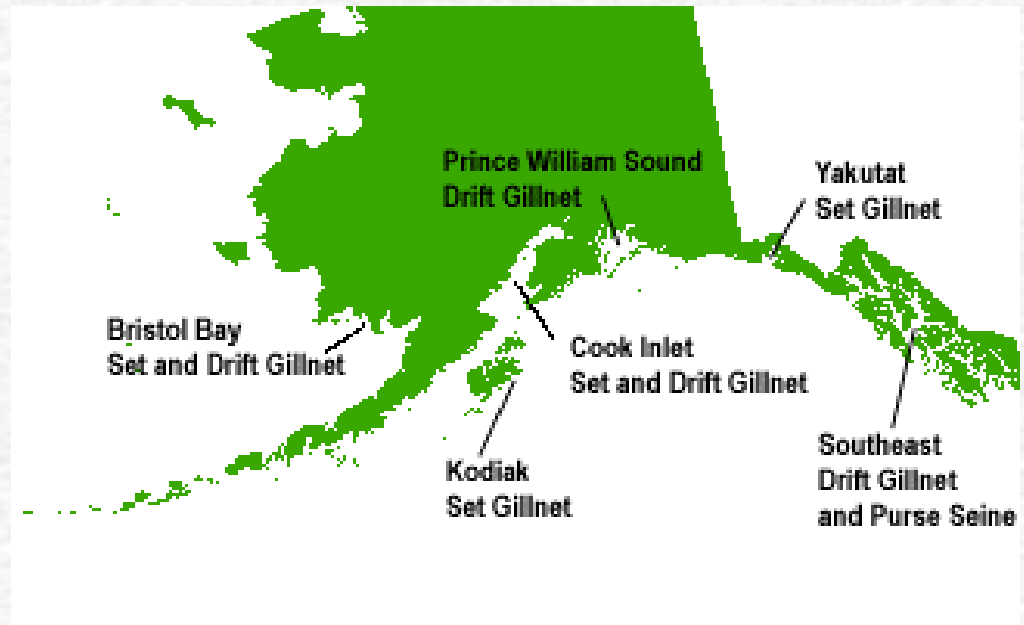
## ☞ Required MM Stock Assessment Reports

## ☞ Mandated Observer Programs



# Which Fisheries Will Be Observed?

- Currently no category I fisheries in Alaska
- There are 12 category II fisheries in Alaska
- On-going rotational



# AMMOP's Main Objectives

- To obtain reliable estimates of incidental serious injury and mortality of marine mammals and seabirds
- To determine the reliability of reports submitted by vessel owners and operators
- To identify changes in fishing methods or technology that may increase or decrease incidental serious injury or mortality
- To collect biological samples for scientific studies that can not be gathered by other methods

# How Is This Program Different from other Observer Programs?



- ✔ Scientific-based
- ✔ Federally funded
- ✔ Includes coverage of some State fisheries
- ✔ Small skiffs or shore sites
- ✔ Remote areas
- ✔ Not initiated by enforcement/compliance

# The Kind of Information Collected



- ✓ Fishing Techniques
  - Where, when, how
- ✓ Gear Characteristics
  - Length of net
  - Twine size
  - Deterrent devices used
- ✓ Weather Variables
  - Sea state
  - Water temperature
- ✓ Catch Data
  - Kept and discarded
  - Fish, mammals, birds...
- ✓ Sightings
  - Mammals near fishing grounds
  - Unique animals

# AMMOP in Cook Inlet

- ☞ 1999 – 2000
- ☞ Drift and set gillnet
- ☞ Salmon
- ☞ ~1200 permits
- ☞ Data Contractors Incorporated
- ☞ ~30 observers



# Observer Coverage in Cook Inlet

		NET DAYS	PERMITS
1999	Drift	141	102
	Set	256	275
2000	Drift	243	160
	Set	358	269
TOTALS		998	806



# AMMOP on Kodiak Island

- Outreach – 2001
- Program scheduled for 2002, 2003
- Salmon set gillnet
- 173 permits
- 3,588 square miles
- 3,000 brown bears



# Survey in Kodiak, 2001

- F/V Captain Kidd
- NMFS & Data Contractors Incorporated
- 42 days at sea, 3 aerial days
- Surveyed island 3 times (~1500 miles)
- Plotted all set net sites
- Sighting line transects
- Outreach materials
- Meetings and interviews
- Safety and program design



# The Future of AMMOP

- Continue working closely with fishing communities
- High hiring standards and specialized training
- High quality of data
- Support research
- Ecosystem approach
- Meet NOAA initiatives
- Meet MMPA requirements



# National Marine Fisheries Service

## Mission Statement

*Stewardship of living marine resources  
for the benefit of the Nation through  
their science-based conservation and  
management and promotion of the  
health of their environment.*

*Thank you*