INCIDENTAL TAKE FORM

This form is for all incidental takes observed during the trip. An incidental take is a marine mammal, marine bird, or sea turtle that is observed entangled in the gear. Begin a new Incidental Take Form with each haul, when incidental takes occur. The incidental takes are numbered consecutively per trip. All incidental takes shall be photographed (see the Photo Form for more details). Dead incidental takes will be uniquely tagged and sampled. Carcasses that cannot be retained will be tagged and discarded at sea. Fishermen have a legal obligation to retain samples that are requested by observers [50 CFR 229.7(c)(4)(vi)].

It is important to understand the definition of incidental take. An incidental take involves direct contact between the gear and a marine mammal, marine bird, or sea turtle (although the later is relatively rare in Alaska). If at any point during an observed trip, a marine mammal or marine bird (or sea turtle) makes physical contact with the fishing gear being observed AND any part of the animal's body gets <u>snagged</u>, <u>ensnared</u>, <u>hung up</u>, <u>tangled</u>, <u>snarled</u> for any period of time, regardless of the final condition and release of the animal, this is an incidental take and is recorded on the Incidental Take Form. There is no set minimum amount of time, such as number of seconds, that the animal has to be held or stuck or in contact with the gear.

Depending on the species and age of the animal, response behaviors may differ. Some animals are extremely sensitive to shock, are quickly overcome or incapacitated, and are unable to free themselves. Other species will have a powerful, continuous response until exhaustion, while other species are strong enough to tear or rip through the gear. Some animals may escape uninjured, while others may drown, asphyxiate, break a limb, have deep lacerations or bleeding wounds, and others may escape with internal injuries or shock responses not obvious externally.

Experts carefully review observer data on incidental takes to determine whether a serious injury or mortality occurred. Serious injuries are injuries that are likely to lead to a mortality. Federal guidelines have been provided but it is still difficult to determine what consitutes serious injury. Therefore, as much information as possible on the condition of the incidental take should be provided by the observer who observed the take in the field. This should include drawings, diagrams, full descriptions of events and injuries. A description of how codes like condition and disposition were decided upon should be included. Opinions based on observations are also helpful.

Not all physical contact with the net is considered an incidental take. Examples of direct contact with fishing gear that are not considered incidental takes include: a sea otter scratching its back on the floatline, a sea lion picking a fish out of the net and swimming away, a bird landing on a float for a rest.

An incidental take may observed to be alive or dead. It is important to note the animal condition, state of decomposition, scavenger damage, environmental conditions, and fully describe the entanglement situation. If it is possible to retain the whole animal a complete necropsy can be done to determine the animal's cause of death, it's body condition at time of death, and it can be examined for resulting injuries from being entangled. If the remains of less than a quarter of an animal in skeletal form is retrieved in the gear, it is not recorded as an incidental take and should be photographed and described in detail in the Catch Section of the Haul Form.

- 1. PAGE NUMBERING: This is for paperwork filing purposes. Number front and back of all double sided forms (if used) and backs with comments on them. The pages are numbered by trip with forms in order as they are listed in the Table of Contents.
- **2. YEAR:** Record the year (yyyy) when the trip ended.
- **3. MONTH:** Record the month (mm) when the trip ended.
- **4. TRIP IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:** Record your unique three character Observer Identifier combined with the three character Trip Number consecutively numbering your trips for this year (example: X01001).
- **5. HAUL NUMBER:** Record the consecutive haul number assigned to the haul with the take. This number must agree with the haul number recorded on the corresponding Haul Form.
- **6. INCIDENTAL TAKE ID NUMBER**: Assign a consecutive number, by trip, to each animal recorded on this form. If there are insufficient lines on one form, continue listing animals on the back and begin a new Incidental Take Form. Start a new Incidental Take Form for each haul, but continue consecutive incidental take ID numbers through entire trip.
- 7. SPECIES: Record the complete common name for each animal incidentally taken on this trip as listed in the Species Code (Appendix 4. Species Codes). Include the appropriate Species Code for data entry (this can be filled in after the trip when codes can be referenced).
- **8.** TAG NUMBER(s): Record the complete alpha-numeric number(s) from the tag(s) you attach, or that were already attached, to the animal. All cattle ear tags issued on should begin with "A" followed by 4 digits. This tag number should be uniquely and individually

- assigned to a particular animal, and only if the animal is dead. If only one tag is recorded, cross out the field box for the second tag.
- **9. TAG TYPE(S):** Indicate what kind of tag is (or was) on the animal. If only one tag is recorded, cross out the field box for the second tag. Use the Tag Type Codes (describe the colors in comments):
- 1 = Cattle ear tag
- 2 = Brand
- 3 = Bleach, dye, or ink
- 4 = Flipper tag
- 5 = Dorsal fin tag
- 6 = Metal leg band
- 7 = Plastic color leg band
- 8 = Nasal tag
- 9 = Spaghetti tag
- 10 = Coded wire tag
- 11 = Stomach tag
- 99 = Other (record in comments)
- 0 = No tag
- **10.** TAG STATUS(S): Indicate whether the tag was on the animal, left on the animal, or put on the animal. If only one tag is recorded, cross out the field box for the second tag. Use the Tag Status Codes:
- 1 = Applied by observer
- 2 = Already on and left on
- 3 = Already on and removed
- 9 = Other (record in comments)
- 0 = No tag(s)
- **11. DISENTANGLEMENT:** Indicate the how the animal was released or disentangled from the gear by recording the most appropriate Disentanglement Code:
- 1 = Momentary snag with self release
- 2 = Released from gear at a point unknown
- 3 = Dislodged from gear under water
- 4 = Dislodged from gear once out of water

- 5 = Removal from gear resulted in damaging gear
- 6 = Removal from gear resulted in cutting the animal
- 7 = Removal from gear by unrolling or untangling gear
- 9 = Other (record in comments)
- 0 = Unknown
- **12. HORIZONTAL LOCATION:** Indicate, horizontally, relative to shore, where in the gear the animal became entangled. The first third of gear would be that closest to shore, and the final third would be that furthest from shore. Use the most appropriate Horizontal Location Code:
- 1 = Found in first third of gear
- 2 = Found in middle third of gear
- 3 = Found in final third of gear
- 0 = Unknown
- **13. VERTICAL LOCATION:** Indicate, vertically, where in the gear the animal became entangled by recording the most appropriate Vertical Location Code:
- 1 = At water surface
- 2 =Near top third of gear
- 3 = Middle third of gear
- 4 =Near bottom third of gear
- 0 = Unknown
- **14. Animal Condition:** Indicate the resulting condition of the animal at the time of release, by recording the most appropriate Animal Condition Code:
- A = Alive
- D = Dead
- R = Recovering or comatose
- U = Unknown

- **15. INJURY:** Indicate the degree of injury, if any, the animal had upon release. Record the one most appropriate Injury Code, and note others in comments. If ingested gear or gear left on animals (codes 7 or 8), also indicate other injury codes, if applicable, in comments:
- 1 = No external injury, responsive
- 2 = No external injuries, unresponsive
- 3 = Saturated wet plumage or oiled
- 4 = Small lacerations and/or missing plumage
- 5 = Large wounds and/or excessive bleeding
- 6 = Broken appendage(s)
- 7 = Ingested gear
- 8 = Gear left on the animal
- 9 = Moderate decomposition (skin may be sunken, sloughing, or pieces missing)
- 10 = Severe decomposition (little or no muscle tissue left)
- 0 = Unknown
- **16. AGE CLASS:** Indicate the age class of the animal by using one of the following Age Class Codes:
- 1 = Calf or pup or juvenile (hatch-year)
- 2 = Immature
- 3 = Adult
- 0 = Unknown

Guidelines for Determining Age:

For pinnipeds, generally, pups are < 1 year; immature are 1-3 years old; and adults are > 3 years old. For cetaceans such as harbor porpoise, age class may be hard to determine from field examination, so only distinguish between calves of < 1 year and adults.

If recording a juvenile bird, note whether an egg-tooth is present at the tip of the bill.

For many larids, plumage differs by age. Generally, juvenile gulls are < 1 year, also known as hatch-year; immature are 1-3 years old; and adults are > 3 years old.

17. SEX: Indicate the sex of the animal by recording one of the following Sex Codes:

M = Male

F = Female

U = Unknown or too young

18. PHOTOS TAKEN: Indicate whether photos were taken of this animal.

Y = Yes

N = No

19. SAMPLES TAKEN: Indicate whether samples (including retained whole) or measurements were collected from this animal. For those animals with "Yes", there should be an accompanying Sample Form.

Y = Yes

N = No

20. COMMENTS: Record any additional information regarding the marine mammal incidental take(s), especially when data are unable to be collected. Reference each comment with its corresponding field name and, if applicable, Incidental Take ID #. For each animal, the observer must record (i.e., sketch and/or describe):

Identifying characteristics: condition, marks, scars, gear on the animal, injuries, etc.

Presence of foam or other excretions coming from blowhole, mouth, eyes, mammary glands, etc.

The color of the eyes and if there is any bleeding.

If the animal fell from the gear, the observer should describe in detail at what point it fell, how the animal was entangled and became untangled, and if the animal sank, floated, and/or drifted away.

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			U = Unknown	own		0 = Unknown							2002

MARINE MAMMAL BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for documenting incidental takes of, and biologically sampling, marine mammals. Each trip may present different challenges in accommodating these priorities and may be affected by circumstances such as rough weather conditions, the animal falling out of the net, etc. It is up to the observer to use his/her best judgment in following these guidelines.

All marine mammals, marine birds, and sea turtles accidentally or intentionally caught by the vessel, or entangled in its gear, during any stage of fishing activity, are considered incidental takes. Animals determined to be incidental takes may not be recorded as sightings on the Sighting Form, and vice versa.

Once the minimum requirements for each species have been recorded, additional species specific sampling and measurements should be obtained as time permits, after recording catch information.

I. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

LIVE ANIMALS:

Identify, photograph, and return to the sea as quickly as possible in a manner that minimizes further stress and injury.

DEAD ANIMALS

1. Obtain DNA Sample (Skin)

Cetacean: Obtain a fin clip sample by removing a 1.25 in² (3 cm²) sample from the tip of the dorsal fin or fluke with the skin intact.

Pinniped: Obtain a skin sample by removing a 1.25 in² (3 cm²) sample from one of the flippers with the skin intact.

2. Tagging

Attach a plastic cattle ear tag with a cable tie to all **dead** animals. Only one cattle ear tag should be used per animal. The cattle ear tags should start with one letter, followed by four numbers (example: A0999) - be sure to record all letters and numbers accurately. For porpoise, cinch the cable tie around the caudal peduncle (tail stock). For pinnipeds, cinch the cable tie around the flipper, above the ankle. If it is not possible to retain the whole animal, attach the tag to the carcass and discard at sea. Record that tag number on the Tyvek biological sample labels to uniquely identify from which animal the samples were collected.

Seals and sea lions should be checked for previous tags, brands, tattoos, and other alphanumeric markings. Note the color, size, shape, and where on the body the marking or tag was located.

3. Identifying and Photographing

Refer to the identification guides to assist you while on a deployment. Identify animals to the most specific grouping you are sure of. Do not guess at identification. All animals MUST be photographed. Photographic instructions are outlined in the Photo Form instructions.

4. Body Measurements

If it is not possible to bring an animal aboard the vessel, record the estimated total length in the comment section of the Incidental Take Form. If the animal can be retained, actual length measurements are recorded on the Marine Mammal Sample Form. When measurements are taken which require a mammal to be placed on one side, the preferred method is for the animal to be lying on the right side (i.e., measurements taken on the left side).

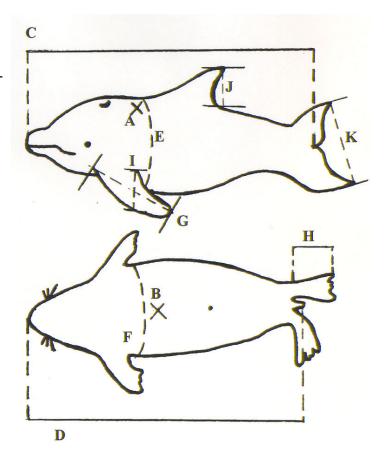


Figure 1. Marine Mammal Body Measurements

Blubber Thickness:

Record, to the nearest millimeter, the thickness of the blubber of the cetacean or pinniped. Measure from where the blubber meets the muscle, up to, but not including, the skin.

Cetacean: To obtain this measurement, make an incision two to three inches behind the blow hole of the marine mammal (Figure 1, Letter A).

Pinniped: To obtain this measurement, make an incision in the ventral surface of the marine mammal, about five or six inches anterior to the navel, in the middle of the body (Figure 1, Letter B).

Total Length:

Cetacean: Record the straight line length from the tip of the jaw (top or bottom jaw, whichever is longer) to the fluke notch (Figure 1, Letter C).

Pinniped: Record the straight line measurement from the snout to the tip of the tail (Figure 1, Letter D).

Girth

Cetacean: Record the girth of the animal just under the pectoral flippers at the axilla. See Figure 1, letter E.

Pinniped: Record the girth of the animal just under the fore-flippers at the axilla. See Figure 1, Letter F.

Hind Flipper or Pectoral Flipper Length:

Cetacean: Record the straight line length of one flipper of the cetacean. This length is taken from the outside or anterior edge of the flipper to the tip of the flipper. This is the longest length along the pectoral flipper. See Figure 1, Letter G.

Pinniped: Record the straight line length of one rear flipper of the pinniped. This length is taken from the outside anterior edge of the flipper at the joint where the flipper connects to the body (this is best located by flexing the flipper forward and measuring from the point where the flipper flexes) to the tip of the flipper. See Figure 1, Letter H.

Pectoral Flipper Width:

Cetacean: Using the same flipper on which the length was measured, record the straight line width, at its widest part. See Figure 1, Letter I.

Pinniped: No measurement taken; dash (-) this field.

Dorsal Fin Height:

Cetacean: Record the straight line height of the dorsal fin of the cetacean from the posterior tip of the fin to the insertion at the body. See Figure 1, Letter J.

Pinniped: No measurement taken; dash (-) this field.

Fluke Width:

Cetacean: Record the width of the flukes of the cetacean, from one tip to the other. See Figure 1, Letter K.

Pinniped: No measurements taken; dash (-) this field.

5. Determining Sex

Sex of cetaceans may be determined by the presence of mammary slits on both sides of the genital slit on females, and the absence of mammary slits on males. However, inserting a probe into the genital slit is a more definite method to determine sex and is required to confirm your determination. When a probe is inserted in females, the slit will open forward; in

2005 AMMOP Manual

males, the slit will open backward. It is important to determine the sex of the animals correctly, and the use of photographs of the genital area will help confirm your determination. Additionally, confirm the sex by examining the animals' reproductive tract if you cut the animal open.

The sex of seals can be determined by the presence of two mammary nipples posterior of the umbilicus on females, and by the penile aperture posterior of the umbilicus on males. The genital opening on females is near the base of the tail, anterior of the anal opening.

6. Describing Unusual Marks or Scar Locations

As you are collecting the body measurements of the animal, observe whether there are any marks or scars on the animal. Sketch and describe these in the comment section of the Marine Mammal Sample Form. If animals are released with gear still attached to any area of the body, be sure to illustrate and comment as to how much remains and where the gear remains attached.

NOTE: Photographs of scars and marks, in addition to sketches, are extremely valuable.

II. ADDITIONAL SAMPLING/MEASUREMENTS

These additional samples are collected once all the minimum sampling requirements are obtained, and after recording the catch.

Retaining the Whole Animal

This is the most valuable sample and also the easiest to obtain, but care must still be taken in handling the animal. If an animal is retained in warm weather and cannot be frozen on board, it should be kept cool until it is unloaded from the vessel. If it must remain on deck or in the skiff, then it should be covered with a tarp and either be iced or occasionally hose with sea water.

Necropsy Guidelines for Sampling Animals not Retained

The tissue/organ samples listed below are to be taken only if the whole animal is not retained. The required length measurements must be taken before any tissue/organ sampling of the animal is done.

All samples will be double bagged, with a waterproof tag enclosed between the first and second bag. As much air as possible should be excluded from both sample bags. Samples from each animal should be kept together in one larger bag, and frozen or iced.

When sampling mammals, the animal should be placed on its right side if possible, with its head to the left of the observer. This is the standard method for marine mammal dissection, and will result in the stomach being in a more accessible position, because it is located on the animal's left side. This will also make other organs easier to locate.

2005 AMMOP Manual

To examine the internal organs, an incision is made from between the flippers to just forward of the anus. To the posterior of the rib cage, the intestines will be the main feature. Just posterior to the rib cage and under it, the liver, a large dark red organ, will be the main feature. The stomach will be located under the liver. Stomach removal is possible without removing the rib cage. However, in order to fully expose the upper part of the stomach and esophagus, and for more working room, removal of the ribcage can be helpful. As you push back the ribs, take care not to break them; broken ribs can leave sharp pieces attached to the backbone which can puncture gloves and hands, resulting in abrasions and infection. If the ribs are not removed, access to the esophagus can be made by cutting between and pushing apart the third and fourth ribs from the bottom.

In order to examine the other internal organs, the intestines should be removed. The kidneys will then become visible near the dorsal side of the abdominal wall. The kidneys have the appearance of compartmentalized globules, almost like a squeezed bunch of grapes.

The testes will appear as paired, sausage-like organs pointing forward and attached to the back wall of the body cavity. They will vary in size depending on species, season, and the maturity of the animal: from a few inches long (the size of your little finger) to a width of two to three inches and a length of six to seven inches. For male phocids, the testes are located in the inguinal area (groin), outside the abdomen, but deep under the skin and blubber.

The female reproductive tract is held in place by a broad ligament, a sheet of peritoneal tissue dorsal to the sheet holding the more ventral urinary bladder. The tract includes the uterus which is oriented along the midline of the body cavity, and the right and left uterine horns which branch laterally from the anterior portion of the uterus. The ovary is anterior to each uterine horn. The ovaries are light gray to tan in color and are bean-shaped.

When you have completed the required sampling for a species, the tagged carcass may be discarded.

Tissue/Organ Samples

Skin:

See 1. Obtain DNA Sample (Skin) above, under I. Minimum Requirements.

Jaw:

Do not collect this sample if you are going to retain the head of the animal. Remove either the whole lower jaw or the lower left jaw with at least four teeth (including the incisor, canine and post-canine for pinnipeds). Be careful not to puncture your skin or gloves, as cetacean and pinniped teeth are sharp.

Stomach:

If it is possible, collect the whole stomach. This should be done by tying off the esophagus and the small intestine near the stomach. Then remove the entire stomach by cutting before the tie on the esophagus and after the tie on the small intestine.

Blubber:

Remove approximately a 10 x 10 cm (.25 lb or 100 g) sample of blubber, including the skin. For cetaceans, take a blubber sample from the dorsal surface of the animal forward of the dorsal fin (Figure 1, Letter A). For pinnipeds, take a blubber sample from the ventral surface, about five or six inches anterior to the navel, along the midline (Figure 1, Letter B). If the animal is badly decomposed, do not collect this sample.

Muscle:

Remove approximately a 0.25 lb (100 g) sample of muscle beneath the blubber on the dorsal surface of the animal forward of the dorsal fin.

Reproductive Organs:

Remove the entire reproductive tract. Collect both gonads.

Head:

Remove the head by making a transverse cut halfway between the eye and the anterior insertion of the flipper.

Fetus:

Collect the whole fetus. If the fetus cannot be brought in whole, a total length measurement and a sex determination are required. Record this information in comments on the Marine Mammal Sample Form. A fetus should not be considered a separate incidental take, however, and should not be recorded on the Incidental Take Form.

MARINE MAMMAL SAMPLE FORM

This form is used when incidental takes of marine mammals are measured or sampled. Only dead marine mammals are to be tagged and sampled. The <u>dead</u> marine mammals are uniquely numbered with a plastic cattle ear tag. Start a new page per haul when marine mammals are sampled.

Cross out fields that do not apply with a single slanted line. If the field does not apply and has check boxes with codes that do not apply, cross out the entire block. Unknown fields should be dashed (unless an unknown code is listed on the form). All unknown fields must be explained in comments and addressed in debriefing. For coded fields, if none of the listed codes are appropriate for the situation, record or check the code for "other" and provide details in the comment section.

MARINE MAMMAL SAMPLE FORM FIELD DESCRIPTIONS

- 1. PAGE NUMBERING: This is for paperwork filing purposes. Number front and back of all double sided forms (if used) and backs with comments on them. The pages are numbered by trip with forms in order as they are listed in the Table of Contents.
- **2.** YEAR: Record the year (yyyy) when the trip ended
- **3. MONTH:** Record the month (mm) when the trip ended.
- **4. TRIP IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:** Record your unique three character Observer Identifier combined with the three character Trip Number consecutively numbering your trips for this year (example: X01001).
- **5. HAUL NUMBER:** Record the consecutive haul number assigned to the haul with the take. This number must agree with the haul number recorded on the corresponding Haul Form.
- **6. TAG NUMBER:** Record the unique tag number that has been attached to the <u>dead</u> marine mammal. This tag is a plastic cattle ear tag and should be attached to the carcass with a cable tie. The tag number will start with an "A" and be followed by 4 digits. Be sure to record all alpha-digits accurately on allforms and sample

- labels. Tags should never be reused to identify another animal. If you are unable to assign a plastic tag and the animal already has a unique tag number or brand, record that number. This is NOT the consecutive identification number.
- 7. SPECIES: Record the complete common name for each animal sampled as listed in the Species Codes (Appendix 4. Species Codes). Include the appropriate Species Code for data entry (this can be filled in after the trip when codes can be referenced).
- **8. STANDARD LENGTH:** Record the <u>straight line</u> total length, in whole centimeters, of the animal. For cetaceans, this is from the tip of rostrum to the notch in flukes. For pinnipeds, this is from the tip of snout to tip of tail.
- **9. GIRTH:** Measure and record the axillary girth, in whole centimeters. This is taken at the "armpits", posterior of the fore-flippers or pectoral flippers.
- **10. FLIPPER LENGTH:** For cetaceans, measure the straight line, in whole centimeters, from the anterior insertion of the pectoral flipper to tip of the flipper. For pinnipeds, measure the straight line, in whole centimeters, from the from outside anterior insertion of the

hind flipper to tip of the longest toe, not including the nail.

- **11. FLIPPER WIDTH:** For cetaceans only, measure, in whole centimeters, the widest straight line distance across the pectoral flipper.
- **12. DORSAL FIN HEIGHT:** For cetaceans only, measure, in whole centimeters the straight line height of the dorsal fin, up and down.
- **13. FLUKE WIDTH:** For cetaceans only, measure the width of the flukes, from one tip to the other, in whole centimeters.
- **14. BLUBBER THICKNESS:** For cetaceans, measure, in millimeters, the depth of the blubber posterior of blow hole just off mid-line. For pinnipeds, measure, in millimeters, blubber thickness at sternum. The measurements are taken from the muscle layer to (but not including) skin layer.
- **15. SKIN:** Was a skin sample collected (this includes a fin clip sample)?

Y = YesN = No

16. RETAINED WHOLE: Was the animal retained whole?

Y = YesN = No

17. JAW OR TEETH: Was a jaw sample taken(this would include a jaw, tooth, or head sample)?

Y = YesN = No

18. STOMACH: Was the stomach retained whole?

Y = YesN = No

- 19. NUMBER OF OTHER SAMPLES: Record the number of other biological samples collected from this animal. If no other samples were collected, record zero.
- **20. COMMENTS:** Record any additional information regarding the marine mammal incidental take(s), especially when data are unable to be collected. Reference each comment with its corresponding field name. **Reference each description with the animal's unique tag number.** For each animal the observer must sketch and describe:
- **Notes from** external and internal examination (colors, shapes, etc.)
- Location where samples and measurements were taken
- Storage method, size and packaging of samples

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