Potential Non-lethal Deterrence Methods for Pacific Harbor Seals and California Sea Lions from Fishing Gear

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/deter/index.htm

Commercial and Recreational fishermen can deter Pacific harbor seals and California sea lions from damaging gear or depredating catch, **ONLY IF ACTIVELY FISHING**.

The following list of "potential methods" and "deterrents to avoid" is not an exhaustive list of non-lethal methods or techniques. If you have questions about protecting your fishing gear and catch from Pacific harbor seals and California seal lions, please contact Monica DeAngelis at 562-980-3232 or NOAA's Office for Law Enforcement at 1-800-853-1964.

NOTE: Some of the methods listed (e.g., loud noise or pyrotechnics) may not be appropriate for use in some areas or subject to prohibition under federal, state, or local ordinances. The presence of Endangered Species Act-listed species in some areas may advise against the use of certain methods. Please consult with appropriate authorities to determine if such prohibitions exist in your area, or if listed species may be encountered.

Deterrence **MAY NOT** result in the following:

<u>Serious Injury or Mortality</u> – The MMPA authorizes deterrence using non-lethal methods only. Deterrence cannot result in the death or serious injury of marine mammals.

<u>Deterrence of ESA-Listed Species</u>: The intended or unintended deterrence of threatened or endangered marine mammals is not allowed.

<u>Violation of State Laws or Local Ordinances</u> – The use of some deterrence methods may be prohibited or restricted by states or local governments. It is your responsibility to check with your local authorities to ensure that any deterrence methods used comply with local and state requirements.

<u>Risk to Human Safety</u> – If you deter a seal or sea lion in such a manner that you cause injury to another person, you may be liable for your actions.

<u>Taking of Non-Target Marine Mammals</u> – Deterrence is not authorized if it will result in the death, serious injury, or harassment of non-target marine mammals (i.e., individuals other than those causing damage to gear or catch.

Individuals attempting to deter sea lions and seals using these listed potential methods or similar techniques, <u>DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK</u>.

No single non-lethal deterrence method known to be universally effective in discouraging Pacific harbor seals and California sea lions from engaging in problem behaviors. The following list of methods and techniques have been found useful for deterring animals that are damaging fishing gear or catch.

Potential methods for use by fishers to deter Pacific harbor seals and California sea lions from damaging gear or catch
(anglers must be actively fishing with gear deployed)

Visual Repellents/Noise Makers:
- boat hazing, circling
- pounding on hull
- pyrotechnics (e.g., bird screamers, bangers, underwater firecrackers, cracker shells)
- starter pistols*
- horns, bells, whistles

Physical Contact:
- sling shots
- non-toxic and water soluble paint ball guns*
- non-lethal ammunition (e.g., rubber bullets, sabot rounds, game stingers)

*The equipment used in these methods must be easily identifiable, at a distance, as a non-lethal weapon. Use of automatic discharge when using these methods is NOT recommended, due to increased risk of injury to the public and marine mammals.

Methods to Avoid-the following methods and techniques have an increased likelihood to cause injury or mortality and should be avoided

- No Firearms with "live" (lethal) ammunition
- No Devices with Injurious Projectiles (e.g., archery gear, crossbows, spear guns, bangsticks)
- No Sharp/Pointed Objects (harpoons, spears, gaffs, nail studded bats/poles/clubs)
- No Entangling Devices (e.g., loose webbing, snares, concertina wire)
- No Aggressive Tactile Methods (e.g., striking animals with bats, hammers, etc., impact with vehicles or boats)
- No Tainted Baits or Poisons

<u>Act Responsibly and Use Common Sense!</u>

<u>Remember Personal Safety!</u>

<u>Be Aware of People around You and be Courteous!</u>