

# SEA OTTER INTERN: THE DATA



Ana Noel • US Fish and Wildlife Service with Caroline Cummings • Semester by the Bay Spring 2022

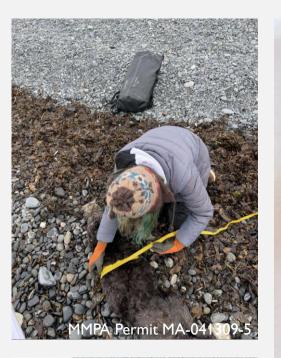
## WHAT WE DID

- Responded to stranded otters
  - Level A data
  - SeaLife Center Training
  - John Maniscalco's study
  - Live observation
- Marine Mammal Forum
  - Educational materials
  - Tabling



# WHAT CAUSES OTTERS TO STRAND?

- Kachemak Bay has ~6,000 otters (Garlich-Miller et al., 2018)
- **Strep syndrome:** a bacterial infection with an unknown origin caused by the bacteria *Streptococcus*. Studies point to mussel consumption, specifically blue mussels, as the likely route of infection (Counihan-Edgar et al., 2012). This disease causes a variety of health issues for otters:
  - **Endocarditis:** an inflammation of the heart lining which can lead to blood clots.
  - **Septicemia:** a blood infection caused when *Streptococcus* enters the blood stream.
  - **Encephalitis:** an inflammation of the brain due to Streptococcus infection.
- **Trauma:** stranded otters may show signs of trauma indicating boat strike, gunshot, mating or fighting wounds, or predation.



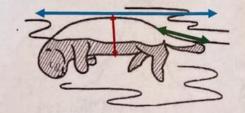


Xyphoid Girth- girth at the xyphoid (divot where the breastbone ends)



Straight Length- tip of tail to tip of nose above or

alongside the otter.



Tail Length- where tail comes out of body to tip of tail (not counting the fur tip)



Right forepaw width- across the widest part of the pad

### IN THE FIELD

### Measurements (cm)

- Straight length
- Tail length
- Head length
- Head width
- Right front paw
- Xiphoid girth









### IN THE FIELD

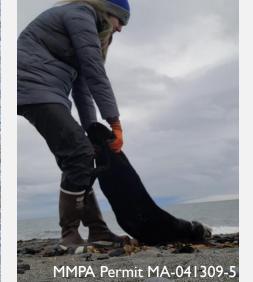
### Measurements (cm)

- Straight length
- Tail length
- Head length
- Head width
- Right front paw
- Xiphoid girth

### Pictures

- Whole body
- Teeth
- Abnormalities









### IN THE FIELD

### Measurements (cm)

- Straight length
- Tail length
- Head length
- Head width
- Right front paw
- Xiphoid girth
- Completion
- Tag
- Dump
- Necropsy

#### MARINE MAMMAL STRANDING REPORT - LEVEL A DATA

FIELD #	NMFS REGIONAL	t:(NMES	USE) (NMFS USE)
COMMON NAME	GENU		SPECIES
EXAMINER Name:			lation:
Address:			Phone:
Photo Sela.			1 Harris
Stranding Agreement or Authority:			
			Confirmed - Minimum Confirmed - Medium Confirmed - High
	Same Information for Level	A Examination	LEVEL A EXAMINATION Examined? YES NO
DATE: Year: Month:		_	DATE: Year: Month: Day:
First Observed: Beach/Land/loe			First Examined: Beach/Land/Ice Floating Swimming
LOCATION: State: County: Body of Water:	City:		LOCATION: State: County: City: Body of Water:
Locality Details:	N		Locality Details:N
Long (DD):	w		Long (DD):W
Actual Estimated			Actual Estimated
How Determined: (check ONE)			How Determined: (check ONE)
GPS Map Internet/Softw CONDITION AT INITIAL OBSERVAT	TION (Check ONE)		GPS Map Internet/Software Other
1. Alive	4. Advanced Decomposit	ion	CONDITION AT EXAMINATION (Check ONE)  1. Alive 4. Advanced Decomposition
2. Fresh Dead     3. Moderate Decomposition	5. Mummited/Skeletal		1. Alive     4. Advanced Decomposition     2. Fresh Dead     5. Mummified/Skeletal
3. Moderate Decomposition	6. Condition Unknown		3. Moderate Decomposition
LIVE ANIMAL INFORMATION			DEAD ANIMAL INFORMATION
INITIAL LIVE ANIMAL DISPOSITION 1. Left at Site	N (Check one or more) 5. Died at Site		CARCASS STATUS (Check one or more) 1. Frozen for Later Examination/Necropsy Pending
2. Immediate Release at Site		ort	2. Left at Site 5. Landfil 8. Towed: LatLong
3. Relocated and Released	7. Euthanized		3. Buried 6. Incinerated 9. Sunk: Lat Long
4. Disentangled	8. Transferred to Reha	abilitation:	4. Rendered 7. Composted 10. Unknown/Other
a. Partially	Date: Year:Month: Facility:	Day:	NECROPSIED YES NO
b. Completely	raciny		Carcass Fresh Carcass Frozen/Thawed
9. Other:			CARCASS CODE AT NECROPSY Code 2 Code 3 Code 4
CONDITION/DETERMINATION (Che			
1. Sick     2. Injured	<ol> <li>Location Hazard a. To animal</li> </ol>	lous	NECROPSIED BY:
3. Out of Habitat	b. To public		
4. Deemed Releasable	8. Unknown/CB		PHOTOS/VIDEOS TAKEN: YES NO
5. Abandoned/Orphaned	9. No Rehabilita	tion Options	Photo/Video Disposition:
6. Inaccessible MORPHOLOGICAL INFORMAT	10. Other:	00000000000	-
	AGE CLASS (Check ONE)	OCCORRENC	CE DETAILS Restrand GE# (NMFS Use)
	Adult 4. Pup/Calf		YES NO
	Subadult 5. Unknown	If Yes, Type: 🔲	Cow/Call Pair Mass Stranding UME #AnimalsActual Estimated
3. Unknown 3.	Yearling	Was the Marine	e Mammal Human Interaction Report completed? YES NO
Whole Animal Partial Anima	al de la companya de	Findings of Hu	man Interaction: YES NO Could Not Be Determined (CBD)
Straight Length:		If YES evidence	of: 1. Vessel Interaction YES NO CBD
Actual Estimated Not Meas	ured		2. Shot YES NO CBD
Weight:kg			3. Fishery Interaction YES NO CBD 4. Other Human Interaction:
Actual Estimated Not Weight	hed		
SAMPLES COLLECTED (Check one			is the likelihood that the human interaction contributed to the stranding event?
1. Histology     2. Other Diagnos	itics 🔲 3. Life History	Uncertain (Ca	BD) Improbable Suspect Probable
4. Skeletal 5. Other			Collected? YES NO Gear Disposition:
PARTS TRACKING (Check one or )	·		Upon Level A: YES NO Could Not Be Determined (CBD)
1. Scientific Collection      2. Ei     3. Other:	uuuuunal Collection		one or more: 1. Illness 2. Injury 3. Pregnant 4.Other: d (Check one or more): External Exam Internal Exam
		Other:	

NOAA Form 89-864; OMB Control No.0648-0178; Expiration Date 03/31/2020

TAG DATA ID# Color Type Placement\* Applied Present Removed (Circle ONE) Tags Were: DDFLR Present at Time of Stranding (Pre-existing): YES NO LF LR RF RR Applied during Stranding Response/Release: YES NO DDFLR Applied during Rehabilitation/Release: YES NO Absent but Suspect Prior Tag: YES NO LE LR RE RR D DF L R LF LR RE RR \* D= Dorsal; DF= Dorsal Fin; L= Left Lateral Body R= Right Lateral Body LF= Left Front; LR= Left Rear; RF= Right Front; RR= Right Rear

(If animal is restranded, please indicate any previous field numbers here)

#### ADDITIONAL IDENTIFIER:

ADDITIONAL REMARKS:



#### DISCLAIMER

THESE DATA SHOULD NOT BE USED OUT OF CONTEXT OR WITHOUT VERIFICATION. THIS SHOULD BE STRICTLY ENFORCED WHEN REPORTING SIGNS OF HUMAN INTERACTION DATA.

#### DATA ACCESS FOR LEVEL A DATA

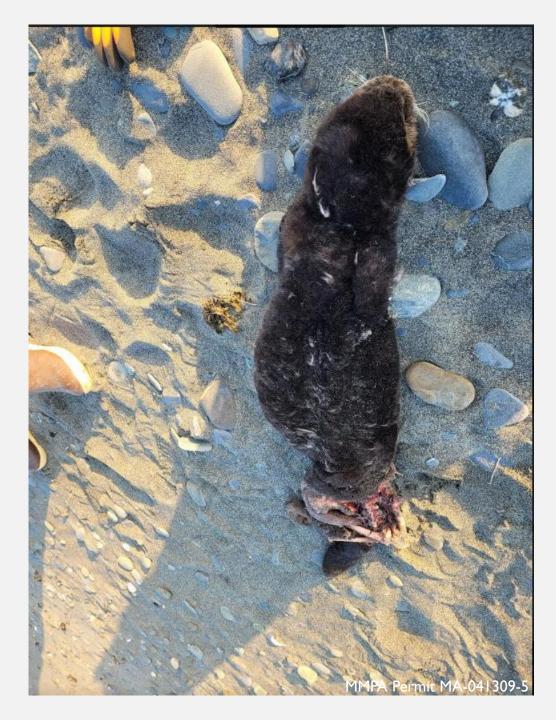
UPON WRITTEN REQUEST, CERTAIN FIELDS OF THE LEVEL A DATA SHEET WILL BE RELEASED TO THE REQUESTOR PROVIDED THAT THE REQUESTOR CREDIT THE STRANDING NETWORK AND THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE. THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE WILL NOTIFY THE CONTRIBUTING STRANDING NETWORK MEMBERS THAT THESE DATA HAVE BEEN REQUESTED AND THE INTENT OF USE. ALL OTHER DATA WILL BE RELEASED TO THE REQUESTOR PROVIDED THAT THE REQUESTOR OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM THE CONTRIBUTING STRANDING NETWORK AND THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE.

#### PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT INFORMATION

PUBLIC REPORTING BURDEN FOR THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IS ESTIMATED TO AVERAGE 30 MINUTES PER RESPONSE, INCLUDING THE TIME FOR REVIEWING INSTRUCTIONS, SEARCHING EXISTING DATA SOURCES, GATHERING AND MAINTAINING THE DATA NEEDED, AND COMPLETING AND REVIEWING THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. SEND COMMENTS REGARDING THIS BURDEN ESTIMATE OR AND YOTHER ASPECT OF THE COLLECTION INFORMATION, INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING THE BURDEN TO: CHIEF, MARINE MAMMAL AND SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION DIVISION, OFFICE OF PROTECTED RESOURCES, NOAA FISHERIES, 1315 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY, SLUVER SPRING, MARYLAND 29910, NOT WITHSTANDING ANY OTHER ASPONDISION OF THE LAW, NO PERSON IS REQUIRED TO RESPOND, NOR SHALL ANY PERSON BE SUBJECTED TO A PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH, A COLLECTION OF INFORMATION SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT, UNLESS THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION DISPLAYS A CURRENTLY VALID OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB) CONTROL NUMBER.



MARINE MAM	MAL STRAND	DING REPORT - LEVEL A DATA					
FIELD # NMFS REGIONAL	*	NATIONAL DATABASE#					
	(NMFS IS: Enhydra	S USE) (NMFS USE) SPECIES: <sup>futris</sup>					
		iliation: USFWS/ASLC					
Address:	^	Phone:					
		, mile-					
Stranding Agreement or Authority:	nconfirmed - Low	Confirmed - Minimum Confirmed - Medium Confirmed – High					
INITIAL OBSERVATION Same Information for Level		LEVEL A EXAMINATION Examined? VES NO					
DATE: Year: 2022 Month: April Day: 11		DATE: Year: Day:					
First Observed: Beach/Land/loe Floating Swimming		First Examined: Beach/Land/Ice Floating Swimming					
LOCATION: State: AK County: Kenai Peninsula City: Homer Body of Water: Cook Intet		LOCATION: State: County: City:					
Locality Details: Right of the parking lot Lat (DD): 59 .7814108		Locality Details: Lat (DD):N					
Long (DD): 1518625009W		Long (DD):W					
Actual Estimated		Actual Estimated					
How Determined: (check ONE) GPS Map PInternet/Software Other		How Determined: (check ONE) GPS Map Internet/Software Other					
CONDITION AT INITIAL OBSERVATION (Check ONE)		CONDITION AT EXAMINATION (Check ONE)					
1. Alive     4. Advanced Decomposit     2. Fresh Dead     5. Mummified/Skeletal	lion	1. Alive     4. Advanced Decomposition					
3. Moderate Decomposition     6. Condition Unknown		2. Fresh Dead 5. Mummified/Skeletal					
LIVE ANIMAL INFORMATION		3. Moderate Decomposition     DEAD ANIMAL INFORMATION					
INITIAL LIVE ANIMAL DISPOSITION (Check one or more)		CARCASS STATUS (Check one or more)					
1. Left at Site 5. Died at Site		<ul> <li>1. Frozen for Later Examination/Necropsy Pending</li> </ul>					
2. Immediate Release at Site 6. Died During Transp	ort	2. Left at Site 5. Landfill 8. Towed: LatLong					
3. Relocated and Released     7. Euthanized     4. Disortangled     8. Transferred to Relate	abilitation	3. Buried 6. Incinerated 9. Sunk: LatLong					
		4. Rendered 7. Composted 10. Unknown/Other					
A. Partially Date: Year:Monin:     Do Completely Facility:		NECROPSIED YES NO					
9. Other:		Carcass Fresh Carcass Frozen/Thawed					
CONDITION/DETERMINATION (Check one or more)		CARCASS CODE AT NECROPSY Code 2 Code 3 Code 4					
1. Sick     7. Location Hazard	dous	NECROPSIED BY: Date: Year:Month:Day:					
2. Injured a. To animal     3. Out of Habitat b. To public		Date: Year:Day:					
4. Deemed Releasable	D	PHOTOS/VIDEOS TAKEN: YES NO					
5. Abandoned/Orphaned 9. No Rehabilita	tion Options						
6. Inaccessible     10. Other: MORPHOLOGICAL INFORMATION		Photo/Video Disposition:					
	OCCURREN	CE DETAILS Restrand GE# (NMFS Use)					
SEX (Check ONE) ESTIMATED AGE CLASS (Check ONE)  1. Male  1. Adult  4. PupiCalf	Group Event:						
2. Female     2. Subadult     5. Unknown	If Yes, Type: E	Cow/Calf Pair Mass Stranding UME # Animals:Actual Estimated					
3. Unknown     3. Yearling	Was the Marin	e Mammal Human Interaction Report completed?					
Whole Animal Partial Animal	Findings of Hu	uman Interaction: YES NO Could Not Be Determined (CBD)					
Straight Length: 119.000 Cm in	If YES evidence	ce of: 1. Vessel Interaction YES NO CBD					
Actual Estimated Not Measured		2. Shot YES NO CBD 3. Fishery Interaction YES NO CBD					
Weight: 🖬 kg 🔲 lb		A. Other Human Interaction:					
Actual Estimated Not Weighed	If VES, what we	as the likelihood that the human interaction contributed to the stranding event?					
SAMPLES COLLECTED (Check one or more) 1. Histology 2. Other Diagnostics 3. Life History		28D) Improbable Suspect Probable					
4. Skeletal 5. Other							
PARTS TRACKING (Check one or more)		Collected?         YES         NO         Gear         Disposition:           s Upon Level A:         YES         NO         Could Not Be Determined (CBD)					
<ul> <li>1. Scientific Collection</li> <li>2. Educational Collection</li> </ul>		one or more:					
3. Other:	_	ed (Check one or more): External Exam Internal Exam Necropsy					
	Other:						



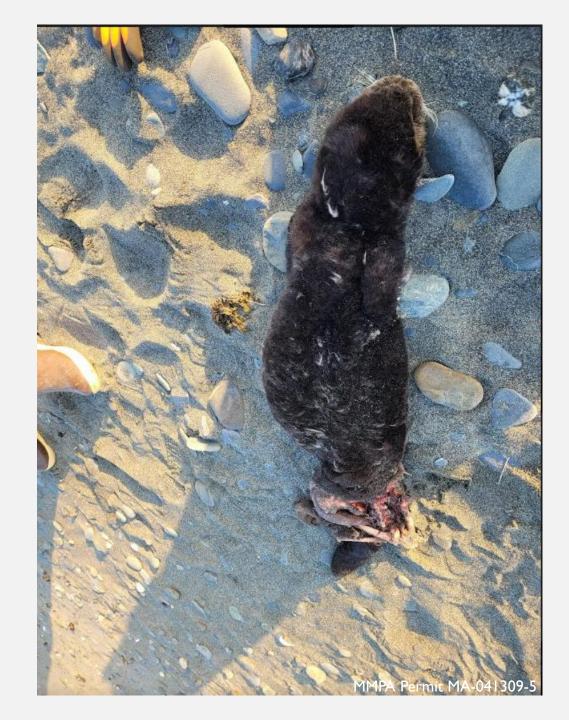
NOAA Form 89-864; OMB Control No.0648-0178; Expiration Date 03/31/2020

		ID#	Color	Type	Placement*	Applied	Present	Removed
Tags Were:		-			(Circle ONE)			
Present at Time of Stranding (Pre-existing):	YES NO	FW	22054		LF LR RF RR			
Applied during Stranding Response/Release:	YES 🗖 NO					_	_	_
Applied during Rehabilitation/Release:	YES NO				DDFLR			
Absent but Suspect Prior Tag:	TES NO				LF LR RF RR			
					DDFLR			
					LF LR RF RR			
	* D= 0	orsal; DF= Do	rsal Fin; L= L	eft Lateral B	Body R= Right Lateral Body	UF= Left Front; LR-	Left Rear; RF= F	tight Front; RR= Righ
ADDITIONAL IDENTIFIER:			(If anim	al is rest	anded, please indicate	any previous f	ield numbers	s here)
ADDITIONAL REMARKS:								
Straight length: 119 cm								
Tail length: 25 cm								
Xipoid girth: 64.5 cm								
Head width: 22 cm								
Head length: 18.5 cm								
Right paw: 5 cm								
Otter was being eaten by eag	es, part of intes	11103 31		out, o				ne bones
THESE DATA SHOULD NOT BE USED OUT OF O	CONTEXT OR WITHOUT V	DISCL		HOULD	BE STRICTLY ENFOR	CED WHEN R	EPORTING	SIGNS OF
			ON. THIS S		BE STRICTLY ENFOR	CED WHEN R	EPORTING	SIGNS OF
THESE DATA SHOULD NOT BE USED OUT OF C HUMAN INTERACTION DATA.	DATA	CCESS FO	ON. THIS S	DATA				

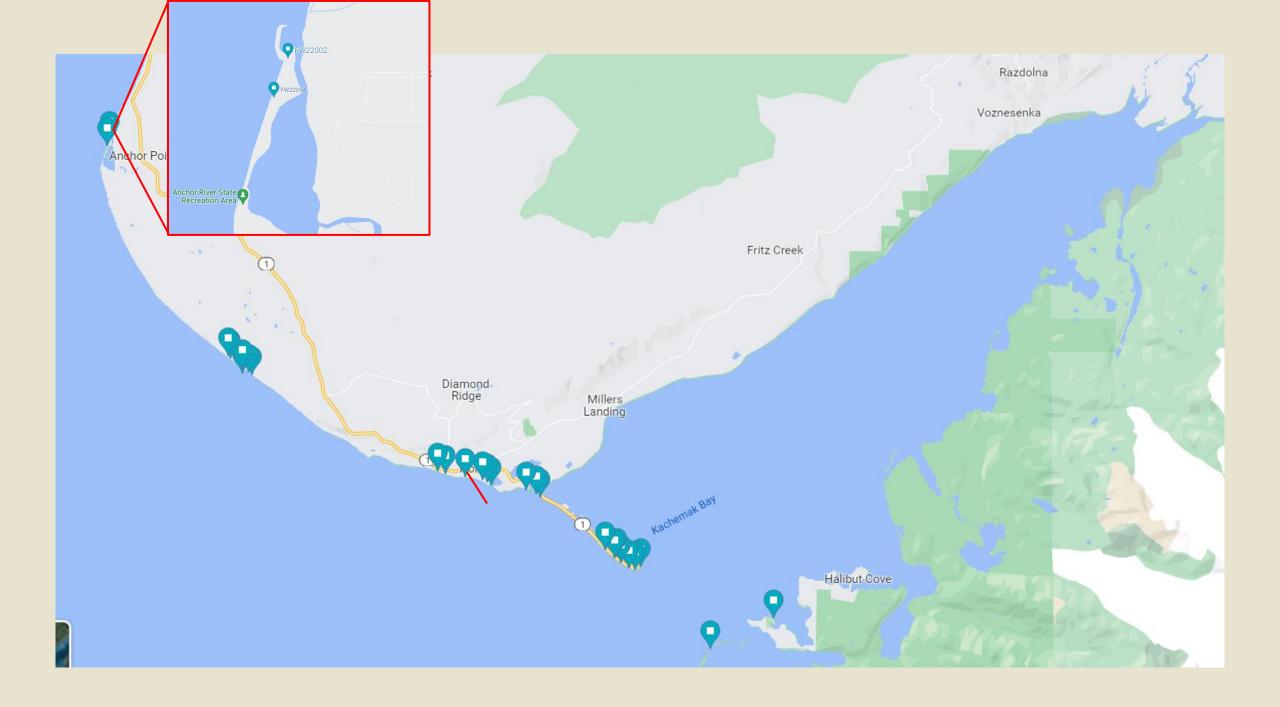
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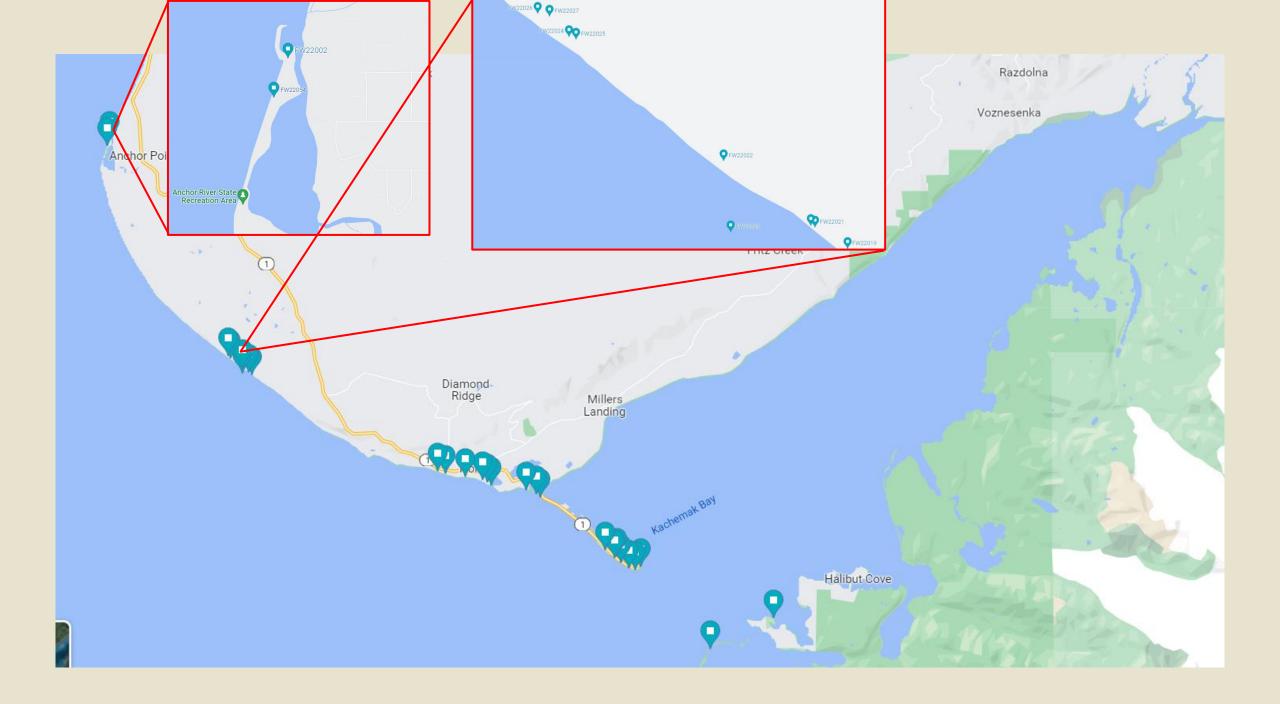
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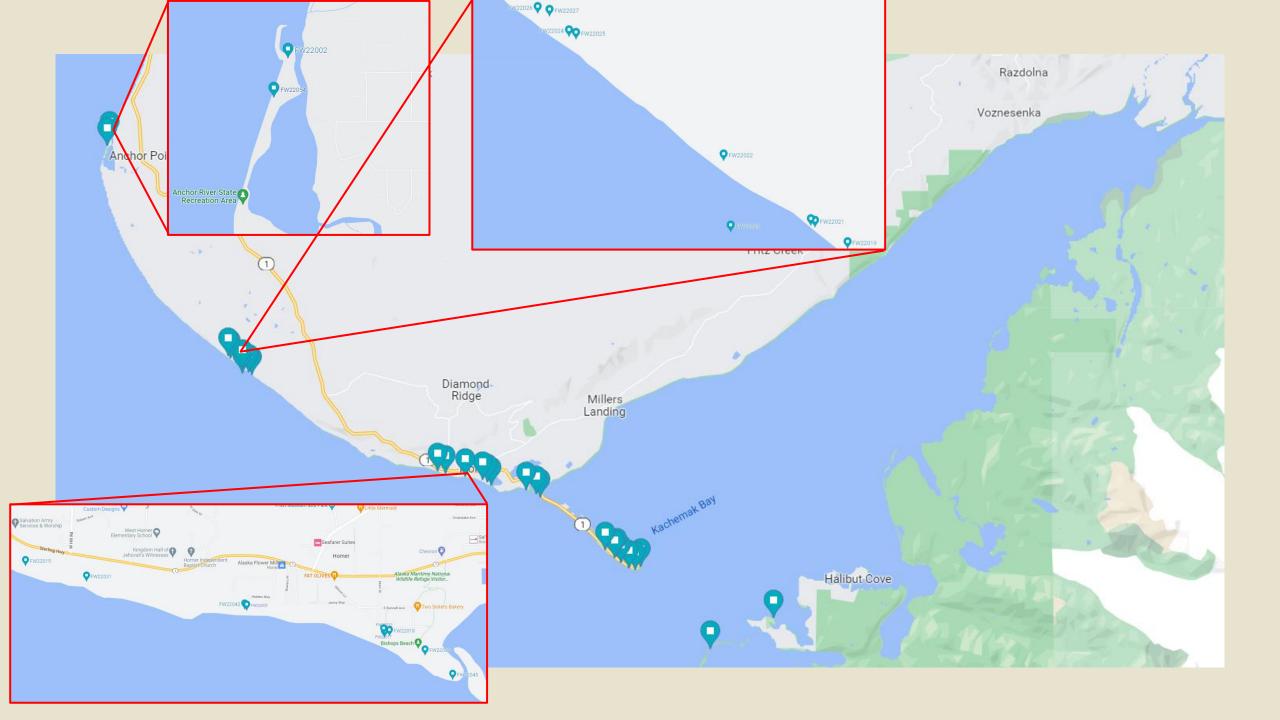


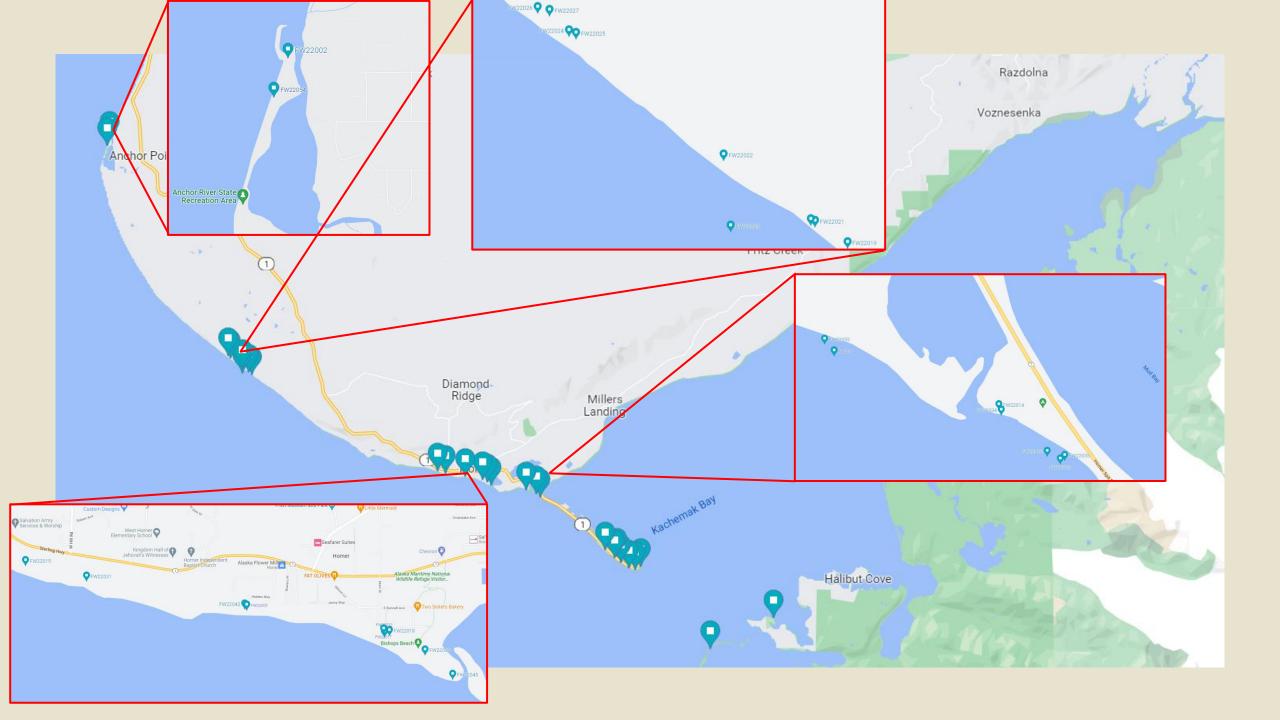


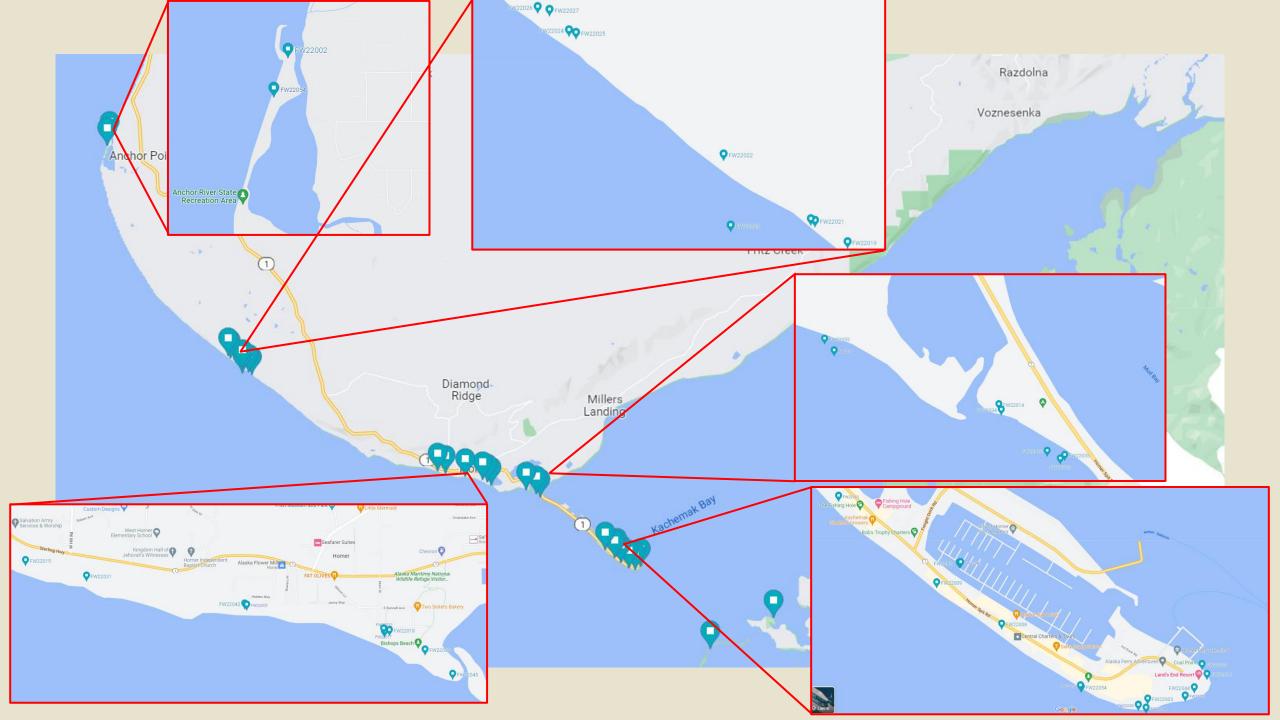


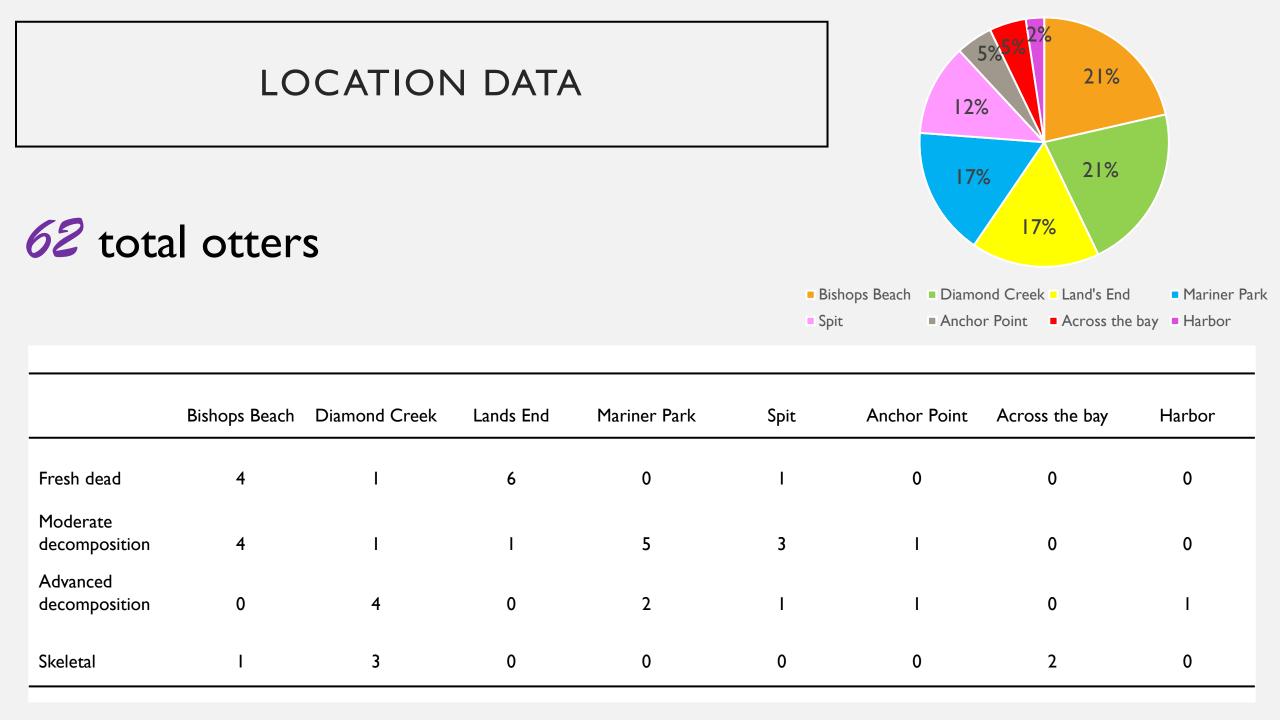




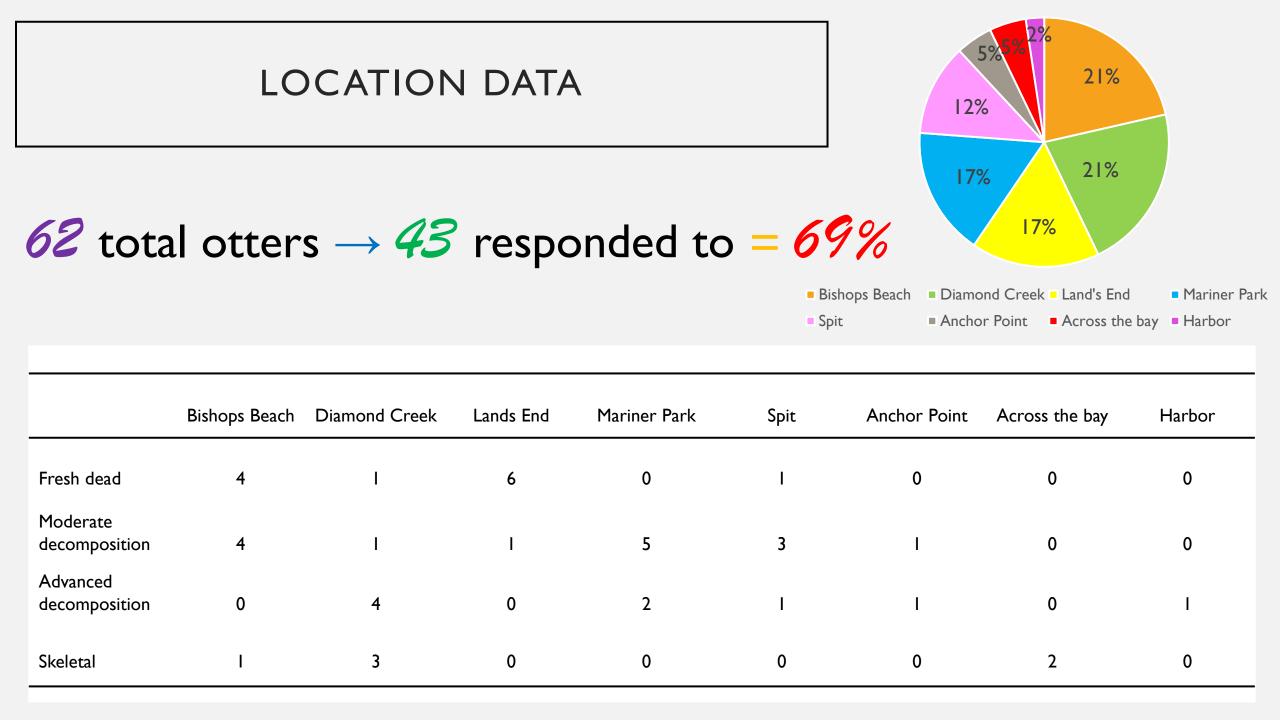








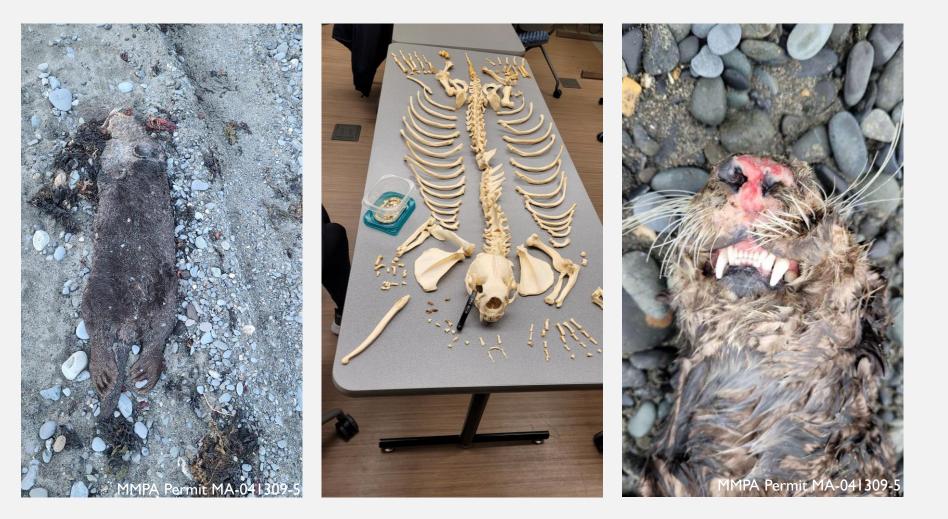
LOCATION DATA					5% <sup>5</sup> % <sup>2</sup> % 12%				
62 tota	al otter	s → <i>43</i>	respo	onded to	■ Bis ■ Sp	d • Mariner Park e bay • Harbor			
	Bishops Beach	Diamond Creek	Lands End	Mariner Park	Spit	Anchor Point	Across the bay	Harbor	
Fresh dead	4	I	6	0	I	0	0	0	
Moderate decomposition	4	I	I	5	3	I	0	0	
Advanced decomposition	0	4	0	2	I	I	0	I I	
Skeletal		3	0	0	0	0	2	0	

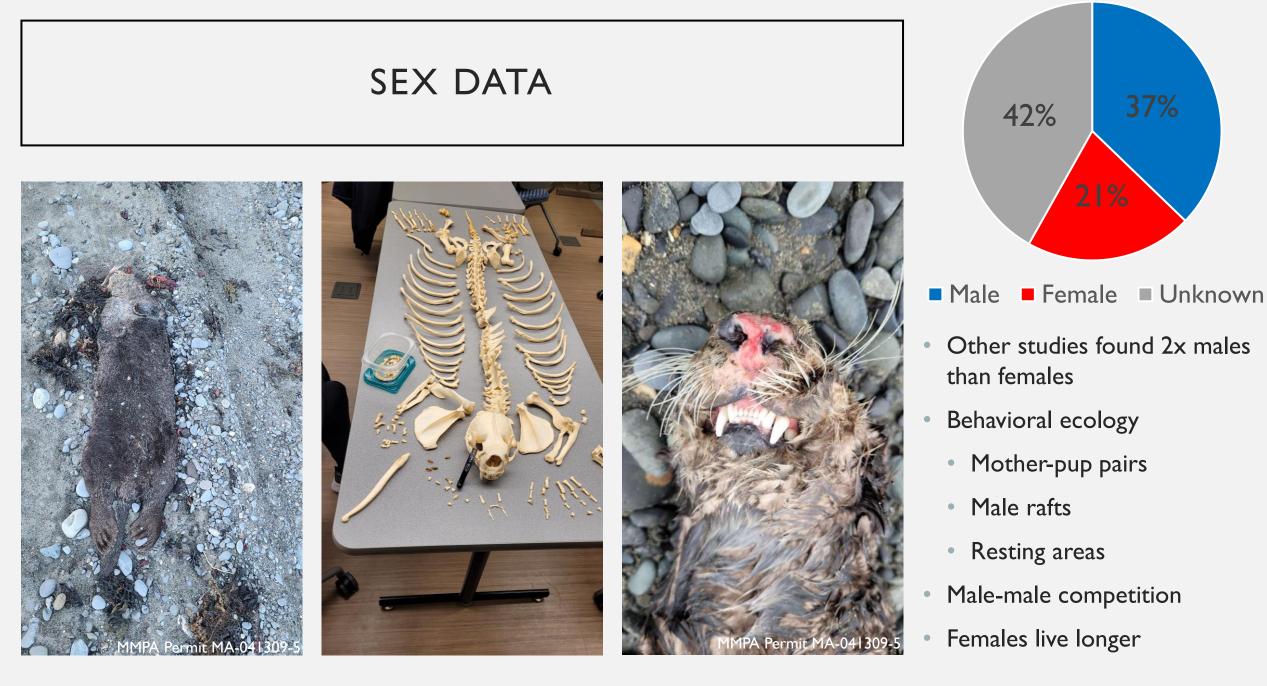


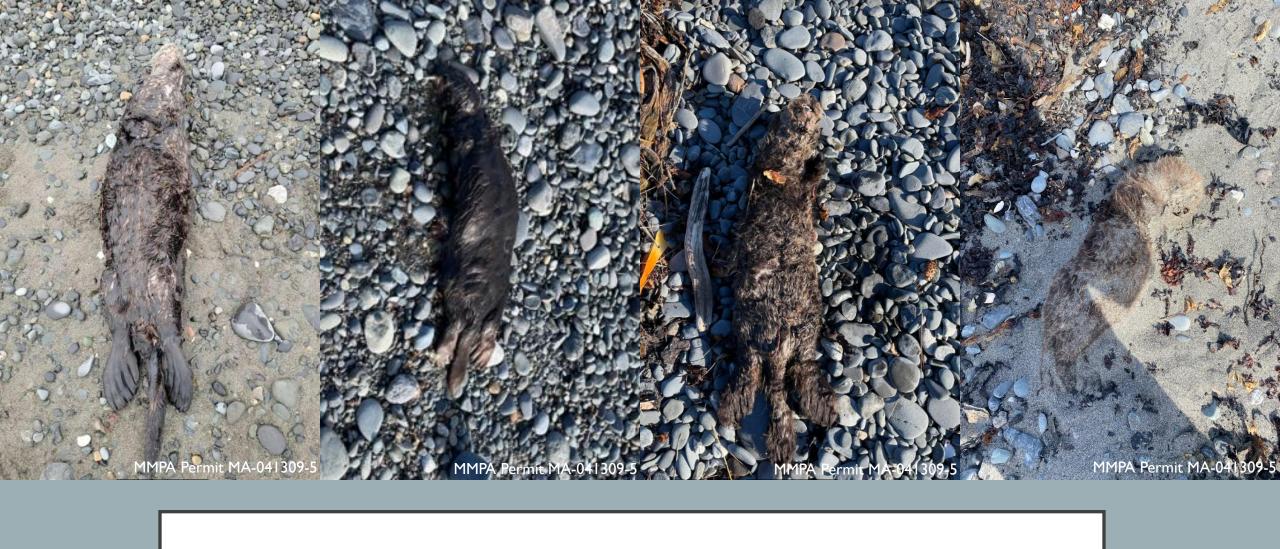
# DIAMOND CREEK



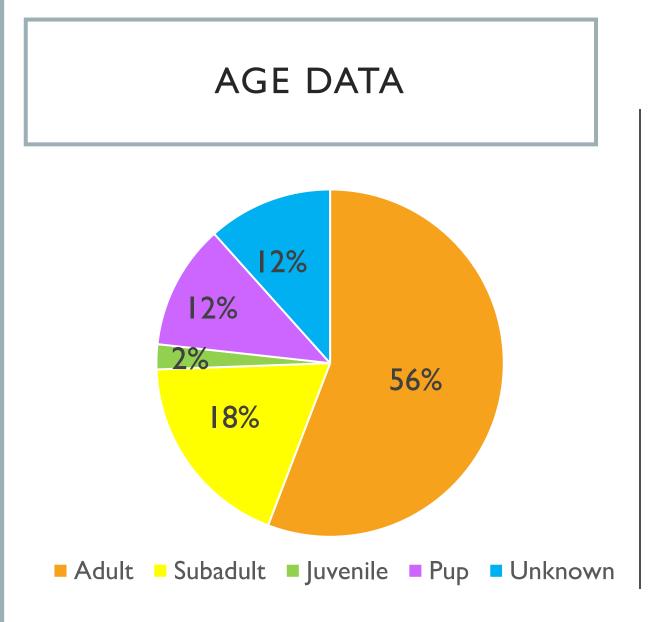








# AGE

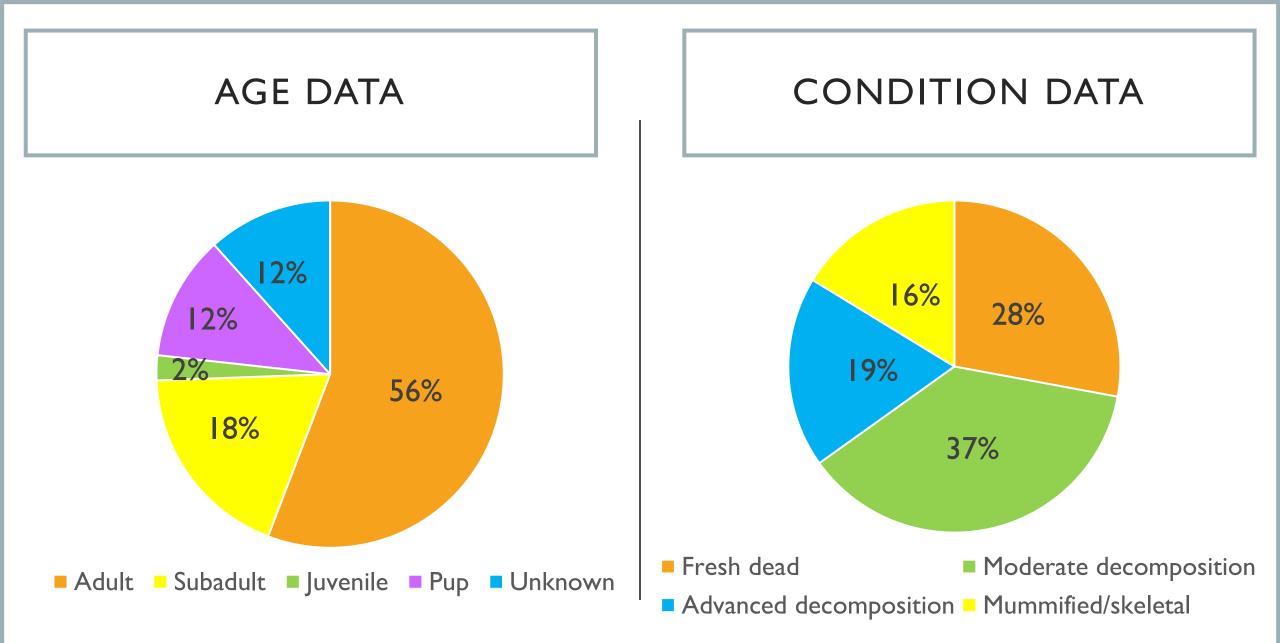


• Carrying capacity

- Pups small, hard to see
- Juveniles less reliant on mother
- Male-male competition
- Disease



# CONDITION









MMPA Permit MA-041309-5

MMPA Permit MA-041309-5

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MMPA Permit MA-041309-5

MMPA Permit MA-041309-5

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Homer ALASKA

SEMESTER BY THE BAY

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THE HARBOR

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Homer ALASKA

ADIRUM

AK 2489 JIL

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THE HARBOR

ADIRONO

AK 2489 UT

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HOMER ALASKS

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MMPA Permit MA-041309-5

- Real-world experience
- Part of a bigger picture
- Inspiration for rehab work
- Working with the public
- Fun!



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# HOMER'S BEST BETS



#### Science in action

Kachemak Bay Campus Semester By the Bay students Diondre Ryan, left, and Ana Noel, right, collect a dead sea otter pup on Tuesday, March 15, at Mariner Park on the Homer Splt in Homer. Ryan and Noel also are interns with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and members of the Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding

Ryan, of Denver, attends the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, and Noel, of Madison, Wisconsin, graduated from the University of Wisconsin LaCrosse. Since January they have collected about 35 stranded or dead sea otters on Kachemak Bay beaches.

Stranded marine mammals can be reported to the Alaska SeaLife Center's marine-mammal stranding network hotline at 888-774-7325.

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- Part of a bigger picture
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- Working with the public
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Caroline Cummings USFWS Alaska SeaLife Center Debbie Boege-Tobin Diondre Ryan Islands and Ocean SBB class Public Family and friends

### REFERENCES

Burek Huntington, K.A., Gill, V.A., Berrian, A. M., Goldstein, T., Tuomi, P., Byrne, B.A., Worman, K., & Mazet, J. (2021). Causes of mortality of northern sea otters (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*) in Alaska from 2002 to 2012. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, 8, 105.

 Counihan-Edgar, K. L., Gill, V.A., Doroff, A. M., Burek, K.A., Miller, W.A., Shewmaker, P. L., Jang, S. Goertz, C.E., Tuomi, P.A., Miller, M.A., Jessup, D.A., and Byrne, B.A. (2012). Genotypic characterization of *Streptococcus infantarius* subsp. *coli* isolates from sea otters with infective endocarditis and/or septicemia and from environmental mussel samples. *Journal of clinical microbiology*, 50(12), 4131-4133.

Garlich-Miller, J., Esslinger, G. G., & Weitzman, B. (2018). Aerial Surveys of Sea Otters (*Enhydra lutris*) in Lower Cook Inlet, Alaska, May, 2017. US Fish and Wildlife Service.