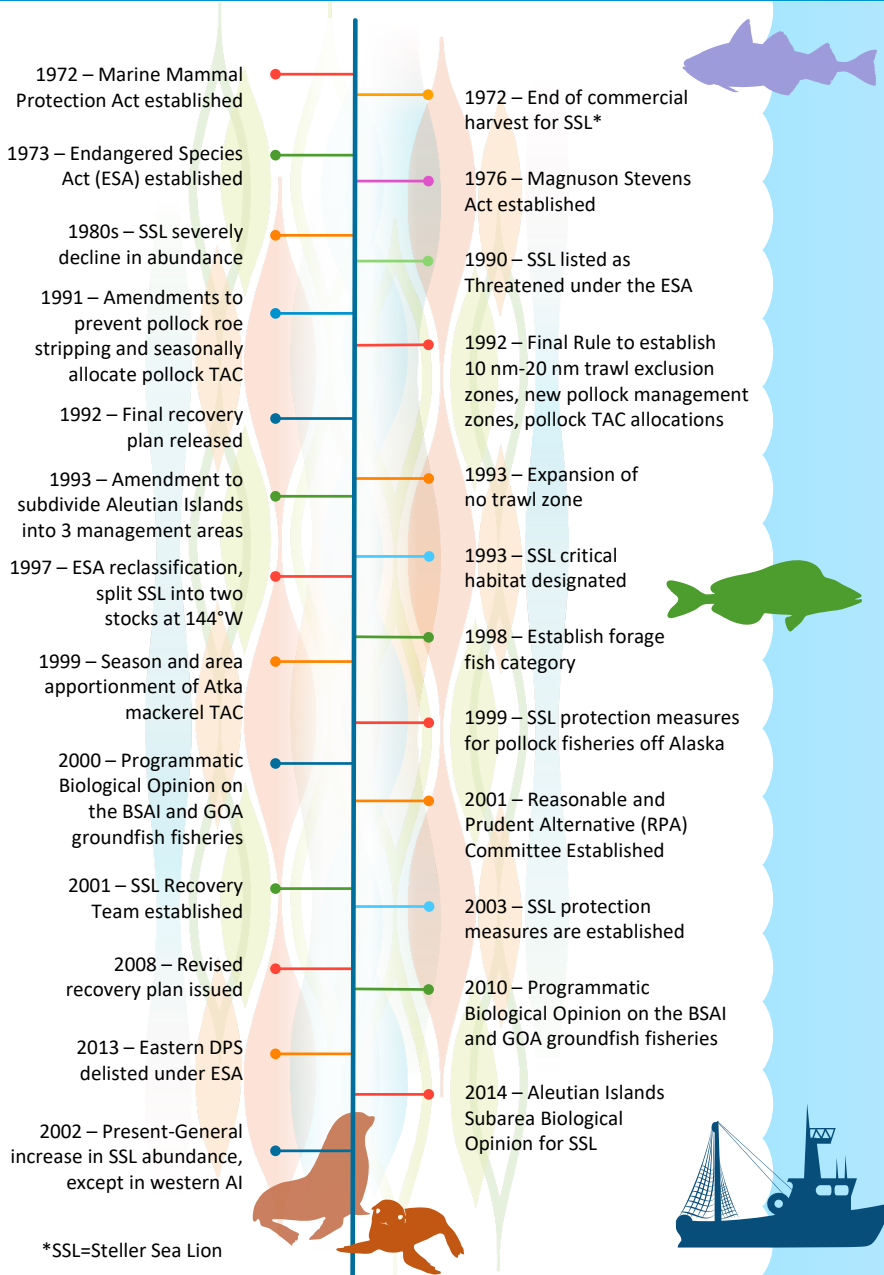


Key Steller Sea Lion Management Actions in Alaska 1990-2021



NOAA
FISHERIES
Alaska Region



- 1990** **Steller sea lion listing under the Endangered Species Act** – After a documented decrease in abundance beginning in the late 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s, petitions, research and review of SSL status lead to their listing as threatened under the ESA.
- 1991** **FMP Amendments BSAI 14/GOA 19** – Prohibited stripping pollock of its roe and discarding the flesh to reduce waste, prevent possible adverse effects on the marine ecosystem and reproductive potential of pollock, and provide for an equitable distribution of the pollock resource among its users, including SSL.
- 1992** **FMP Amendments BSAI 20/GOA 25** – Prohibited trawling year-round within 10 nautical miles (nm) of 37 Steller sea lion rookeries; 2) expanded the prohibited zone to 20 nm for five; 3) established new GOA pollock management districts, and 4) imposed a limit on the amount of excess pollock harvestable per district.
- 1993** **BSAI FMP Amendment 28** – Aleutian Islands (AI) were divided into three subareas (541, 542, 543) to prevent localized depletion of groundfish stocks, particularly Atka mackerel in the eastern AI.
- 1997** SSL split into two ESA Distinct Population Segments delineated by 144° west longitude, with the western population listed as endangered and the eastern population listed as threatened.
- 1998** **FMP Amendments BSAI 36/GOA 39** – Created a forage fish species category to prevent the development of a commercial fishery for forage fish, a critical food source for marine mammals, seabird, and fish species.
- 1999** Atka mackerel total allowable catch (TAC) divided into two seasonal allowances to reduce the percentage of Atka mackerel TAC harvested from SSL critical habitat. Additionally the seasonal no-trawl zone around Seguam and Agligadak rookeries in the AI Eastern District was extended into a year-round closure.
- 1999** Emergency rule for pollock fisheries that temporally and spatially dispersed fishing effort and established pollock trawl exclusion zones around important SSL rookeries and haulouts.
- 2000** FMP level biological opinions that covered multiple species and reached a jeopardy opinion for SSL.
- 2003** **68 FR 204** - As a result of findings from the SSL recovery team, the RPA committee and the 2000 Biological Opinion, management measures were enacted to disperse fishing effort over time and area to provide protection from potential competition for important SSL prey species in waters adjacent to rookeries and important haulouts.
- 2010** FMP level biological opinion that covered multiple species, reached a jeopardy opinion for SSL, offered reasonable and prudent alternatives and established incidental take statements (ITS) for multiple species.
- 2013** After several years of sustained population growth, the eastern stock of SSL was determined to have recovered and was de-listed from the endangered species act.
- 2014** As a result of the 2010 Biological Opinion, the 2014 Biological Opinion focused exclusively on SSL in the AI subarea, did not reach a jeopardy conclusion and established an ITS for SSL in the AI.
- 2002 – Present** Overall populations of Alaska SSL are increasing, except in areas in the western Aleutians. At present (2021) it is unclear what continues to drive the decline of SSL in the western Aleutians.

Many more SSL actions have occurred in Alaska. This document seeks only to highlight major actions.

*SSL=Steller Sea Lion