

NMFS Office of Protected Resources
Review of February 19, 2016 Stranding Event
August 18, 2016

NMFS completed its review of the California sea lion stranding reported on NMFS's website on March 8, 2016. Based on the information available, NMFS determined the event does not warrant modifications to the Letters of Authorization for the U.S. Navy's Hawaii Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) under 50 CFR 218.78(c)(1) or notice and comment procedures under 50 CFR 216.106(e) or 50 CFR 218.78(c)(1)(ii).

As reported, on February 19, 2016, Navy personnel discovered a live, emaciated juvenile California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*) at Coronado Naval Amphibious Base in San Diego, California. The Navy confirmed the use of high frequency sonar shortly before, and in the vicinity of, the stranding location.

The Stranding Response team from SeaWorld California responded and collected the animal for rehabilitation on February 19, 2016. The yearling male sea lion was emaciated as is typical of the current California sea lion Unusual Mortality Event (UME).¹ The sea lion progressed through a normal course of rehabilitation for a juvenile emaciated California sea lion and was released. The animal displayed no visual or hearing deficits during rehabilitation that were reported by the animal care staff.

The animal was assessed using the best available information routinely obtained by the rehabilitation facility. Because the available information does not support a causal connection between the Navy's HSTT training or testing and this California sea lion stranding, NMFS concludes that this event does not warrant any actions pursuant to 50 CFR 216.106(e) or 50 CFR 218.78(c).

¹ See <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/mmume/californiasealions2013.htm>.