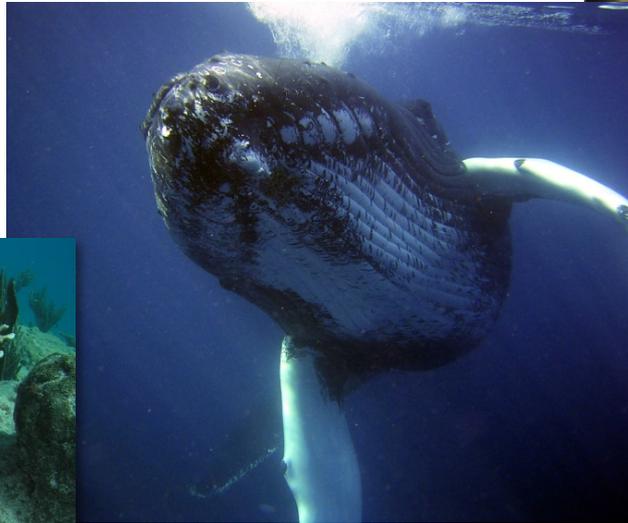


# NOAA's Protected Resources Recovery Program

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MAFAC

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# NOAA's Protected Resources Recovery Program

## Presentation Outline

- ESA Recovery Process
- ESA Recovery Plans
- MAFAC Recovery Project
- ESA Priority Initiative
- Recovery Program Review:  
Deep Dive



# ESA Recovery



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## *What is recovery?*

- Improvement in the status of listed species to the point at which listing is no longer appropriate under the criteria set out in section 4(a)(1) of the Act (50 CFR § 402.02)
- Process by which listed species & their ecosystems are restored & their future is safeguarded to the point that protections under ESA are no longer needed (NMFS & FWS Interim Recovery Planning Guidance 2007)



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# ESA Recovery



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*What is required for recovery?*

ESA Section 4(f) requires:

- Develop & implement recovery plans for conservation & survival of listed species *unless* such plan will not promote the conservation of the species
- Priority given to species that are most likely to benefit from such plan
- Procure services of appropriate entities to develop & implement plan—FOIA exempt
- Provide public notice & comment and consider all information prior to plan approval
- Biennial Report to Congress on progress



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# ESA Recovery

*What factors are considered in recovery planning?*

- Species biological constraints & habitat needs
- Present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range
- Overutilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes
- Disease or predation
- Inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
- Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence
- Conservation efforts



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# ESA Recovery

## *What is a recovery plan?*

- Guidance (not regulatory; 2004 Interim recovery planning guidance, 1990 Listing & Recovery Priority Guidelines ), a road map for recovery – lays out where we need to go & how best to get there
- Outreach tool
- Guide for monitoring species status, threats, recovery actions, post-listing





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## ESA Recovery

### *What is required in a recovery plan?*

Each plan must include:

- Objective, measurable criteria, which when met would result in removing the species from the ESA
- Site-specific recovery actions as may be necessary to achieve the plan's goal
- Cost and time to carry out those measures needed to achieve the plan's goal



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# ESA Recovery

## *What is required in a recovery action?*

- Should be relevant to meeting the recovery criteria, either related to species' biological needs or eliminating/reducing threats
- Site-specific, discrete, action oriented, concise description
- Should identify responsible party (ies)
- Should be prioritized:
  - #1—action necessary to prevent extinction or irreversible decline
  - #2—action necessary to prevent significant decline short of extinction
  - #3—action necessary to provide full recovery



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## ESA Recovery

*How can we work together to improve recovery success?*

We are working with the Protected Species Subcommittee:

- Retrospective analysis of recovery actions
- Build partnerships to complete recovery actions with emphasis on fisheries-related actions



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# ESA Recovery

*Seven recovery plans were selected based on 4 criteria:*

- Older than 12 months representing a wide range of recovery action status/completion dates
- NMFS only recovery plans (i.e., not jointly held with FWS or states)
- Species represent diverse taxa and ecological niches
- Recovery plans represent all NMFS Regions

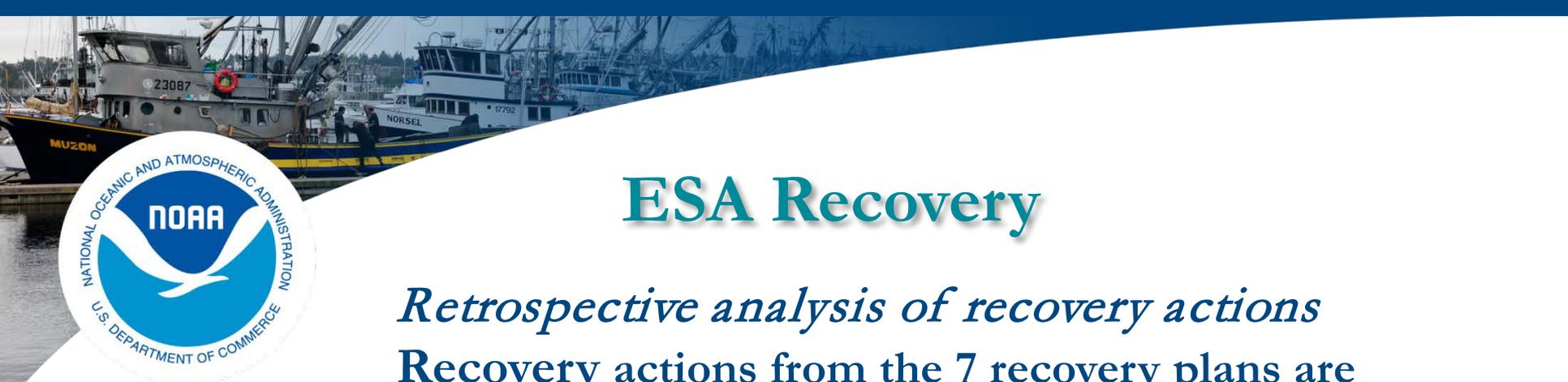
1. North Atlantic Right Whale
2. Smalltooth Sawfish
3. Sperm Whale
4. White Abalone
5. Middle Columbia River Steelhead Trout
6. Steller Sea Lion Western DPS
7. Hawaiian Monk Seal



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# ESA Recovery

## *Retrospective analysis of recovery actions*

Recovery actions from the 7 recovery plans are organized by status category:

- Not Started:** No planning or implementation work has been done. No plans in place to begin work. Still considered necessary for recovery.
  - **White Abalone** Enhance wild populations by outplanting captive-bred abalone in selected sites throughout the range of the species
- Ongoing Current:** Actions without specified end-points that are conducted continuously or periodically throughout the recovery process (e.g., population surveys). Action is considered necessary for recovery and is currently being successfully implemented. Further work needed to bring action to “Complete” status.
  - **Hawaiian Monk Seal** Establish a trained, well-equipped emergency response team to evaluate and potentially treat seals during an event involving compromised or grounded vessels



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# ESA Recovery



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## *Retrospective analysis of recovery actions cont.*

- ❑ **Ongoing Not Current:** Actions without specified end-points that are conducted continuously or periodically throughout the recovery process (e.g., population surveys). Action is still considered necessary for recovery, but is behind schedule (not current).
  - **Hawaiian Monk Seal** Continue annual population monitoring in the NWHI
- ❑ **Partially Complete:** Action duration has a discrete end-point (e.g., 3 years). Action has been partially completed (relative to work needed when recovery plan was released). Further work needed to bring action to “Complete” status.
  - **Smalltooth Sawfish:** Use PVA or other types of population models to evaluate the effect of fishery takes on the species' viability.



# ESA Recovery



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## *Retrospective analysis of recovery actions cont.*

- Complete:** Action has been successfully completed. No work remains to be done.
  - **Steelhead Trout:** Gather information to further evaluate habitat limiting factors and threats in the Rock Creek watershed
- Planned:** Initial planning of action is complete or in progress, but no implementation has yet been done.
  - **Sperm Whale:** Develop a system to encourage, collect, and appropriately analyze opportunistic sightings of sperm whales from fishing vessels, whale-watching vessels, charter vessels, etc.



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# ESA Recovery



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## *Retrospective analysis of recovery actions cont.:*

- ❑ **Discontinued:** Action has had some work done, but is out-of-date or unsuccessful. Still considered necessary for recovery, but there are no current plans to resume work.
  - **Sperm Whale:** Perform genetic analyses on preserved samples from whales killed by the whaling industry in the past.
- ❑ **Obsolete:** This action is not necessary to recovery, according to current understanding of species' status.
  - **Steller's Sea Lion:** Understand predator life histories, biology, and ecology - captive work



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# ESA Recovery



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## *Retrospective analysis of recovery actions*

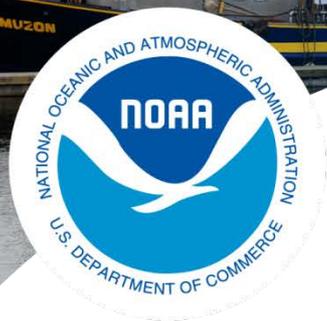
Common characteristics for successful recovery actions and interviews of recovery coordinators for each recovery plan. The output will be a set of recommendations for future recovery actions--what has worked and what can we do better:

- Are the recovery actions clearly described & appropriate responsible parties engaged
- Are the recovery actions technically & scientifically practicable/feasible
- What degree does NMFS have authority/influence over the recovery action & how does that affect the outcome
- Does adequacy of resources needed for recovery actions affect the outcome



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# ESA Recovery



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## *How can we work together to improve recovery success?*

- Build partnerships to facilitate completing recovery actions
- MAFAC holds a unique position with its broad membership across states, industry, academia, nongovernmental organizations, and tribal nations.
- Protected Resources Subcommittee will review the ‘not started’ recovery actions, with an emphasis on recovery actions related to fisheries impacts, in a subset of recovery plans. The Subcommittee will suggest potential partners and strategies, and/ or provide revisions and clarifications to help implement these recovery actions.
- Examples of actions that have not been started or completed:
  - Smalltooth sawfish: Recovery Task 1.1.10--Develop & implement programs, in cooperation with other interested parties to assess, minimize and mitigate the effects of lost fishing gear.
  - North Atlantic right whale: Recovery Task 1.2.1—Develop & implement fishing practices & gear modifications to reduce entanglement

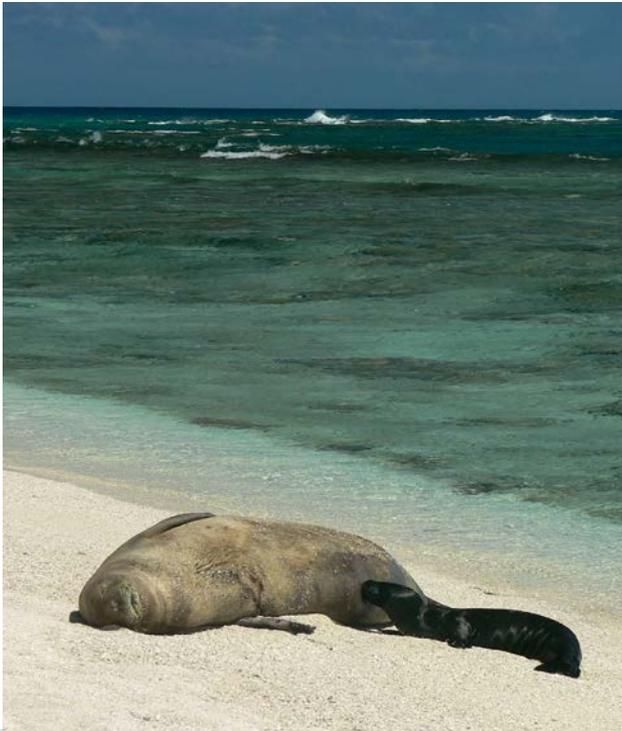


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# ESA Priority Species

## Initiative Overview

- Immediate, targeted efforts to stabilize population declines
- Focus resources within and outside of NOAA on most at-risk species
- Guide agency actions where we have discretion to make investments



### Criteria

Proposed to identify the most at-risk species based on 3 factors:

1. ESA Endangered listing
2. Declining population trend
3. Recovery Priority No. 1 (1990 ESA Recovery Priority Guidelines)

# ESA Priority Species 1990 Recovery Priority Guidelines

1990 Policy Martix & Definitions:

Magnitude of Threat*	Recovery Potential**	Conflict***	Priority #
HIGH	HIGH	CONFLICT	1
HIGH	HIGH	NO CONFLICT	2
HIGH	LOW TO MODERATE	CONFLICT	3
HIGH	LOW TO MODERATE	NO CONFLICT	4
MODERATE	HIGH	CONFLICT	5
MODERATE	HIGH	NO CONFLICT	6
MODERATE	LOW TO MODERATE	CONFLICT	7
MODERATE	LOW TO MODERATE	NO CONFLICT	8
LOW	HIGH	CONFLICT	9
LOW	HIGH	NO CONFLICT	10
LOW	LOW TO MODERATE	CONFLICT	11
LOW	LOW TO MODERATE	NO CONFLICT	12

\**Magnitude of threat.* Not defined in Policy – Assume 4(a)(b) listing factors

- High= extinction is almost certain in the immediate future because of a rapid population decline or habitat destruction.
- Moderate = species will not face extinction if the recovery is temporarily held off, although there is a continuing population decline or threat to its habitat.
- Low = taxa in the low category are rare, or are facing a population decline which may be a short-term self-correcting fluctuation, or the impacts of threats to the species' habitat are not fully known.

\*\**Recovery potential.* Based on how well biological and ecological limiting factors and threats to the species' existence are understood and the extent of management actions needed.

- High = Limiting factors & threats are well understood and the needed management actions are known and have a high probability of success.
- Low to Moderate = Limiting factors & threats are poorly understood or if the needed management actions are not known, are cost-prohibitive, or experimental with an uncertain probability of success.

\*\*\**Conflict.* Species that are, or may be, in conflict with construction or other developmental projects or other forms of economic activity.

# ESA Priority Species Initiative

Endangered; Declining Population; Recovery Priority No 1

Variety of taxa identified across multiple regions:

**Cetaceans**

**Pinnipeds**

**Turtles**

**Salmonids**

**Invertebrates**

# ESA Priority Species Initiative Implementation

- 5-year Action Plans will be developed for each species on list
- Identify short list of specific recovery actions for next 3 – 5 years
- Focus internal efforts to address those recovery actions
- Mobilize partners and stakeholders to help us with those recovery actions
- Evaluate efforts in 2017

# Recovery Program Review: Deep Dive

Protected Resources was chosen as the first management program to undertake a strategic review

We selected the ESA recovery program because it is a key mission objective for which we lack comprehensive evaluation; there is interest from many sectors on this subject; timing works well; anticipate significant benefits from such a review

The purpose and goals of the review are to:

- Ensure program priorities and implementation are aligned with resources and mission mandates.
- Enhance and align strategic management of NMFS regulatory Programs.
- Provide transparency in the operation of NMFS programs



# Recovery Program Review: Deep Dive

- Objective – evaluate the current NOAA Fisheries recovery program to determine whether the current planning process results in recovery plans that are targeted and useful and result in progress towards recovery
- Responses from reviewers will be used to provide advice on recovery program improvements
- Information Provided to Reviewers – NOAA Fisheries' recovery planning policies, guidance, practices, **results of MAFAC retrospective analysis**, and summary information based on overarching questions for Reviewers



# Recovery Program Review: Timeline

- **May 2015 PR Board review and comment on Draft Terms of Reference**
- **August 2015 National Recovery Planning Workshop to flesh out 'deep dive' questions and process**
- **April 2016 conduct one national level review**
- **September 2016 draft program review report**
- **December 2016 final program review report and recommendations for action**
- **2017 implement recommendations**





**QUESTIONS?**

