

PUBLIC INPUT

NMFS needs your participation in scoping for the EIS.

What is Scoping?

Scoping is defined as an "early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action." NEPA requires that NMFS include scoping as part of the EIS process. For our scoping, we have chosen a combination of public meetings around the country and repositories of the information - both virtual (on our website) and real (in a library in each city where a scoping meeting is held).



Photo by NMFS NWR

Your involvement and input are essential to the EIS process. Many opportunities exist to be involved in the EIS on the activities of the National Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (MMHSRP):

- Participate in a scoping meeting
- Identify specific issues
- Submit comments
- Sign up for the mailing list
- Review and comment on the Draft EIS
- Participate in a public hearing
- Review the Final EIS

NMFS is seeking public comments on all issues relating to the MMHSRP, including the following specific questions:

- What sort of activities should be conducted on a local, regional and national level in response to stranded, entangled, sick, injured, and other marine mammals in distress?
- Are there critical research or management needs that may be met by stranding investigations, rehabilitation, disentanglement or health-related research and biomonitoring - activities? Are these needs currently being met? If not, what are they, how are they likely to benefit the marine mammal species, and what should be done to meet them?
- Should there be different standards or levels of MMHSRP effort for different species or groups of species (i.e. pinnipeds vs. cetaceans; threatened or endangered species vs. increasing populations, etc.)? If so, how should NMFS set these standards or priorities?
- Is the current organization of the national stranding and health assessment networks at the local, state, regional, ecosystem, and national levels adequate to meet the necessary management and research needs for conservation? If not, what changes should be implemented to make the organization more effective?
- What should be the minimum qualifications of an individual or organization prior to becoming a Stranding Agreement holder to ensure that animals are treated appropriately, humanely, and with the minimum of adverse impacts?
- Are public and animal health and safety needs adequately addressed in the current organization and operations of the MMHSRP?
- Are there any other relevant issues or data NMFS should consider in its analysis of activities conducted by, for, and under the authorization of the MMHSRP? If so, please provide if or a reference for it.



Photo by Lynne Barre, NMFS NWR

Information Repository Sites:

Santa Barbara Public Library 40 East Anapamu Street Santa Barbara, CA 93101	San Francisco Public Library 100 Larkin Street San Francisco, CA 94102
Hawaii State Library 478 South King Street Honolulu, HI 96813	Seattle Public Library 1000 4th Avenue Seattle, WA 98104
Z.J. Lousac Public Library 3600 Denali Street Anchorage, AK 99503	St. Petersburg Public Library 3745 9th Avenue North St. Petersburg, FL 33713
Boston Public Library 700 Boylston Street Boston, MA 02116	NOAA Central Library 1315 East-West Highway 2nd Floor, SSMC3 Silver Spring, MD 20910

Contacts:

Sarah Howlett or Sarah Wilkin
Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Division
Office of Protected Resources
NMFS 1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226
Phone: 301-713-2322

**Address your comments by
February 28, 2006 to:**

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NMFS 1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226
mmhsrpeis.comments@noaa.gov
Fax: 301-427-2584

For More Information:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/els.htm>

Scoping Meeting Dates and Locations:

PLACE	DATE
Santa Barbara, CA Natural History Museum 2559 Puesta del Sol	Tuesday January 24, 2006 7:00 to 10:00 pm
San Francisco, CA Bay Conservation and Development Commission 50 California Street, Suite 2600	Wednesday January 25, 2006 2:00 to 5:00 pm
Honolulu, HI Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary O'ahu Office 6600 Kalaniana'ole Highway	Friday January 27, 2006 3:00 to 6:00 pm
Seattle, WA NMFS Northwest Regional Office Building 9 7600 Sand Point Way NE	Monday January 30, 2006 2:00 to 5:00 pm
Anchorage, AK U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1011 East Tudor Road	Wednesday February 1, 2006 2:00 to 5:00 pm
St. Petersburg, FL NMFS Southeast Regional Office 263 13th Avenue, South	Tuesday February 7, 2006 5:00 to 8:00 pm
Boston, MA New England Aquarium Conference Center Central Wharf	Monday February 13, 2006 5:00 to 8:00 pm
Silver Spring, MD Silver Spring Metro Center, Building 4, Science Center 1301 East-West Highway	Friday February 17, 2006 2:00 to 5:00 pm

