

Description of the Survey Data and Sighting Maps the Cetacean Stock Assessment Surveys of NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Assessment Center (SWFSC)

These maps of cetacean sightings and survey tracks are based on data from NOAA's marine mammal stock assessment program, conducted by NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC). They were developed by the Biogeography Branch at NOAA, for a Biogeographic Assessment off north/central California, for NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program.

Except for the coastal bottlenose dolphin data (May-July, 1990-2000), SWFSC cetacean maps from Phase I and Phase II have the same data but are presented differently. Both Phase I and II maps show cetacean sightings (species group size) and effort locations, for the late summer and fall seasons (ranging from July-December, the late Upwelling and Oceanic seasons) of the SWFSC cetacean ship surveys for four years: 1991, 1993, 1996 and 2001, off the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington.

The Phase I maps show the sightings and effort by species and year; the Phase II maps combine data from all available years into one map for each species, or species stock.

Maps for 18 cetacean species (or species stocks) and a map of the survey tracks are included to provide additional mapped information that was available for these species. Most of these maps result from the broad scale, SWFSC cetacean ship surveys, although aerial survey information is included for the California coastal stock of the bottlenose dolphin.

This survey data is used to develop stock estimates and trend analyses for most marine mammals that occur off the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington. The SWFSC data do not represent the distribution of the species, but do provide an indication of the broader spatial extent of the species. Since the SWFSC data were not incorporated into the CDAS central California data set and maps, they are presented separately.

For more information on the marine mammal stock assessment survey data used in this assessment, contact Dr. Jay Barlow at Jay.Barlow@noaa.gov or visit the following websites for additional information on the SWFSC marine mammal surveys and stock assessments:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/species.htm>

or

<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division=PRD&ParentMenuId=148&id=1248>

or

<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/textblock.aspx?Division%20=PRD&ParentMenuId=257&id=1465>