

# Forest Service Sensitive Species- Wildlife

Sensitive species are those plant and animal species identified by the Regional Forester for which population viability is a concern on National Forest Service (NFS) lands within the region. The goal of the Forest Service Sensitive Species Program (Forest Service Manual 2670) is to ensure that species numbers and population distribution are adequate so that no federal listing will be required and no extirpation will occur on NFS lands. The Queen Charlotte goshawk is covered on a separate handout.



## Steller sea lion – Eastern AK DPS (*Eumetopias jubatus*)

### Marine Mammal Habitats

A. Provide for the protection and maintenance of harbor seal, Steller sea lion, and sea otter habitats.

1. Ensure that Forest Service permitted or approved activities are conducted in a manner consistent with the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), Endangered Species Act, and NMFS guidelines for approaching seals and sea lions. Consult with the appropriate agency for identification of critical timing events, such as molting, parturition, etc., and recommended distances to avoid disturbances. "Taking" of marine mammals is prohibited; "taking" includes harassment (adverse disturbance), pursuit, or attempting any such activity.

2. Locate Forest Service authorized and approved facilities and concentrated human activities as far from known marine mammal haul outs, rookeries, and known concentration areas as feasible to meet the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP) consistency requirements and MMPA. The following distances are provided as general guidelines for maintaining habitats and reducing human disturbance:

- Locate camps, LTFs, campgrounds, and other developments (where allowed by the LUD) 1 mile from known haul outs (farther if the development is large).
- Forest Service permitted or approved activities will not intentionally approach within 100 yards, or otherwise intentionally disturb or displace any hauled-out marine mammal.
- Dispose of waste oil and fuels off site as regulated by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

3. Cooperate with the state and other federal agencies to develop sites and opportunities for the safe viewing and observation of marine mammals by the public. Maintain a public education program explaining forest management activities related to marine mammals in cooperation with state and other federal agencies.

The Steller's sea lion eastern Distinct Population Segment (DPS) was delisted under the Endangered Species Act effective December 4n 2013 (Federal Register Vol. 78, No. 213). Members of the endangered Western DPS have been documented in northern Southeast Alaska but rarely occur south of Fredrick Sound (NMFS 2013c).

The eastern DPS of the Steller sea lion has been removed from the endangered species list; however it is still analyzed as a sensitive species for 5 years after removal from the list.

### Project Level

Most Forest Service projects have very minimal impact to the marine environment.



## Black oystercatcher (*Haematopus bachmani*)

The black oystercatcher is found along rocky shorelines along the coast. It forages in sheltered areas where low-sloping gravel or rock beaches with abundant prey occur.

### Project Level

These areas are generally protected under the Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines.

## Aleutian Tern

(*Sterna aleutica*)



The Aleutian tern nests on islands, shrub-tundra, grass or sedge meadows and freshwater and coastal marshes. Distribution within Alaska is restricted to coastal areas throughout the Aleutian Islands as far west as Attu Island, north to the southeastern Chukchi Sea and east to the Alaska Peninsula, Yakutat, and Glacier Bay.

### Project Level

The area is outside of the known range of the Aleutian tern.



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