

Peripheral Monitoring Instructions 110120

Our monitoring procedures and forms have changed. Most importantly, we have added fields for environmental factors for each stop we make. These fields form the second line of data for each site in the count dataform. This line of environmental data is only entered in the count dataform. In the disturbance form, only list disturbances, being sure to enter site and start and end times for each. You should have a copy of detailed dataform entry instructions, which go over each of the items in the form. This document is entitled “Russian River Estuary Management Activities, Pinniped Monitoring Datasheet Instructions,

Pinniped Monitoring at Periphery – COUNTS Explanation of Fields”. If you don’t have a copy please review the one at the Stewards’ website: http://www.stewardsofthecoastandredwoods.org/st_pinnipedmonitoring.htm or request a printed one from Michele mluna@mcn.org. The last two pages in the document include the instructions for entering disturbance data.

Peripheral Field Procedure

1. Go the sites in the order in the dataform.
2. Go to the first stop in the datasheet.
3. At the first site, fill out the header data boxes as requested in the datasheet instructions. These are the boxes at the tops of the form, whose values normally do not change during the course of observations. Later fill out the environmental data as listed in the dataform at each stop. Most of the data can simply be circled.
4. Get out your dataform and gear.
 1. Some sites only need binoculars.
 2. Others always require a telescope.
 3. Telescoping will be necessary to establish if a pup is neonatal, that is less than 1 week old. Neonatal pups are less than 15 kg (32 lb), thin for their body length, may have an umbilicus present, have a wrinkled skin, and have awkward movements on land, although they can swim. Photograph any possible neonatal.
 4. If you suspect any pup is abandoned, note whether if it hasn’t moved, if it has no contacts with adults, or whether any nursing attempts are rebuffed by adults. Please report your observations promptly to Jessica Martini-Lamb (707) 322-8177. Jessica will inform the Marine Mammal Center of the pup’s status.
5. **Above all watch your footing at all times, especially when photographing.**
5. Look carefully over rocks and logs for seals; it can be easy to miss one or two in coast or river haulouts on your first pass.
6. Count twice slowly, and make sure your counts match. If not count again. If you spot another seal your missed on land later during your 10 minute watch, add it.
7. Some sites may require looking from more than one vantage.
8. Photograph the site from the different vantages.

9. If you have any question about the boundaries of sites, a PowerPoint with the count area indicated by red lines is available on the Steward's monitoring website given above or a printed copy of the PowerPoint will be sent by request to Stewards.
10. Do not count seals or any other marine mammals in the water, though feel free to note them in comments.
11. Count people at the site. This includes all people within the counting circle and along its boundaries, or people on the water within 100 yards of the circled sites.
12. Enter all counts as requested in the datasheet procedures.
13. Allow a timed 10 minutes for monitoring, starting with set up—this measured period means we can calculate a disturbance rate from humans and compare sites.
14. Record any California Sea Lions (CASLs) as instructed.
 1. If possible distinguish adult males from other CASLs. Adult males have a distinct forehead or crest.
 2. Other CASLs are lumped in an "other" category. CASLs have doglike faces.
15. Note other pinnipeds.
 1. Steller sea lions (STSLs) would be rare—usually only at Bodega Rock outside our count area. They have been seen at Mile Rocks off Jenner, but that is outside our Jenner count area.
 2. Northern elephant seals (NELSs) sometimes show up and it is possible that one or two may stay for a month in molt.
 3. Northern and Guadalupe Fur Seals have stranded recently, but this would be very rare.
 4. If you can't ID a pinniped, photograph it. Photograph all stranded animals.
16. Total all pinnipeds.
17. If there is a disturbance make an entry in the disturbance data form. Sometimes you will not see the beginning or ending of a disturbance.
 1. The overall number of disturbances should be very low.
 2. At two sites, there may be As to observers on cliffs.
 3. If there are kayaks in the river, disturbance is likely with close approaches.
18. Go to the next site and continue to record.
19. At the end of your shift, drop your datasheet off at the Jenner Visitor Center.

Thank you so much for helping in our study.