Entanglement in marine debris and ingestion of fishing gear contribute to Steller sea lion (SSL; *Eumetopias jubatus*) injury and mortality. We surveyed SSL haulouts and rookeries throughout Southeast Alaska (2000-2012) and northern British Columbia (2000-2009) and documented sex/age class of animals entangled or that had ingested gear, and described the type of entanglement/ingested gear. We recorded > 500 individual SSLs that were entangled or had ingested gear including both males and females and all age classes. The most common neck entanglements were packing bands and black rubber bands. The most frequently ingested gear was salmon troll fishing gear, evidenced by flashers hanging from the corners of animals’ mouths. During annual surveys of permanently marked (branded) sea lions, we documented 16 individuals that had ingested gear; a disproportionately high number (14) were males. Twelve branded animals (9 males, 3 females) had bands or line encircling their neck, face or head. We are tracking the fate of these known animals in order to estimate survival reduction caused by entanglement/ingested gear. It is likely that SSL entanglements will increase in coming years as debris from the Japanese tsunami enters Alaskan waters, highlighting the importance of this long-term monitoring effort. Reducing the use of packing bands, cutting loops of synthetic material, and re-configuring fishing gear that includes loops (e.g., black rubber bands used on crab pots) can prevent entanglements. We believe a cooperative effort between commercial and sport salmon trollers and biologists is needed to develop methods to reduce interactions between SSLs and salmon troll fisheries.
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