

The NewsRoom

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MMS Awards Grant to Alaska to Monitor Sea Lions

Provides \$32,722 through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program

ANCHORAGE – The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded a \$32,722 grant to the Alaska Department of Natural Resources through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) for a three-year project to monitor the endangered Steller Sea Lion in the Bering Sea.

The project will monitor the sea lions' use of rarely-surveyed areas in the Bering Sea, specifically around St. Lawrence Island, Cape Newenham, and Amak Island. The project will collect new data, including how many sea lions are living in the areas, and their sex and age. The data collected will provide a baseline for further studies to assess the potential effects of oil and gas development and large-scale commercial fisheries on the endangered sea lions.

"MMS is committed to supporting our partners through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program with important projects that will promote conservation, especially for the Endangered Steller Sea Lion," said MMS Alaska Regional Director John Goll.

Alaska's CIAP plan was approved by the Minerals Management Service on September 30, 2008. The CIAP was created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and provides \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to six eligible Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas producing states – Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, and Mississippi. The total funding to Alaska includes \$79.8 million for fiscal years 2007 through 2010.

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