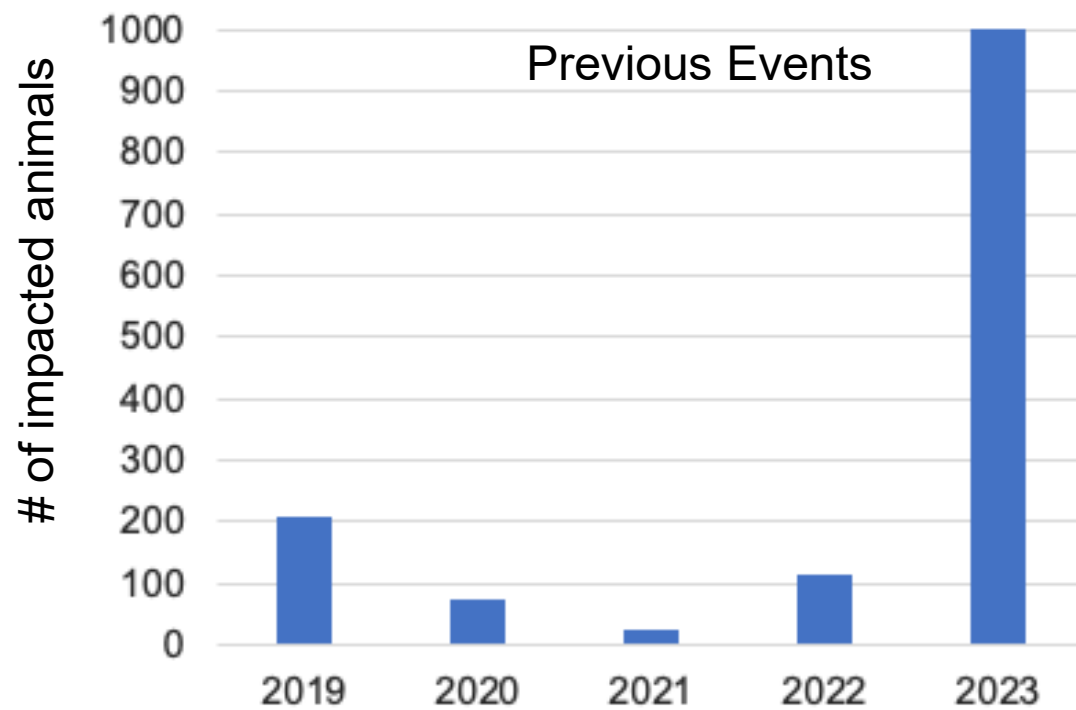

2024 Marine Mammal Stranding Event Update

SCCWRP Commission Meeting
September 6, 2024



2024 Marine Mammal Stranding Event



- ~300 animals impacted (counts still in progress)
 - 2023 event involved ~3x more animals
- California Sea Lions primarily impacted, some dolphins and fur seals may also be impacted (testing in progress)
- Strandings were greatest in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, but sick animals observed as far south as Orange County

Cause of the strandings: domoic acid

- Strandings linked to exposure to domoic acid from a summer bloom event
- Bloom centered in Santa Barbara Channel, extended as far as northern Santa Monica Bay area
- Initial lab results suggest very high levels of toxin in environment



SCCWRP is part of the response team

Response Efforts:

- SCCWRP leading coordination of enhanced monitoring for HAB toxins
 - Ongoing pier monitoring via HABMAP
 - SCCWRP leading targeted offshore monitoring efforts
- Marine mammal stranding network leading rescue and rehabilitation effort
 - SCCWRP and partners collaborating to support domoic acid testing in stranded animals

A grayscale microscopic image showing a dense network of thin, elongated plant fibers or cellulose strands. The fibers are oriented in various directions, creating a complex, interwoven pattern. The background is a light, slightly textured gray.

Questions?

Jayne Smith

Senior Scientist, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Jaymes@sccwrp.org