

Pacific Marine Mammal Center is a nonprofit organization with a mission to rescue, medically treat, and rehabilitate marine mammals that strand along the Orange County coastline due to injury or illness; to release healthy marine mammals back to their natural habitat; and to increase public awareness of the marine environment through education and research. As the sole marine mammal rehabilitation facility in Orange County, Pacific Marine Mammal Center has been actively following the controversy surrounding the California sea lion population in Newport Harbor. We acknowledge the human-wildlife conflict and appreciate the frustration of those individuals affected. The animals in question are healthy California sea lions exhibiting natural behaviors and therefore, the situation falls outside of the scope of Pacific Marine Mammal Center's mission. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service is the federal agency charged with the management of marine mammal populations as well as the enforcement of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. We support their efforts in exploring various avenues that will potentially provide a resolution for this situation. As a 501(c)(3) organization, Pacific Marine Mammal Center cannot become involved in politically controversial situations, whether actual or potential, but is willing and able to provide information about the natural history and behaviors of the animals in question.