

newly born pup on Fish Island, about 400 km east of Sugarloaf, during 1996. No interchange of breeding animals between the eastern and western stock was observed. Low resighting rates of sea lions branded at Marmot Island during 1987 and 1988 suggested low juvenile survival. Future marking studies will likely focus on estimation of vital parameters.

#### **MOVEMENTS, ROOKERY FIDELITY, AND SURVIVAL OF STELLER SEA LIONS BRANDED AS PUPS IN ALASKA AND RUSSIA**

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Over the past twenty years, the western stock of the Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) in Alaska has declined by more than 80%. During the same time period the eastern stock (east of 144° W) within Alaska nearly doubled in size. The western stock was classified as “Endangered” in 1997, under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. During the past 24 years about 9,000 pups were branded on their natal rookeries in Alaska and Russia with the objectives of determining the range of juvenile and adult movements, the degree of natal rookery fidelity, interchange between eastern and western stocks, and survivorship. In 1975 and 1976, 7,046 Steller sea lion pups were branded with letters, unique as to rookery and year of birth, at six rookeries in the Gulf of Alaska. From 1987-1989, 1,145 pups were marked with individually unique brands at Marmot Island, Alaska and the Kuril Islands, Russia. During 1994 and 1995, 800 sea lion pups were individually branded within the stable population at Forrester Island. Branded juveniles were resighted at distances up to 2200 km from their birth rookery. Adult females displayed a high degree of natal fidelity to their rookery of birth or to a nearby rookery. However a female branded as a pup on Sugarloaf Island in 1976 was observed with a

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**ABSTRACTS**

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