

## **WDFW Help**

### **Why can't sea lions be relocated to other natural areas?**

Previous efforts to relocate sea lions to other waters have been largely unsuccessful, because sea lions often return to the site where they were captured. The experience with sea lions at the Ballard Locks in Seattle in the late 1980s is a prime example: In 1988 and 1989, resource managers captured 39 California sea lions that had been foraging at the Ballard Locks and transported them to the outer Washington coast near Long Beach, where they were released. Within a few weeks, 29 of those animals returned to the Locks to resume preying on salmon and steelhead.

The result was much the same the following year, when resource managers transported six California sea lions back to their breeding area off the coast of southern California. Three of those animals returned to Puget Sound within 45 days and a fourth was sighted in the Columbia River. Sea lions captured at Bonneville Dam and relocated to the Oregon coast and the lower Columbia River have also returned to the dam within a short period of time.

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/help/questions/267/>