Marine Mammal Stranding Protocol

1- **Do NOT Touch!**
1. Do not touch, pick up, or feed the animal. They are wild animals, and can bite. They also are easily stressed by humans. Do not return the animal to the water. Seals and sea lions temporarily "haul out" on land to rest. Harbor seal mothers often leave their pups ashore while they're feeding at sea. A beached whale, dolphin, or porpoise should be reported immediately.

2- **Observe**
Observe the animal from a distance of at least 50 feet. Keep people and dogs away.

3- **Describe**
Note physical characteristics such as size, presence of external earflaps, and fur color. This helps volunteers determine the species and what rescue equipment and volunteers are needed.

4- **Note Condition**
Note the animal's condition. Is it weak and underweight? Are there any open wounds?

5- **Identification**
Does the animal have any obvious identification tags or markings?

6- **Location**
Determine the exact location of the animal, in order to provide accurate directions. Volunteers cannot rescue an animal if they cannot find it!

7- **Call!**
In Whatcom County
*First*: Whatcom County Stranding Network (360) 303-3608
*Second*: NMFS Northwest Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network hotline (800) 853-1964
   www.nwr.noaa.gov/marine-mammals/stranding-information.cfm
*Third*: Wolfs Hollow Rehabilitation Center (360) 378-5000

In San Juan County
*First*: San Juan Islands Marine Mammal Standing Network (800) 562-8832
   http://161.58.53.200/programs/mmsn.html
*Second*: NMFS Northwest Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network hotline (800) 853-1964
   www.nwr.noaa.gov/marine-mammals/stranding-information.cfm
*Third*: Wolfs Hollow Rehabilitation Center (360) 378-5000

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