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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

More than 2,000 scientists expected to attend marine mammal conference in Florida

Cumulative effects of threats to marine mammals: challenges to animals, scientists, and managers

Whales, dolphins, porpoises, manatees, dugongs, seals, sea lions, walruses, polar bears and sea otters will be the subjects of the Society for Marine Mammalogy's 19th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals beginning Monday, November 28 in Tampa, FL. The "biennial," held at a different site around the world every two years, is a gathering of marine mammal scientists and students from around the world, with the goal of exchanging new research findings, enhancing collaboration, sharing ideas, and improving the quality of research on marine mammals.

The theme for this year's conference is "*Cumulative effects of threats to marine mammals: challenges to animals, scientists, and managers.*" Scientists, students and experts from around the world will be available to answer questions about the topics covered during several hundred oral presentations, speed talks and poster viewing sessions.

The field of marine mammal science has grown tremendously since the first biennial conference was held in Santa Cruz, CA in 1975. Since then cities including Monaco, Monte Carlo, Maui, Hawaii, Cape Town, South Africa, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada and San Diego, CA have hosted this conference and more than 2,000 attendees are expected this year in Tampa. This is the first time the conference is being held in Tampa, and it is a return to Florida after 16 years when the 11th biennial was hosted in Orlando. In 2013 the conference will be held in New Zealand and in 2015 in Argentina.

Media Day will be held on Monday, November 28 with an introduction to begin at 8:30am and presentations taking place throughout the day. The conference will take place at the Tampa Convention Center. Media interested in attending the conference should **contact Allison Garrett**, 727-551-5750 to obtain credentials and/or more information on Monday's speakers and speed talks. There will be a press room available for conducting interviews and reviewing video and photos that the attendees have been encouraged to bring with them.

(more)

For more information on the conference and the Society for Marine Mammalogy please visit www.marinemammalscience.org/conference

The Society for Marine Mammalogy has three main objectives. The first is to evaluate and promote the advancement of marine mammal science. The second is to gather and distribute technical and management information to members of the Society, the public and private institutions through publications and meetings. Finally, the Society provides scientific information on matters related to the conservation and management of marine mammal resources.

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