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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NOAA's Fisheries Service Awards \$3.7 Million to Partners to Aid  
Stranded Marine Mammals and Research Health Issues**

NOAA's Fisheries Service today announced the award of 42 grants to partner organizations totaling more than \$3.7 million to recover and treat stranded marine mammals, collect data for scientific research on marine mammal health and support rehabilitation and data collection facilities.

The grants through the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program have been awarded to academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, state agencies and municipalities in 17 states that are part of the National Marine Mammal Stranding Network. The stranding network involves trained professionals and volunteers in more than 100 organizations that partner with NOAA's Fisheries Service to investigate marine mammal strandings, rehabilitate animals, and assist with research on marine mammal health issues.

Thirty-eight awards are for stranding response activities and four are for research projects such as auditory testing on small stranded cetaceans in southeastern Massachusetts; monitoring of injured or stranded cetaceans after release in Florida; and using stranding data to understand the dynamics of leptospirosis, a bacterial disease, in California sea lions.

Since 2001, NOAA's Fisheries Service has made 392 Prescott grant awards to 85 recipients in 24 states and 2 U.S. territories, for a total of \$34.7 million. Over the years, the awards have enabled network members to make improvements to the network such as expanding response coverage; enhancing response capabilities and data collection; and building and upgrading rehabilitation facilities. The awards are made under Title IV of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which authorizes NOAA's Fisheries Service to fund eligible members of the national stranding network through grants and cooperative agreements.

The grantee organizations for the FY2010 Prescott awards are:

College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, Maine - \$99,978  
Maine Department of Marine Resources, Augusta, Maine - \$100,000  
University of New England, Biddeford, Maine - \$99,745  
International Fund for Animal Welfare, Yarmouth Port, Mass. - \$100,000 and \$97,156  
New England Aquarium, Boston, Mass. - \$57,139  
Sea Research Foundation, Inc./Mystic Aquarium, Mystic, Conn. - \$99,983  
University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn. - \$46,078  
Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation, Riverhead, N.Y. - \$100,000  
Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Annapolis, Md. - \$71,128  
Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center Foundation, Inc., Virginia Beach, Va. - \$99,927  
North Carolina Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Raleigh, Va. - \$92,117

University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, N.C. - \$99,980 and \$99,890  
Coastal Carolina University, Conway, S.C. - \$96,437  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Social Circle, Ga. - \$30,000  
Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute, Melbourne Beach, Fla. - \$99,978  
Mote Marine Laboratory, Sarasota, Fla. - \$97,378  
Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge, Destin, Fla. - \$78,860  
Texas State Aquarium Association, Corpus Christi, Texas- \$47,995  
Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network, Galveston, Texas- \$100,000  
Chicago Zoological Society, Brookfield, Ill. - \$94,613  
Makah Tribe, Neah Bay, Wash. - \$50,868  
The Whale Museum, Friday Harbor, Wash. - \$79,177  
Orca Network, Greenbank, Wash. - \$84,475  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Olympia, Wash. - \$100,000  
Portland State University, Portland, Ore. - \$99,954  
Oregon State University, Corvallis, Ore. - \$99,996  
Northcoast Marine Mammal Center, Crescent City, Calif. - \$100,000  
The Marine Mammal Center, Sausalito, Calif. - \$97,268  
California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, Calif. - \$100,000  
San Jose State University Research Foundation, San Jose, Calif. - \$99,960  
Channel Islands Marine and Wildlife Institute, Santa Barbara, Calif. - \$99,952  
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, Calif. - \$83,705  
City of Malibu, Malibu, Calif. - \$80,212  
Regents of the University of California, Los Angeles, Calif. - \$99,880  
Marine Mammal Care Center at Fort MacArthur, San Pedro, Calif. - \$98,500  
Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu, Hawaii - \$100,000  
University of Hawaii, Hilo, Hawaii - \$99,992  
University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska - \$98,635  
Seward Association for the Advancement of Marine Science, Seward, Alaska- \$99,948 and \$39,972

More information about the Prescott Grant Program, more details on each 2010 grant, eligibility requirements, and funding opportunities go to <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/prescott/>

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