



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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October 5, 1998

Memorandum

To: Files

From: Refuge Manager, Maui NWRC

Subject: **Oiled Bird Rehabilitation (Tesoro Oil Spill): September 19-29, 1998**

Saturday, September 19, 1998

Received call from Dr. Greg Massey, State Veterinarian, regarding possible site at the Refuge to rehabilitate birds from the Tesoro spill off Kauai. Reason: birds are being stabilized and washed up at the Olinda facility; however, the weather is too cold for the birds to adjust and rehabilitate before release. He is looking for an area with warmer weather. Expressed our concerns of potential introduction of disease into wetlands. All they need is an area that has water and possibly may need electricity. Later in the afternoon, I contacted Greg and informed him that we could take a look at an upland area of the refuge that would be away from the wetlands and has water source (County water). I scheduled to meet him at the Refuge the following day.

Sunday, September 20, 1998

Met with Greg Massey and two staff from the Olinda facility to look at upland area in the maintenance area of the refuge. Agreed that the area would be okay. Reiterated concerns and requested that staff and volunteers working with the birds remain in this area and not come down to the office area, which is closer to the wetlands. Although they requested a key to the gate, I declined the request informing them that during the week the gate would be open and on weekends they could park outside the gate (Greg Massey agreed they could walk in since they wouldn't have much to carry). I informed them that we would rather keep the birds' location between us, as we didn't want people coming in and out of the refuge to check it out (Greg agreed - primary responsible contact will be Linda Elliott, International Bird Rescue, and Kathleen Hodges, Haleakala NP).

They constructed two wire cages, approximately 10ft by 10ft with tarp covering the outside. Traps were set on the backside to target rats, cats, mongoose from harassing the birds. Water was used to fill small tubs in each of the cages. They used the electric panel across the entrance road (next to the small pump/well) to run a "bilge" pump to clean out the small tubs.

Thursday, September 24, 1998

Linda and Kathleen asked if we knew where to buy live fish to feed the birds. They had mainland species which were too oily and was interfering with their natural oil. Calvin called Roy Sato to see if there were fish available from the baitfish ponds (backside of the Refuge). Arrangements were made for Roy Sato and Boni Sahagun to net fish (awa) for the birds, which they did from September 24 to 28. Provided approximately ? number of fish for the birds.

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

A total of ten birds were housed in the cages: seven red-footed boobies (RFBO) and three brown boobies (BRBO). In the morning, four RFBO were shipped off to Sea Life Park, where they were originally from (based on bands). The remaining six birds were released approximately 1300hr from Haycraft Park in Ma'alaea Bay. When I left the site around 1330hr, four of the birds had taken off and two BRBOs remained in a kiawe tree and rehab staff were remaining to ensure they took off.

Wednesday, September 30, 1998

By the end of the day, the area where birds were rehabilitated was all cleaned up and all materials were removed. The only thing remaining was some sand they bought to put down on the ground for the birds (versus the soil and rocks that existed - surface was too hard).

Summary

The rehab crew remained attentive to our concerns and requests throughout the ten days they were on the refuge. They remained at their site and were of no disruption to our operations. Request for Refuge staffs' time was extremely minimal with only about two hours of the RM Nakai's time and an hour of MW Willis' time as he hooked them up with Roy Sato. Volunteers Roy and Boni conducted all the netting of 'awa from the baitfish ponds, contributing approximately 15 hours each.

The rehab crew used water from the County Line and electricity from the pump site; however, the amount used of each cannot be determined and is deemed as a minimal amount.

Overall, the Refuge staff were glad to help out in such short notice. I like to hope that this oil spill incident has initiated a more secured protocol for Oiled Bird Recovery and Rehabilitation which identifies contacts and locations.