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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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