

Unified Command News Release
U.S. Coast Guard - Bean Stuyvesant LLC
California DFG Office of Spill Prevention and Response

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Humboldt Bay Oil Spill Clean-up in Final Stages

CONTACT: (707) 445-0844, ext. 4651 — Joint Information Center

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA — The first three loons that were oiled by the Labor Day spill in Humboldt Bay were released, this morning, at King Salmon Harbor, just south of Eureka. Dr. Dave Jessup, Sr. Wildlife Veterinarian for the Dept. of Fish and Game-OSPR, deemed it necessary to release the birds, for their own health, and to make room for other oiled birds. Veterinarians anticipate that the first significant bird release could occur in the next few days.

The number of birds being brought to the Wildlife Care Center at HSU has declined, but there are currently over 500 birds in care, there. "This is the largest spill, in terms of wildlife numbers, that the Oiled Wildlife Care Network has ever done," said OWCN veterinarian Scott Newman. "All the help from HSU, local volunteers, businesses, and the community have made it possible for us to handle it."

Newman thinks as many as 500 volunteers have assisted in the past 10 days since the spill. Professional wildlife rehabilitators from as far away as Alaska and Texas have been recruited to help save north coast sea birds. To date, over 1,000 birds have been taken to the Wildlife Care Center. Approximately half of them have died; some of those had to be euthanized.

Shoreline Clean-up Assessment Teams (SCAT) checked segments of the coast, today, between Humboldt Bay and Sharp Point, and found no new oiling. Minor spot-cleaning of impacted areas is ongoing, and previously-oiled areas will continue to be re-surveyed, to check for additional impacts.

- Please DO NOT TOUCH wildlife. If you see an oiled bird or animal, please telephone (707) 826-3450, with a description and its exact location. This line has been very busy, so please be patient, and call back, if necessary.
- The Marine Wildlife Care Center needs many more volunteers, to assist with bird rescue, feeding, cleaning, and rehabilitation. Please call 826-4528.

- Approximately 525 birds are receiving care, as of this evening.
- Approximately 512 birds have died, including 20 endangered marbled murrelets (only a necropsy can verify the exact cause of death).
- Clam, Moonstone, and Luffenholtz county beaches are open to foot traffic only.
- Approximately 219 people (approximately 100 volunteers and 119 paid responders) are still working on the clean-up and wildlife operations.
- Additional information and photos may be seen on these spill response web sites:
 - o <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/incidents>
 - o <http://www.humboldt.edu/~mwcc>
 - o <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Ospr/index.html>
- Approximately \$2.7 million has been spent on the spill response.
- Two small boats are being used in wildlife recovery operations.
- People with third-party claims may telephone (800) 995-4045

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NOTE TO ASSIGNMENT EDITORS: Good news! We may be able to release some of the rehabilitated birds, this Friday (9/17). If we do this, it will be instead of the media availability at the HSU Wildlife Care Center. We will inform you of the location and time of the bird release, tomorrow. Also, please note my new phone number: 465-4651. Thanks.

Dana Michaels
Sr. Public Affairs Officer
CA DFG Office of Spill Prevention and Response

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