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DFG - Oiled Wildlife Care Network Releases Rehabilitated Birds Today

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VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE — Twelve birds impacted by the September 28 Point Pedernales oil spill will be released to the wild today, October 21, near where they were found, Department of Fish and Game (DFG) officials announced.

The release, coordinated by Jonna Mazet, D.V.M., P.h.d., Director of OSPR's statewide Oiled Wildlife Care Network, will take place at 4 p.m at Vandenberg AFB in the Ocean Park area of Surf Beach. Mazet, along with other DFG and animal welfare organization officials, will be available to answer media questions and provide video opportunities.

Included in the release will be two Endangered brown pelicans and 10 gulls. The birds were collected from various beaches near the oil spill, and brought in by the CDFG-Oiled Wildlife Care Network, who have been searching the nearby beaches since the spill. The spill came from a leak in an underwater pipeline about three miles off Point Pedernales in Santa Barbara County.

As of Monday, a total of 185 oiled birds -- 130 were brought in dead and 55 were alive -- had been collected and brought to the Oiled Wildlife Care Network Veterinary Operations staff. Of the 55 live birds, 37 later died or were euthanized, leaving a total of 18 currently alive.

As the oiled birds were brought to the OSPR mobile veterinary van for treatment, they were immediately examined and their conditions recorded in a log. The birds then received medical evaluation, medication, and stabilization.

"It is always an exciting day when we are able to set free birds we have nursed back to health," said Mazet, who directed the Vandenberg AFB old firehouse site that was turned into a wildlife operations center. "This turned out to be our best operation yet for OSPR, and the reason was the excellent cooperation we received from everyone, from all the agencies involved to the trained volunteers."

Those participating in the success of the Oiled Wildlife Care Network included interagency cooperation from Vandenberg AFB, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, US Coast Guard, Clean Seas, and Torch Operating Company. Also, trained volunteers in numerous animal welfare organizations, such as Pacific Wildlife Care, the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, and the International Bird Rescue Research Center.

The released gulls have received a clean bill of health and will have radio transmitters attached so they can be tracked, both in the air and on the ground, Mazet said. The transmitters will last about six months, and will determine how and where the rehabilitated birds are eating and roosting.

[Western Grebe Brought in for Treatment](#)
[Rehab Staff Working on Bird](#)
[Close-up of Rehab Staff Working on Bird](#)
[Bird Rescue Hospital](#)

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[Aerial View of Skimming Operation](#)
[DFG Emergency Vet Lab on Wheels](#)
[Paul Kelly, Dr. Jonna Mazet & Tim Williamson](#)
