

Marine Mammal Care Center Celebrates Sea Lion Pup Release and Hermosa Beach's Continued Support Including \$35,000 in Annual Funding

HERMOSA BEACH, Calif. (June 25, 2025) – Yesterday, The Marine Mammal Care Center Los Angeles (MMCC) was joined by Hermosa Beach elected officials for the release of two sea lion pups. Later that evening at its regular meeting, the Hermosa Beach City Council approved \$35,000 in annual funding to MMCC for the nonprofit's critical work in responding to and caring for injured and sick marine mammals.

"Protecting our coastline and the wildlife that call it home is a shared responsibility," said Hermosa Beach Mayor Rob Saemann during remarks at the June 24 release event. "We are proud to support the Marine Mammal Care Center in preserving local marine life and helping keep our beaches safe and healthy for all."

Following the 2023 domoic acid bloom, Hermosa Beach became the first city to provide funding to help rescue and rehabilitate marine mammals stranded on their beaches, setting a precedent for coastal communities to support vital conservation efforts.

This year's bloom, which started in February, was the worst in recorded history. In the first five months of the year, the Center had responded to more than 550 sea lions and dolphins. The Center's annual budget is based on 300 animals in care. This bloom stretched Center resources thin.

"We are so grateful to Hermosa Beach for being the first city to establish a public private partnership with MMCC and continuing it here today," said MMCC CEO John Warner. "We were happy to celebrate their continued support with the release yesterday. Their leadership supports a regional solution to keeping our beaches safe and our marine mammals healthy."

In addition to Hermosa Beach's funding, the Center has also received help from the LA County Board of Supervisors and a number of coastal cities, including Redondo Beach, Palos Verdes Estates, Long Beach, and Manhattan Beach. MMCC continues to work to create a coalition of cities to help the organization prepare for the inevitability of the next mass stranding event.

The Center is the only year-round hospital for marine animals in Los Angeles County, and more than 10,000 animals have been treated by its dedicated team of staff and volunteers since 1992. Its annual budget is based on 300 animals in care over 12 months, but MMCC has already surpassed that number during the first five months of 2025.

Causes of strandings include toxicity from harmful algal blooms, malnutrition, infectious diseases, and entanglements, among other threats. On average, MMCC responds to 750 to 1,000 reports of marine mammals in distress, and rescue and rehabilitate anywhere from 250 to 500 animals each year.

A non-profit 501(c)3 organization, MMCC depends on grants and individual contributions to meet the needs of marine mammal patients. Donations can be made at: <https://marinemammalcare.org/donate/>.

Please report any animals in need of rescue to the MMCC Rescue Hotline at 1 (800) 39-WHALE.

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