

Port of Los Angeles Funds Life-Saving Diagnostics Tool for Marine Mammals

The Community Investment Grant provides funding for the cost of bloodwork for patients at the Marine Mammal Care Center in San Pedro.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (June 18, 2024) — The Port of Los Angeles has awarded the Marine Mammal Care Center funding to support its Pinniped Blood Testing Program as part of its FY 2023/24 Community Investment Grant Program.

Blood diagnostics are an indispensable component of the Center's veterinary operations. Blood tests are run upon admission as a routine aspect of health care that can help guide a patient's medical treatment.

Blood work is vital in identifying conditions related to hydration, anemia, bacterial infection or parasites. Over the last year, the Center's animal care experts have increased diagnostic testing, including blood tests, to help identify patients affected by terrestrial parasites like *Toxoplasma* and *Sarcocystis*.

"In addition to guiding each patient's individual course of treatment, blood diagnostics are essential in assessing an animal's readiness to return to the ocean by confirming that previously identified conditions have resolved," said Marine Mammal Care Center CEO John Warner. "We are grateful to the Port of Los Angeles for funding this life-saving tool."

The Marine Mammal Care Center was one of 37 local nonprofit organizations receiving a total of \$1.5 million under the port's Community Investment Grant Program, which funds community events, programs and projects that benefit surrounding harbor communities and promote the goals of the Los Angeles Harbor Department. Funds come from the City of Los Angeles Harbor Department's annual budget, which is entirely self-supported from shipping and lease revenues, not taxpayers.

Since the program began in 2014, the Port has awarded more than \$10.8 million in grants, including previous grants to the Marine Mammal Care Center. For more information on the Port of Los Angeles Community Investment Grant Program, visit portoflosangeles.org/community/grants.

The Marine Mammal Care Center is the only year-round hospital for marine animals in Los Angeles County, responding to more marine mammals per square mile than any other rescue organization in the country. More than 10,000 animals have been rehabilitated by the Center's dedicated team of staff and volunteers since 1992.

A nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, the Center depends on grants and individual contributions to meet the needs of marine mammal patients. Donations can be made at MarineMammalCare.org/donate.