



CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM PRESS RELEASE

Clearwater Marine Aquarium releases three sea turtles; Operations Cold Stun continues

Clearwater, FL (February 22, 2016) – Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) cleared three green sea turtles for release this weekend. “Nova” and “Christine Cherry” were picked up from the aquarium for release on the east side of the state on Saturday. “Xiphosura” was released this morning on Clearwater Beach.

Each turtle released came to CMA in 2015 with fibropapilloma tumors, the same virus affecting this year’s cold stun turtles. Nova and Christine Cherry were transferred here from the east side of Florida because CMA is one of the few facilities in the state that treat the fibropapilloma virus.

While the cause of the virus is not fully known, the CMA team works vigilantly to treat the turtles affected. After carefully removing the tumors with a laser, the turtles are rehabilitated by the staff for an additional 6-12 months to fully clear the virus. Guests are able to watch the surgeries live in the hospital wing of the aquarium.

With more than 200 intakes so far this year, sending three turtles back to the wild in one weekend is a positive sign for the team at CMA. The aquarium is incredibly grateful for the generous donations from all over the world that have helped with Operation Cold Stun, but there is more work to be done. The ongoing treatment for the many turtles affected by recent cold ocean temperatures will be costly and require additional resources.

See the message from Adrienne Cardwell, Manager of Sea Turtles and Aquatic Biology Programs, regarding the current state of Operation Cold Stun:

<https://www.hightail.com/download/ZWJXak85RkVveFBsZThUQw>

Photo and video of Xiphosura’s intake and release can be downloaded here:

<https://www.hightail.com/download/ZWJXak80NHZubHhESjhUQw>

Join Duke Energy and support our work at www.Seewinter.com/OperationColdStun and come see our team in action at Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

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About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin’s story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people’s lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from every other aquarium in the world.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our marine life and environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation, and release.

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