



MEDIA ALERT

Clearwater Marine Aquarium Flies Rescue Mission for Dolphins and Turtles in Keys

Home of Winter the Dolphin Steps up to Bring Food & Medicine

Clearwater, FL (Sept. 15, 2017) – Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is extending its rescue mission to the Florida Keys in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

CMA Dive Coordinator Brian Mahardy, with the generous plane and pilot support of Steve Gresham, loaded a plane full of supplies for animals and staff at marine facilities throughout the Florida Keys. On Friday, September 15 the stocked plane flew out of Clearwater Air Park headed for Marathon Key and Key Largo.

The supplies include desperately needed food and medicine for animals at different marine life centers. The plane also delivered food, water and satellite phones for staff who are working tirelessly to rebuild after the devastation of Hurricane Irma.

Clearwater Marine Aquarium experienced some damage during the storm, though the financial impact of being closed was significant. However, Mahardy led the rescue mission on behalf of CMA to assist the animals and their caretakers that were much less fortunate.

"We are honored to pay it forward and help needy animals in the Florida Keys," says David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium. "Especially with relief efforts being overseen by long term friend and marine life rescue biologist Steve McCulloch, who has saved hundreds of marine animals during his career."

[Click here](#) to download video of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium's rescue mission to the Florida Keys.

For further information, contact Julia Anderson at janderson@cmaaquarium.org or 727.686.3499.

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 any other aquarium in the world.

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

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A Florida non-profit 501(c)(3)