



CLEARWATER MARINE
AQUARIUM™

12 Critically Endangered Sea Turtles Airlifted to Clearwater Marine Aquarium for Care

Goal is to rehab and release 'cold-stunned' sea turtles in time for the holidays

Clearwater, FL (Dec. 11, 2017) – 12 critically endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles were transported to Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) on Fri., Dec. 8. CMA named the sea turtles after Santa, his reindeer, Frosty the Snowman and an elf. **Media can film sea turtles at CMA on Tues., Dec. 12, 10 – 11 a.m.**

The turtles, all juvenile, were severely affected by the cold-water temperatures in New England, experiencing what is called a 'cold-stun.' The New England Aquarium (NEAQ) facility in Quincy, MA transported 46 cold-stunned sea turtles (1 green sea turtle and 45 Kemp's ridley sea turtles) by private jet to Tampa, FL. Four rehabilitation facilities in Florida will assist in the recovery of the turtles.

Hundreds of sea turtles have been rescued near New England's East Coast in the past month. As cold-blooded reptiles, sea turtles assume the temperature of their surroundings. When the turtles are exposed to frigid water temperatures (around 50 degrees Fahrenheit) over several days, their circulatory systems can slow to the point where they become cold-stunned. A cold-stun turtle is unable to swim or function properly.

"Our goal is to rehabilitate these turtles to a healthy state to be released," says David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium. *"CMA is a working animal hospital and our team is ready to provide the best possible care for these critically endangered sea turtles."*

Guests can visit the rescued sea turtles at Clearwater Marine Aquarium. For information on how to help the rehab efforts of these turtles, visit: <https://seewinter-3624.wedid.it/>

Additional media information:

- Media opportunity to film sea turtles on Tues., Dec. 12, 10 – 11 a.m. CMA staff available for interviews.
- Where: Clearwater Marine Aquarium | 249 Windward Passage, Clearwater, FL 33767
- For further information, contact Julia Anderson at janderson@cmaquarium.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.

249 Windward Passage | Clearwater, FL 33767 | 727.441.1790 | SeeWinter.com

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