

NOAA Fisheries

National Marine Fisheries Service
Pacific Islands Region



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MEDIA ADVISORY
July 2, 2004

HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL TT40 WILL BE RELEASED ON JULY 6TH FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL SURGERY AND REHABILITATION

A team of marine mammal experts assembled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) will return Hawaiian monk seal TT40 to his natural habitat on the Island of Kauai. The seal was first observed there on June 4th with fishing line extending from his mouth. About 15 feet of fishing line was removed from the animal before he was airlifted by the U.S. Coast Guard from Kauai to Oahu where he underwent surgery to remove a fish hook from his esophagus. Following almost three weeks of observation and medical treatment, veterinarians have decided it is in his best interest to be returned to his natural environment. The U.S. Coast Guard will again provide air transport from Oahu to Kauai where the team will be met by Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources personnel and trucked to a remote beach where the seal will be released from his cage. Limited seating for media may be available on the plane on a first-come, first-served basis.

WHAT: Media availability and photo opportunity

WHEN: Tuesday, July 6, 2004 (all times approximate)

5:30 a.m. at Kewalo Research Facility, 1125B Ala Moana Blvd. for briefing and photo opportunity before transport to Kauai. (See attached map.)

7:00 a.m. at Barber's Point for C-130 flight to Kauai. (See attached map.)

9:00 a.m. at Lihue airport for briefing and caravan to release site

10:00 a.m. release TT40

10:05 a.m. interviews with technical staff at release site

WHO: Brad Ryon, NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office, Protected Species Program, marine mammal biologist
Charles Littnan, NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Science Center, Marine Mammal Research Program, ecologist
Dr. Robert Braun, NOAA Fisheries contract veterinarian and marine mammal specialist

NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to providing and preserving the nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management, and enforcement. NOAA fisheries provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the Web:

Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center: http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/pifsc_hot.html

NOAA Fisheries: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

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