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The Marine Mammal Center Hires Gorilla Veterinarian to Care for Pinnipeds

(Sausalito, Calif – April 10, 2007) – The Marine Mammal Center is pleased to announce that Dr. Felicia Nutter, DVM, PhD, has joined the veterinary team as Staff Veterinarian overseeing animal care and day-to-day animal operations at its hospital. Dr. Nutter’s recent work in the mountains of Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where she has been part of the growing conservation efforts of the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project, have prepared her for her next adventure – working with seals and sea lions.

“Dr. Nutter’s extensive knowledge, expertise and dedication will be a huge asset to The Center,” said Dr. Frances Gulland, the Director of Veterinary Science at The Center. “She has a deep commitment to teaching, a love for people and wildlife, and an interest in veterinary care, research and conservation.”

At The Center, Dr. Nutter’s responsibilities will include ensuring the quality and advancement of animal rehabilitation and care. Although she is now working with a different wildlife species, it mirrors in many ways her previous work with gorillas, as she will be collaborating with many members of the marine mammal community, including researchers, conservationists and educators.

“I have moved from the foggy mountains of Rwanda to the foggy Marin Headlands where The Center is headquartered,” said Dr. Nutter. “I am excited to work with and learn from different wild mammal species.”

Based out of Ruhengeri, Rwanda, Dr. Nutter’s four years in the region’s montane forests, known as the Albertine Rift Forests, included the treatment of gorillas, sick and injured due to human interactions, training local staff, monitoring wild populations, and assisting animals that had been illegally taken from the wild by humans. Her work frequently brought her into the natural habitats of mountain gorillas and into cross border initiatives with national park staff and local communities in order to learn more about the impacts on these endangered animals.

Dr. Nutter received her veterinarian qualifications in 1993. While a zoological medical resident at the University of North Carolina, Dr. Nutter was first introduced to the work of The Marine Mammal Center as an extern in 1997.

About The Marine Mammal Center:

Headquartered in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in Sausalito, California, The Marine Mammal Center is a nonprofit veterinary hospital, research and educational center dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of ill and injured marine mammals – primarily elephant seals, harbor seals and California sea lions – and to the study of their health. Since 1975, The Center has accumulated a body of knowledge about marine mammal health from its patients. By educating the public about marine mammals, The Center hopes to foster ocean stewardship and conservation. The Center is supported almost entirely by public funds.

On the web: www.marinemammalcenter.org

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