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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 14, 2006

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The Marine Mammal Center Reaches Milestone in Facility Revamp

(Sausalito, Calif. – December 14, 2006) The Marine Mammal Center announces its one-year anniversary of construction since it broke ground to rebuild its new veterinary teaching hospital, research center and educational headquarters in Sausalito, California last November. The \$25 million project is one of the most ambitious projects underway in the North Bay Area right now. The new Marine Mammal Center will be located on the grounds of the existing facility, on 35,000 square feet of land, formerly a Nike missile site, in the Marin Headlands. When completed, it will boast species-specific pens and pools with solar panels, a modernized, underground water filtration system, and a campus of buildings to house critical veterinary, staff and educational operations, as well as an exhibits area for the public to see and learn more about seals, sea lions and other marine mammals The Center rescues and rehabilitates. To date, The Center has raised \$18 million and expects to complete its rebuild by the end of 2007.

“In October, we announced the public phase of our capital campaign – a strategy to involve the public to help raise the remaining funds needed to make the project complete,” said B.J. Griffin, Executive Director at The Marine Mammal Center. “A four month-long record-breaking rainy season earlier this year delayed the construction project, and at the same time, the \$18 million dollar project price tag increased to \$25 million due to the dramatic rise in prices of concrete, steel and PVC. “

Soon, construction crews will pour the foundation that will support the new Community Education building. This, along with three other buildings, will make up the Life Sciences Center complex. Within that complex will be medical and animal care buildings and a Veterinary Science building. The Community Education building will house the public exhibits area as well as retail store and indoor classrooms. In all, approximately 67,500 cubic feet (nearly 4600 tons) of concrete will be poured for all of the buildings.

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The Marine Mammal Center's 30-year old collection of patched together shipping containers, trailers, pens, pumps and pools has deteriorated beyond repair. The Center's most critical need is to build new facilities if it is to continue to advance its work. As the only organization federally authorized to rescue marine mammals along 600 miles of northern and central California coastline, staff and volunteers rescue hundreds of animals each year. Many of those animals suffer from a multitude of injuries and maladies ranging from fishing entanglements to biotoxin poisoning and cancer.

Gifts totaling more than \$500,000 from The Koret Foundation in San Francisco, the DMARLOU Foundation and the Wells Fargo Foundation, will help The Center move forward towards meeting its fundraising goal. Generous leadership donors such as The Marin Community Foundation, the Packard Foundation, the late William Kimball and the Geoffrey C. Hughes Foundation have helped launch The Center into its current construction phase.

To learn more about the capital campaign, call The Marine Mammal Center's Development Office at (415) 289-7335.

About The Marine Mammal Center

Headquartered in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in Sausalito, California, The Marine Mammal Center is a nonprofit veterinary teaching hospital and research and educational center dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of ill and injured seals, sea lions, otters, dolphins and other marine mammals, and to the research of their diseases. Since 1975, marine science organizations around the world have come to rely upon the body of knowledge The Center has accumulated about its patients and ocean health. The Center shares this information, along with its pioneering veterinary techniques and skills, whenever and wherever needed. The Center also strives to educate the public on the health of marine mammals and the importance of conserving our shared ocean environment.

On the web: www.marinemammalcenter.org