

**The Marine Mammal Center Receives Grant from Ferris Olson Family Foundation for
Ocean Stewardship**

The grant will fund an apprenticeship aimed at protecting whales through vessel strike mitigation, highlighting the importance of research and collaboration to save lives



The Marine Mammal Center is thrilled to announce it has been awarded a generous \$12,500 grant from the Ferris Olson Family Foundation for Ocean Stewardship. This grant will provide critical support for an apprenticeship aimed at studying and safeguarding whales in the San Francisco Bay and the Gulf of the Farallones, where the threat of vessel strikes poses a significant danger to whales.

The grant is enabling The Marine Mammal Center to hire a dedicated research apprentice with specialized skills in drone and boat operation, data collection, and marine mammal research. The research apprentice will participate in nearshore surveys in San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Strait, followed by offshore surveys in the Gulf of the Farallones. During these surveys, the apprentice will capture drone footage and whale photo identifications, collect research data (individual and group information, environment, and behaviors), as well as report and stand by entangled whales until trained responders arrive.

Following data collection, the research apprentice will analyze the gathered information to create comprehensive maps of cetacean sightings in the region, helping to shed light on the co-occurrence between whales and vessel traffic.

“We are incredibly grateful for the support of the Ferris Olson Family Foundation for Ocean Stewardship,” said Kathi George, Director of Cetacean Conservation Biology at The Marine Mammal Center. “This grant will allow us to better understand the whales in our region and how to protect them. We will share that information with other marine mammal experts and decision makers. The goal of this research is to save lives and foster a successful co-existence with humans.”

The research findings will be shared with key stakeholders, including the San Francisco Marine Exchange Harbor Safety Committee's Marine Mammals Work Group and the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Additionally, The Marine Mammal Center staff aim to present this research at the 25th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals. The goal is to enhance global recognition, foster valuable connections, and advance research goals that are critical for the conservation of marine mammals and the protection of our oceans.

The Marine Mammal Center extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Ferris Olson Family Foundation for Ocean Stewardship for their generous support. This grant underscores the importance of collaborative efforts to address the challenges faced by marine life in our region.

ABOUT THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER

The Marine Mammal Center is a global leader in marine mammal health, science and conservation, and is the largest marine mammal hospital in the world. As a leading contributor to the global body of research and knowledge about marine mammal medicine and ocean health, the Center generates research findings and scientific outputs at volumes comparable to top academic institutions and prides itself on gathering and providing open research data that is free to access, reuse, repurpose and redistribute. The Center's teaching hospital and training programs operate globally with headquarters in Sausalito, CA. The Center has rescued more than 24,000 marine mammals from 600 miles of authorized rescue area along the California coastline and as well as the coast of Hawai'i. The Center's mission is to advance global ocean conservation through marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education.

For more information, please visit MarineMammalCenter.org. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.