



SEAWORLD SAN ANTONIO TRANSPORTS REHABILITATED MANATEE VIA U.S. COAST GUARD PLANE TO SISTER PARK IN ORLANDO

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SAN ANTONIO, Texas (February 18, 2015) – Earlier today, SeaWorld’s Animal Rescue Team and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) sent Trinidad, a male Florida manatee, to SeaWorld Orlando in a U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue plane.

After receiving care and rehabilitation at SeaWorld San Antonio for the past three months, Trinidad was healthy enough to make the trip, and is one step closer to being returned back to his natural environment.

Trinidad, who travelled from Florida to the Texas coast, was rescued by a number of members of the Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, SeaWorld San Antonio and an expert from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, on November 25, 2014. A deputy with the Chambers County Sheriff’s Office found him swimming in the cold waters of the NRG Energy power plant outflow in Trinity Bay near Houston. At the time of rescue, he weighed 960 pounds and was showing signs of cold stress, malnourishment and dehydration.

The male manatee received the name Trinidad, a Spanish translation of Trinity, because of the location where he was found, Trinity Bay.

USFWS requested the manatee be transferred to SeaWorld San Antonio, where he received medical treatment and rehabilitation, including antibiotics, tube feeding and other supportive care.

After being medically cleared for today’s move, Trinidad weighed 1,140 pounds and measured 10 feet long. SeaWorld’s Animal Rescue Team, with the help of the U.S. Coast Guard, transported the male manatee to SeaWorld Orlando where he will stay for an undetermined length of time before being returned to the Tampa Bay area. Researchers determined that he is a known manatee from Tampa Bay, first observed there in December 2001.

“Today marks a huge milestone for Trinidad, and the next big step will be his eventual release to the warmer waters in Tampa Bay,” said Chris Bellows, SeaWorld San Antonio’s Vice President of Zoological

Operations. “It has been a great team effort and the real reward will be seeing this animal in his home waters in Florida.”

“We’re delighted to have Trinidad back in Florida,” said Jim Valade, Florida Manatee Recovery Coordinator, USFWS. “His successful rescue, treatment and return flight home is due to the remarkable efforts of partners working together to save manatees.”

In collaboration with the government and other members of stranding networks, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment operates one of the world’s most respected programs to rescue ill and injured marine animals, with the goal to rehabilitate and return to their natural environment. SeaWorld animal experts have helped more than 24,000 animals in need – ill, injured, orphaned and abandoned – for more than five decades.

USFWS is the lead Federal agency charged with recovering the endangered manatee. Service partners, such as the Coast Guard and SeaWorld, are an integral part of efforts to conserve this species. These partners, members of the Service’s Manatee Rescue and Rehabilitation Partnership, assist with the rescue of dozens of injured and distressed manatees each year as well as with other recovery efforts.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Manatee Rescue Program is responsible for coordinating rescues of sick and injured manatees.

“By carrying out the provisions of a memorandum of agreement with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Coast Guard enforces its living marine resources mission to help protect the Florida Manatee,” said Katie Moore, the fisheries specialist for the Coast Guard Atlantic Area command. “In fact, the Coast Guard is part of the Manatee Response Network to help with the safe transport and delivery of endangered species.”

As part of the Manatee Rescue & Rehabilitation Partnership (MRP), SeaWorld Orlando is an acute care rehabilitation facility that provides life-saving medical care to rescued manatees.

The MRP is a cooperative group of non-profit, private, state, and federal entities who work together to monitor the health and survival of rehabilitated and released manatees. Information about manatees currently being tracked is available at www.manateerescue.org. The endangered Florida manatee is at risk from both natural and man-made causes of injury and mortality. Exposure to red tide, cold stress, and disease are all natural problems that can affect manatees. Human-caused threats include boat strikes, crushing by flood gates or locks, and entanglement in or ingestion of fishing gear.

The HC-144A Ocean Sentry aircraft used for this transport is based out of Mobile, Alabama, and is part of the Coast Guard’s medium range surveillance aircraft fleet.

All manatee rescue footage produced by SeaWorld under FWS Permit Number MA7701911.

Image Captions:

- U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue plane delivers rehabilitated male manatee, Trinidad, from SeaWorld San Antonio to the SeaWorld Orlando Animal Rescue Team at Orlando International Airport.
- Male manatee, Trinidad, is getting accustomed to his new rehabilitation pool at SeaWorld Orlando.

B-roll Includes:

- U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue plane lands successfully with rehabilitated male manatee, Trinidad, on board.
- Visual of male manatee inside U.S. Coast Guard plane.
- Trinidad being transferred into SeaWorld Orlando Animal Rescue vehicle for ride to the park.
- Trinidad successfully being unloaded into his new rehabilitation pool at SeaWorld Orlando.

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