

PRBO Conservation Science
3820 Cypress Drive #11
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-781-2555
www.prbo.org



**Press Release- For Immediate Release
November 9, 2007**

Contact:

Christine Abraham (spill responder): cell 415-717-6348
Diana Humple (spill responder): cell 415-717-6390
Melissa Pitkin, Education and Outreach Director: 707-781-2555, ext 307

Documenting Oiled Birds for Evidence

After the Cosco Busan Oil Spill

The PRBO Conservation Science (PRBO) **Oil Spill Response Team** has been deployed to set up the Bay Area's official bird intake and processing system at the San Francisco Bay Oiled Wildlife Care and Education Center in Cordelia, CA.

Identifying and documenting the oiled animals (live and dead) is a critical component of spill response, providing the scientific evidence used to legally assess the impact of the spill on wildlife. PRBO's Oil Spill Response Team is part of the state of California's Incident Command Structure.

Rigorous documentation ensures the ability to legally assess the full extent of the damage for appropriate mitigation. PRBO, with 40+ years experience in identifying, measuring, banding, and collecting rigorous scientific data on birds, is uniquely qualified for this role. PRBO is a leader in setting standards for how birds are documented and recorded in oil spills globally. Our team has been on-site for various spills throughout California as well as South Africa and Spain.

Right now PRBO biologists are onsite at the Oiled Wildlife Care Center in Cordelia, (part of the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN), and the International Bird Rescue and Research Center (IBRRC). Biologists and volunteers are in the field documenting and reporting oiled birds at the Farallon Islands, Bolinas Lagoon, conducting a SF Bay-wide shorebird census, and other coastal beaches

PRBO biologist Christine Abraham, co-director of PRBO's Oiled Wildlife Processing Unit, explains the need for qualified and trained ornithologists:

"Identifying oiled birds is not always straightforward because much of the time we receive birds that are completely soaked in oil. Oil is incredibly caustic and often burns off identification characteristics such as feather color and bill coverings. Dead birds washed up on beaches have often already been scavenged (leaving only parts of a bird such as a wing or breastbone), making identification difficult for anyone who has not been trained in this type of assessment."

PRBO Conservation Science
3820 Cypress Drive #11
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-781-2555
www.prbo.org



Without credible, scientific recording of oiled birds, the true and full affect of the oil spill to wildlife would not be known or legally defensible.

PRBO Conservation Science is a non profit studying birds and ecosystems to advance conservation from Alaska to Antarctica, on land and at sea. Founded in 1965 as Point Reyes Bird Observatory, PRBO's 120+ staff and seasonal biologists partner with hundreds of governmental and non-governmental agencies as well as private interests to ensure that every dollar invested in conservation yields the most for biodiversity -- benefiting our environment, our economy and our communities.

Visit PRBO on the web at www.prbo.org.

#####