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NEWS RELEASE: Pelican Crisis Pushes California Wildlife Groups to Breaking Point

February 5th 2010 // Four wildlife rescue centers in California have written to State and Federal authorities to request their urgent attention and support in dealing with an unprecedented number of wet, starving adult California Brown Pelicans being recovered from the Central and Southern California coastlines. With wildlife groups shouldering the cost of care, some are concerned that they may have to temporarily close their doors in order to cope.

To date, the four organizations (International Bird Rescue Research Center, Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center, Pacific Wildlife Care and Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network) have received nearly 500 pelicans since January 1st, creating a severe strain on human and financial resources for each organization. They are now being forced to seriously consider shutting their doors to further casualties in spite of the potential consequences of such a decision to the communities and the wildlife that they serve.

“We feel it is our duty to share this information with the agencies ultimately responsible for these animals and to ask for their help at this critical time,” says Jay Holcomb, IBRRC Director and spokesperson for the Wildlife Groups. “Members of the public are reporting sightings of sick and dying pelicans with increasing frequency and there may be a negative reaction if there is an expectation of care for these birds but no resources to respond.”

The wildlife groups impacted by this situation are asking for financial support as well as involvement by the authorities in developing both a clear strategy for the situation in hand and for the future. They are also asking for the public to support rescue efforts by donating to the organization in your area. Contact information for the four wildlife centers affected is as follows:

International Bird Rescue Research Center, San Pedro, Los Angeles and Fairfield, San Francisco Bay

www.ibrrc.org

Media Contact: Paul Kelway – (310) 691-9558

Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center, Huntington Beach, Orange County

www.wccoc.org

Media Contact: Debbie McGuire - (714) 713-1155

Pacific Wildlife Care, San Luis Obispo

www.pacificwildlifecare.org

Media Contact: Dani Nicholson – (805) 772-9494

Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network, Santa Barbara

www.sbwcen.org

Media Contact: Julia Parker – (805) 681-1080