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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Dolphin Rescue Hospital Needs Funding**

**KEY LARGO, October 13, 2002** The Marine Mammal Conservancy (MMC), one of the most successful all-volunteer dolphin and whale rescue organization in the U.S., has laid the foundation for the first building of their dolphin rescue hospital, called the Florida Bay Dolphin Refuge. This hospital will provide a dedicated treatment and rehabilitation facility for any stranded marine mammal in need of care. In spite of the physical proof of this vision now taking shape, the Marine Mammal Conservancy needs and additional \$250,000 to complete the hospital, and is reaching out to the community for assistance.

Since 1990, MMC has responded to over 75 dolphin and whale strandings, and successful release of 25 back to the wild. With this hospital, we can insure a quicker response to the local dolphins and whales in distress, states MMC President, Robert Lingenfelter. Every marine mammal who can, will be rehabilitated for release back to their home waters in the sea. With this facility, our success for doing this, is greatly increased.

The Florida Bay Dolphin Refuge is currently planned to consist of two medical pens, with hydraulic lifts to prevent unnecessary distress or further injury to the animals, as well as a quarantine pen for at-risk mammals, a fish kitchen for proper care and feeding, and an administrative/housing building to allow for 24-hour access for care. The prospective completion date depends greatly on the contributions received, but is hopeful for a 2003 completion date. All donations are guaranteed to be 100% allocated to the hospital and can be made online at [www.marinemammalconsrv.org](http://www.marinemammalconsrv.org), or by mail to Marine Mammal Conservancy, P.O. Box 1625, Key Largo, FL 33037-1625.

To receive updates on the hospital progress, please sign up for our e-newsletter on our website listed above. Or, for additional information, please contact Robert Lingenfelter at 305-778-4847.

The Marine Mammal Conservancy is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization serving marine mammals since 1990. MMC operates in Key Largo, Florida, with the Marine Mammal Rescue Foundation as the first line of response for rescue and rehabilitation in the Keys and South Florida Area.

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