NASNI Assists with Sea Turtle Rescue

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Amanda Ray, Commander, Navy Region Southwest Public Affairs

CORONADO, Calif. (NNS) -- A U.S. Coast Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft landed at Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI) Jan. 28, with two sick sea turtles from Newport, Ore.

Naval Air Station North Island was an intermediate spot on the trip which ultimately led to the transfer of the turtles to Sea World San Diego for rehabilitation.

After almost a month of coordination, the turtles were picked up during a training flight that originated in Sacramento, Calif. en route to Oregon. After picking up the sea turtles, they were then transported to NASNI where Sea World caretakers took control of the rescue mission.

Both sea turtles were found in thermal shock in November 2009, after being in water too cold for them to survive. The turtles then drifted in the current until they washed up on a Pacific Northwest beach. They have been cared for at the Oregon Coast Aquarium since the rescue.

Sea World San Diego has experts in sea turtle rehabilitation and was chosen as the second step in the turtles' recovery. If all goes well, the plans are to release the animals back into the wild later this summer.

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