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Date: Feb. 20, 2017

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Statement on Vancouver Aquarium Announcement on Beluga Whale Research

The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums supports Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre's announcement today that it will bring beluga whales back to the aquarium for 12 years in order to continue critical research on this endangered marine mammal.

The Aquarium's Marine Mammal Research Centre provides important research and scientific study that is needed to understand what can be done to help save belugas living in a rapidly changing environment. This is particularly true for the beluga whales in the St. Lawrence Estuary where the population of about 800 animals is declining each year.

Alliance members caring for beluga whales continually collaborate in research and a breeding program that provide quality care for the animals and result in a better understanding of this much loved, marine species. During the next 12 years, Vancouver's research and participation in the North American beluga program will result in much needed science that can guide programs ranging from the rescue of stranded animals to policies that help protect the wild populations.

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