



Media Release

The Hon Greg Hunt MP

Federal Member for Flinders
Minister for the Environment

Wednesday, 12th November 2014

Penguin Foundation revolutionises the treatment of animals after oil spills

I would like to congratulate the Penguin Foundation on Phillip Island for their recent success in receiving a \$250,000 Google grant.

The grant will allow the foundation to complete its development of an 'Oil Spill Wand', which offers a revolutionary way of cleaning animals following an oil spill.

When an animal comes into contact with oil, iron powder is applied to the animal, which binds with the oil. The magnetic wand is then waved over the animal, drawing up the metallic powder and oil.

Traditional oil spill cleaning methods rely on hot water and detergent and wildlife are easily stressed while scrubbed clean or transported and housed in special facilities.

The wand is being developed as part of a joint research and development program being conducted by researchers at the Penguin Foundation and Professor John Orbell at Victoria University.

This is a tremendous achievement by the Penguin Foundation and Professor Orbell, which is the culmination of years of hard work. It is fantastic to see these kinds of developments in our own backyard.

As the Minister for the Environment, I am passionate about native marine life and this is an innovative way of protecting an iconic local species in the event of an oil spill.

Having been to the Penguin Foundation and seen this technology demonstrated first-hand, I am well aware of the advantages it has over current cleaning practices and am excited about the potential it offers to improve the way we respond to oil spills.

I look forward to seeing this technology developed and in use across the country in the future.

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