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Media Relations

Expert Available To Comment On Environmental Impact Of Italian Cruise Ship

January 18, 2012

DURHAM, N.H. –Nancy Kinner, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of New Hampshire and an expert on oil spills, is available to comment on the environmental impact of the cruise liner Costa Concordia, grounded off the coast of Italy with more than 2,000 tons of oil onboard.

Nancy Kinner is available at nancy.kinner@unh.edu or 603-862-1422 or through Kathy Mandsager at Kathy.mandsager@unh.edu or 603 862-1545.

The ship ran aground and partially sank off the Italian island of Giglio on Friday, Jan. 13, 2012; 11 fatalities have been confirmed and several dozen people are still reported missing from the ship. The wreckage is within the Pelagos Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals, rich with marine species like fin whale, sperm whale, bottlenose dolphin, tuna, swordfish and sharks, as well as sea bird populations.

The Dutch salvage firm Smit has been hired to remove the estimated 2,380 tons of fuel oil from the wrecked ship.

"Smit is very experienced; one of the world's best," says Kinner. "Still, there is lots of fuel in several tanks, as the ship was at the start of its cruise and had just 'filled up.'" Kinner adds that weather will play a role in the recovery of the fuel oil. In addition to rough seas, she notes that "people forget it is cold there at this time of year, with air temperatures between 30 and 50 degrees."

Kinner, who is co-director of the UNH/NOAA Coastal Response Research Center, was widely sought after for her expertise following the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. She testified before federal lawmakers three times and took a leadership role in creating and disseminating scientific knowledge in support of clean-up efforts, convening several high-level meetings among spill responders, scientists, and other stakeholders in the Gulf of Mexico spill region.

The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRC) is focused on developing new approaches to oil spill response and restoration in marine and estuarine environments through research and synthesis of information. Established as a partnership between NOAA and UNH in 2004, it is part of the Environmental Research Group at UNH.

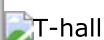
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UNH Experts available for comment:

- [Nancy Kinner](#)



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