



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Airport Relocates Pond Wildlife

Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands (20 January 2020) The Cayman Islands Airports Authority (CIAA), which owns and operates the Owen Roberts International Airport (ORIA) and the Charles Kirkconnell International Airport (CKIA), embarked on its ‘filling of the ponds’ project last month with the successful removal and relocation of dozens of wildlife from ponds within the airfield perimeter at ORIA. The project forms part of the CIAA’s Airfield Upgrade Project to improve operations and safety standards at the Airport.

These ponds, located within the airfield perimeter, were identified during a wildlife study of the airport as attractants. The ponds not only provide a source of food and water for birds, but also a safe place to rest during their annual migration period. The movement of the birds in and out of these areas consequently present a hazard to the safe operation of aircraft. There are several ponds of varying size west of the start of Runway 08, one pond to the south of the runway and one pond adjacent to the fire station.

The project began last month with CIAA staff and local volunteers, led by CIAA Safety Officer Megan Ramnarine of the Airport Safety Office, who all joined forces to rescue and relocate hickatees, tarpon, mosquito fish, crusted goby and tilapia and other wildlife that reside in the ponds west of the runway. Equipped with fishing poles,



Cayman Islands Airports Authority

holding tanks, pole nets and cast nets for this important mission, they successfully removed dozens of species and relocated them to neighboring ponds.

Ms. Ramnarine was recently trained on Hazardous Wildlife Control at Minneapolis Airport in the United States and credits the knowledge gained to assist in the planning and execution of this project. She also gives credit to Mr. Arren McCoy, a friend and local volunteer for the role he played in providing resources, his personal time and knowledge of local wildlife. “We could not have saved these precious animals without the help and commitment of all the volunteers,” said Ms. Ramnarine.

Once the ponds are cleared of wildlife, they will be drained and filled with large sized “Rip-Rap” stone. Geotextile fabric is to be placed over the stone, and granular fill material will be placed and compacted over the ponds to allow for extension of the runway into this area.

The Airfield Upgrade Project is expected to be completed in August 2020.

PHOTO SUBMITTED Airport Relocates Pond Wildlife1: CIAA staff and volunteers successfully remove and relocate dozens of wildlife from ponds within the airfield perimeter at ORIA.



PHOTO SUBMITTED Airport Relocates Pond Wildlife2: CIAA staff and volunteers successfully remove and relocate dozens of wildlife from ponds within the airfield perimeter at ORIA.





Cayman Islands Airports Authority

PHOTO SUBMITTED Airport Relocates Pond Wildlife3: CIAA staff and volunteers successfully remove and relocate dozens of wildlife from ponds within the airfield perimeter at ORIA.



**** END ****

MEDIA CONTACT:

Rhonda Verhoeven

Business Development and Marketing Manager

Direct: 345.244.5809 | Cell: 345.925.8651

Email: Rhonda.verhoeven@caymanairports.com