

Whale's death stumps Oregon authorities

by UPI

NEWPORT, Ore. - Authorities in Oregon are struggling to explain how a 40-foot whale that washed ashore died and what they should do with the massive mammal.

The beached animal had no visible signs of deadly trauma and authorities were at a loss on how to remove the California gray whale from the rocky terrain where it wound up, KGW-TV of Portland, Ore., reported Monday.

The animal likely washed ashore Saturday or Sunday, wildlife officials said, and an initial assessment of the whale indicated it had been dead for days.

As early as Saturday morning, curious beach-goers descended on the animal's location to catch a glimpse of the unfortunate behemoth.

Marine Mammal Stranding Network officials were to examine the whale at its current location outside Newport, Ore., before it is moved elsewhere for a necropsy. That medical procedure may shed some light on what killed it, KGW-TV said.

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