

# OWCN Mentored Research Program Project Concept Form

**Project Title:**

Effects of keel cushions on the behavior of western grebes entering rehabilitation

**Name of OWCN Member Organization:**

International Bird Rescue (IBR)

**Researcher Information (Name, phone number & email):**

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**Problem Statement (Briefly describe the issue or question you want to address):**

Keel lesions are common in Western Grebes. Current keel cushion designs are labor intensive, have a high failure rate, cause high material waste, and their success is dependent on the skill level of the user.

**Project Description (Briefly describe how the expected results of your project would address the issue, and provide any ideas on general experimental design):**

A pre-made reusable keel cushion design would improve consistency between users, improve success, reduce material waste, and be less labor intensive. The general experimental design would be 4 treatment groups: 1) no keel cushion, 2) vetwrap/towel cushion (the current method), 3) pre-made U-shaped cushion, 4) pre-made parallel cushion.

**Logistical Needs (Briefly describe what resources you believe the project would require, including people, animals, supplies, space, and time):**

We would need materials for the different types of keel cushions and techs trained to apply the cushions. There would be approximately 20 animals in each treatment group (80 animals total). The location would be at IBR, where there is housing available for these individuals. I would expect this project to take 1 year to complete.