



ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE
WILDLIFE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

SAN DIEGO ZOO GLOBAL

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Christina Simmons

Csimmons@sandiegozoo.org

619-685-3291

Cell - 619 318 3348

AUDUBON NATURE INSTITUTE

PUBLIC RELATIONS

KATIE SMITH 504-378-2693, cell-504-278-0542

ksmith@auduboninstitute.org

FRANK DONZE 504-212-5335, cell - 504-232-7461

fdonze@auduboninstitute.org

**Groundbreaking Conservation Partnership Between
Audubon Nature Institute and San Diego Zoo Global
Launches in New Orleans**

First Group of Animals Arrive to New Orleans' West Bank

[Click Here to Download Video and Photos of ASW Animals and Interviews](#)

(New Orleans, La.) - Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center in New Orleans has welcomed the first group of animals from San Diego Zoo as part of an innovative partnership between the two animal conservation leaders to bolster populations of threatened and endangered species.

The collaboration - the Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife - is designed as a modern-day ark to preserve species that are vulnerable in the wild and sustain populations in human care.

"Building sustainable populations of some endangered species means that we need space for large groups of these animals or space for them to exhibit natural behaviors," said Bob Wiese, Ph.D. Director of Living Collections, San Diego Zoo Global. "Here at the Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife we have created large spaces that will help us build these populations and fight extinction."

The first arrivals include reticulated giraffe, sable, bongo, okapi, common eland, and yellow-backed duiker. Based on the conservation premise that a few hundred is a few hundred too few, the Alliance focuses on animals that live in large herds or flocks. These are species that by their very nature need space for large populations, to be viable, sustainable breeding groups.

"This effort is headed by a skilled team of science and animal care experts with years of experience developing breeding and husbandry practices," said Michelle Hatwood, Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center Curator. "By joining forces on this project, we put to work our shared expertise in assisted reproduction techniques and behavioral sciences to help create sustainable populations of animals."

The project echoes the original purpose of the Species Survival Center, which opened in 1993 as an off-site breeding and research facility. While the West Bank campus spans more than 1,000 acres, the Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife (ASW) will occupy approximately 425 acres of the space.

“The Alliance is a one-of-a-kind resource for zoos and aquariums to rebuild animal collections that are in danger of disappearing,” said Ron Forman, Audubon Nature Institute President and CEO. “We will be a haven for animals that have been disappearing in the wild. We want to ensure that these species continue to maintain numbers needed to keep them from the brink of extinction.

Both Audubon Nature Institute and San Diego Zoo Global bring a wealth of animal care experience to this endeavor. This collaborative effort, comes in part, from the ongoing efforts of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) to create and manage species through the collaborative efforts of accredited zoos.

“AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums are, at their core, conservation organizations focused on saving species from extinction. The Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife is yet another example of collaboration between AZA members coming together to save species, while also sustaining vulnerable animal populations,” said Dan Ashe, President and CEO of AZA.

Initial construction involved fence installation, road building and new barns for giraffe and okapi. The animals have room to roam in large open areas designed to showcase the natural setting. This is the first phase of a multi-phase project. Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife will not be open to the public, but educational tour opportunities may be possible in the future.

Audubon Nature Institute

Audubon Nature Institute operates a family of museums, parks and research facilities dedicated to celebrating the wonders of nature. Through innovative live animal exhibits, education programs, and scientific discovery, Audubon makes a meaningful contribution to preserving wildlife for the future. Audubon Nature Institute flagships include Audubon Park, Audubon Zoo, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, Entergy Giant Screen Theater, Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium, Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Special Survival Center, Woldenberg Riverfront Park and Audubon Wilderness Park. Ron Forman is President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute.

San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Conservancy

The San Diego Zoo Global Wildlife Conservancy is dedicated to bringing endangered species back from the brink of extinction. The work of the Conservancy includes onsite wildlife conservation efforts (representing both plants and animals) at the San Diego Zoo, San Diego Zoo Safari Park, San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research, and international field programs in more than 35 countries. In addition, San Diego Zoo Global manages the Anne and Kenneth Griffin Reptile Conservation Center, the Frozen Zoo™, Native Seed Gene Bank, the Keauhou and Maui Hawaii Endangered Bird Conservation Centers, the San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike Breeding Facility, the Cocha Cashu Biological Research Station, the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center, and a 800-acre biodiversity reserve adjacent to the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. The important conservation and science work of these entities is supported in part by The Foundation of the Zoological Society of San Diego.

###