



## ***From Antarctica to Florida, 93 Wildlife Projects Receive More Than \$1.2 Million from the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund***

*-- Fund Surpasses \$10 Million in Giving in 10 Years --*

**Orlando, Fla. (October 10, 2013)** – Wild animals in need around the world – from Antarctic penguins to sea turtles hatchlings on Florida’s beaches – will benefit from more than \$1.2 million in grants awarded this year by the non-profit SeaWorld® & Busch Gardens® Conservation Fund. Ninety-three wildlife research, habitat protection, animal rescue and conservation education projects will receive the grants.

These grants will support researchers studying migration movements of Antarctic penguin species, provide safer passage for turtle hatchlings making their way from the nest to the water, and help monitor the long-term health of dolphins in one of Florida’s vital eco-systems.

Since its inception 10 years ago, the Fund has given more than \$10 million in grants to protect wildlife and wild places.

Additionally, *SeaWorld* and *Busch Gardens* provide direct support to the Fund by placing zoological staff into the field to work alongside researchers on projects supported by the Fund.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment™ provides all administrative and development costs as well as staffing and infrastructure. Because of this, 100 percent of donations go to on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts.

Just a few of the wildlife projects and organizations the funds will help include:

**Tracking Penguin Migrations** – Where do penguins go for the winter? Researchers with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution are using geolocation (GLS) tagging and stable isotope studies to identify the winter diets and migration movements of Adelie and chinstrap penguins in the Antarctic Peninsula. The data will be of critical importance in defining future management priorities for these species.

**Sea Turtle Lighting Project** – Lights on turtle nesting beaches can disorient turtle hatchlings and lead them away from the ocean. To help make a safer passage, Sea to Shore Alliance has created a method of measuring, mapping, and recording beach lighting levels. This data enables wildlife managers to quickly and easily compare,

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observe and locate areas with excessive beach lighting. By identifying these illumination “hotspots” managers can better protect sea turtle hatchlings.

**Long-term Monitoring of Dolphins** – The Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute is conducting a long-term study to monitor the abundance, population and habitat structure of Atlantic bottlenose dolphins that inhabit Florida’s Indian River Lagoon. The data being collected will help to make animal management decisions and better evaluate risks facing this species.

“No animal is immune to the threats that face wildlife today,” said Brad Andrews, President and Executive Director of the *SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund* and Chief Zoological Officer for *SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment*. “The on-the-ground work from researchers, animal rehabilitators and educators is vital to help our planet’s animal inhabitants not only survive, but thrive.”

For more information on the *SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund* visit [www.swbg-conservationfund.org](http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org) or [visit the Fund on Facebook](#).

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### **About the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund**

A non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, the SeaWorld® & Busch Gardens® Conservation Fund supports wildlife research, habitat protection, animal rescue and conservation education in the U.S. and countries around the world. The Fund provides an outlet for park visitors to help protect wildlife and, because SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment™ provides all administrative and development costs as well as staffing and infrastructure, commits 100 percent of donations to on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts.