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ANIMAL PLANET NAMES BIG CAT ADVOCATE SCOTT LOPE
HERO OF THE YEAR 2009

--Lope Helps Orphaned and Abandoned Big Cats at Tampa Sanctuary --

(December 19, 2009, Silver Spring, Md.) – Animal Planet and the makers of Fresh Step® litter announce Scott Lope of Tampa, Fla. as Animal Planet’s **HERO OF THE YEAR** in the fourth annual campaign recognizing people who have demonstrated extraordinary service for the welfare of animals. As Director of Operations at Tampa’s Big Cat Rescue, Lope is a defender of big cats at the sanctuary and beyond, dedicating more than 10 years of his life to their plight. He will be announced as the winner of **HERO OF THE YEAR** on December 18 during Animal Planet’s **ANIMAL COPS: PHILADELPHIA** premiere at **10 PM (ET/PT)**.

“Scott Lope epitomizes what it means to be a responsible member of the animal kingdom,” says Marjorie Kaplan, president and general manager of Animal Planet. “Animal Planet proudly partners with the makers of Fresh Step® litter to recognize Scott’s work with big cats. These lions, tigers and other big cats may be displaced from their natural habitats, but Big Cat Rescue and advocates like Scott Lope make us hopeful that through education and awareness, these instances will be fewer in the future.”

As Director of Operations at Big Cat Rescue, Lope oversees daily procedures at the sanctuary, where he cares for big cats that have been abandoned by their owners, retired from performing acts or saved from being slaughtered for their fur. However, Lope’s work goes far beyond his formal title. He has dedicated his life to advocating, not just for big cats, but for all wild animals and the habitats in which they live. Lope frequently speaks to the public to raise awareness for habitat preservation, and he sends a clear message that wild animals deserve their freedom. His passion has inspired hundreds of volunteers, visitors and community members.

“Of course, I want all wild animals to enjoy life in their natural habitat, but for the cats at Big Cat Rescue, that isn’t an option,” says Lope. “Our goal is to give our cats the best life they can possibly have in captivity, while educating the public, so that in the future, there will be no need for organizations like ours.”

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As **HERO OF THE YEAR**, Lope will receive a \$10,000 donation to his charity, Big Cat Rescue, and a trip for two to a destination of his choice which supports his animal welfare passion.

This year's **HERO OF THE YEAR** is being announced in conjunction with a new episode of Animal Planet's series **ANIMAL COPS: PHILADELPHIA**, which airs from **10-11 PM (ET/PT)**. **ANIMAL COPS: PHILADELPHIA** follows the work of the Pennsylvania SPCA's Human Law Enforcement team as they investigate cases of animal cruelty; rescue sick and abused animals; and fight for justice on their behalf.

Nominations for **HERO OF THE YEAR** were accepted online at www.AnimalPlanet.com from March 9 through June 28, 2009, and Animal Planet received more than 4,500 unique applications. Each nominee was vetted by a panel of internal judges based on the following criteria: level of commitment to their cause, accomplishments and impact, inspirational value and credibility. The top 10 finalists were announced in September, at which time the public was invited to vote online for their favorite finalists during People's Choice Voting, which took place between September 14 and September 27, 2009.

To learn more about Big Cat Rescue, please visit <http://www.bigcatrescue.org/index.htm>.

About Animal Planet Media

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.AnimalPlanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; www.Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service; mobile content; and merchandising extensions.

About Fresh Step® litter

Fresh Step® litter is a part of The Clorox Pet Products Company, a subsidiary of The Clorox Company, headquartered in Oakland, Calif. The Clorox Company is a leading manufacturer and marketer of consumer products with fiscal year 2009 revenues of \$5.5 billion. With 8,300 employees worldwide, the company manufactures products in two dozen countries and markets them in more than 100 countries. For more information about Clorox, visit www.TheCloroxCompany.com For more information about Fresh Step® litter, visit www.freshstep.com

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