



CONTACTS: Laurie Goldberg, 310-975-1631  
[Laurie\\_Goldberg@Discovery.com](mailto:Laurie_Goldberg@Discovery.com)

Paul Schur, 240-662-3348  
[Paul\\_Schur@Discovery.com](mailto:Paul_Schur@Discovery.com)

## **ANIMAL PLANET ANNOUNCES 2016-2017 UPFRONT PROGRAMMING SLATE**

*-2016 Marks 20th Anniversary of Animal Planet -*

(New York, NY) – Animal Planet presents its 2016-2017 Upfront slate highlighted by the introduction of **ANIMAL PLANET PRESENTS**, a new programming event to introduce award-winning and premiere specials and documentary films from top filmmakers that will include **MILLION DOLLAR DUCK** (WT); all-new series such as **TEXAS VETS** (WT), **THE ZOO** (WT) featuring Bronx Zoo, and **PENN VET** (WT); and returning favorites that include **RIVER MONSTERS**, **PIT BULLS & PAROLEES** and **MY CAT FROM HELL**. Animal Planet also chronicles the spectacular, revelatory and definitive natural history of our beloved canine counterparts in the all-new blue chip multi-part series, **LIFE OF DOGS** (WT). Additionally, **PUPPY BOWL** in January and **MONSTER WEEK** in May, Animal Planet’s most watched week of the year, will continue as part of the network’s quarterly events which will include the addition of **PET NATION RENOVATION** during 3Q16 and **WILD WINTER NIGHTS** in 4Q16 which will feature holiday editions of the network’s most popular programs plus sneak peeks of upcoming series and events.

As Animal Planet approaches its 20th anniversary in October, the network ranked among the top-20 ad-supported cable networks in Primetime among Men 25-54\* in 2015, making it the fourth consecutive year Animal Planet was a top-20 cable network among Men. Last year, eight series garnered more than one million Total Viewers P2+ each, including **RIVER MONSTERS**, **THE LAST ALASKANS**, **TREEHOUSE MASTERS**, **DR. DEE: ALASKA VET**, **FINDING BIGFOOT**, **PIT BULLS & PAROLEES**, **WHALE WARS** and **NORTH WOODS LAW**.

“Animal Planet is alive with passion and adventure, with animals at the forefront of our programming”, said Rich Ross, group president of Discovery Channel, Animal Planet and Science Channel. “We are excited that joining our great franchise series will be new tent pole events, unscripted series and blue chip specials.”

The network’s 2016-2017 slate of new programming will include:

## *ANIMAL SPECIALTY*

**PENN VET** (WT) follows a group of fourth-year students' professional and personal lives during their last semester at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Veterinary Medicine. This all-new series features students with diverse backgrounds and goals as they handle a wide range of cases, at both Ryan Hospital for companion animals in Philadelphia, and New Bolton Center hospital for large animals in Kennett Square, PA. With the animals' lives on the line, **PENN VET** showcases the rigorous training of veterinary students as they face the day-to-day challenges inherent in this high pressure world. With more than 30,000 patient visits a year and species ranging from dogs, cats, guinea pigs, iguanas to horses, cows, zebras and goats, the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine is home to two internationally renowned teaching hospitals with some of the largest caseloads in the world. Penn Vet established the first-ever facility for the care of critically injured large animals, the first state-of-the-art minimally invasive surgery suite, the first recovery pool for equine orthopedic surgeries, and the world's first animal bloodmobile. Among the students who are driven by a mission to heal and protect animals, new friendships blossom and relationships evolve as life-changing moments alter these student's worlds forever as they prepare to enter the professional veterinary industry.

**TEXAS VETS** (WT) follows veterinarians, Dr. Diarra Blue, Dr. Aubrey Ross and Dr. Michael Lavigne, who recently moved to Houston to open a full-service veterinarian hospital and animal shelter together. The series captures the doctors' lives as they juggle running a new business while managing their family life filled with spouses, parents, in-laws, children, pets and friends, as well as their intense moments saving the lives of animals at their clinic.

## *NEW SERIES*

**THE ZOO** (WT) - The Bronx Zoo is a world leader in conservation that provides the chance for people to interact with animals and learn about their plight in the wild. It's also a research haven where groundbreaking work is being performed in order to save wildlife around the globe. For the first time ever, the Bronx Zoo is opening its doors and allowing cameras to document the day-to-day operations that provide quality care for animals while educating the public on the importance of wildlife and conservation. The Bronx Zoo features dozens of exhibits and experiences and is on a critical mission to preserve conservation efforts throughout the world. The Bronx Zoo comprises 265 acres of park lands and naturalistic habitats and is part of an integrated system of four zoos and one aquarium managed by the Wildlife Conservation Society.

## *NATURAL HISTORY*

**LIFE OF DOGS** (WT) is a multi-part blue-chip series that chronicles the spectacular, revelatory and definitive natural history of our beloved canine counterparts. From wild wolves to domesticated pampered companions, **LIFE OF DOGS** dives deep into the evolution of the species and how, through all of its genera they have been instrumental in the advancement of humankind around the globe. Filmed in 24 countries using the latest technology and storytelling techniques, this series uncovers the remarkable skills these animals possess, from detecting cancer and helping us survive the harshest of conditions to fighting beside us in battle and beyond. Viewers will learn the nuances of pack behavior, how wild dogs have

adapted to surviving in urban environments and identify behaviors their own pets inherited from their ancestors.

**PROJECT GRIZZLY (WT)** is a six-part docu-series that takes viewers on a journey with Jeff Watson and his two rescued bears, Bob and Screech, as Watson attempts to return them to the wild where they belong. Watson is a bear trainer – he has lived with and trained grizzly bears his whole life and adopted Bob and Screech as cubs. A crisis of conscience has spurred him to do the unprecedented – introduce his two 700-pound grizzlies, animals that were raised as his kin, to the wild. Jeff must teach the bears every skill they don't currently possess in order to survive the deep wild. It will be the adventure of a lifetime.

### *SPECIALS*

**ANIMAL PLANET PRESENTS** is an all-new programming event featuring the best of blue chip documentaries and films. Viewers will experience premiere programming from top filmmakers that explore a wide range of topics which provide a unique lens on the world we share with our animal counterparts. Films to premiere this year will include:

- Winner of the 2016 Slamdance Film Festival, **MILLION DOLLAR DUCK** dives into the wonderfully eccentric world of the Federal Duck Stamp Contest - the only juried art competition run by the U.S. government. The Duck Stamp is among the most successful conservation tools ever created with 98% of the proceeds going to support the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund while simultaneously spawning a uniquely American subculture brimming with talent, ego, art, controversy, big money, and migratory waterfowl. Following six wildlife artists striving to win "the Olympics of wildlife art," **MILLION DOLLAR DUCK** brings to life the high tension competition as one by one each is eliminated, leaving a winner whose life will be changed forever.
- **LIFE AFTER: CHERNOBYL** - 30 years after the worst nuclear catastrophe in history, which sent a plume of highly radioactive fallout into the atmosphere, biologist Rob Nelson and anthropologist Mary-Ann Ochota are the first scientists granted unlimited access to all areas surrounding the infamous Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. Knowingly putting themselves at risk to radiation exposure, the duo investigates the effects of high radiation doses on the surrounding animal population and how wildlife and environment have been affected after decades as one of the most contaminated place on earth.
- **I BOUGHT A RAINFOREST** - Charlie Hamilton James is a professional wildlife cameraman whose love of animals takes him to the most remote corners of the planet. Wanting to preserve a part of a delicate ecosystem that is being destroyed, Charlie does something extraordinary – he buys 100 acres of the Amazon rainforest sight unseen. Now, he must contend with the illegal loggers, miners and cattle ranchers whose livelihood is ravaging the forest and threatening the very existence of this unique animal kingdom. To protect the land, Charlie must learn to understand the people he sees as his enemy and navigate the complex situation, putting his life at risk. Charlie wants to save the rainforest, but can one man make a difference?

### *RETURNING SERIES*

**DR. DEE: ALASKA VET** - As one of the most successful veterinarians in Alaska, it is not uncommon for Dr. Dee Thornell's daily patient roster to include reindeer, moose, ducks, bears and pigs, along with the usual pet dog and cat. As all of her clients aren't able to make it to her clinic, Dr. Dee's went the extra mile to earn her pilot's license in an effort to reach the ones in all areas of the state. Now she and her husband travel the country offering veterinary care, as well as spay and neutering clinics, in remote villages. Knowing that no critter is off limits, Dr. Dee and her staff handle extreme cases with care and compassion.

Denver-based veterinarian Dr. Jeff Young is **DR. JEFF: ROCKY MOUNTAIN VET**. His love for animals coupled with his 25+ years of veterinary experience has helped and saved countless pets, including dogs, cats and exotic animals. With his maverick 'can-do' energy, Dr. Jeff is possibly one of the busiest veterinarians in the country and has attracted more than 80,000 clients. With so much going on, it can be a mad house in Dr. Jeff's animal house, but he and his skilled team of veterinary experts complete approximately 30 surgeries a day while attending to a diverse clientele and their pets; they even take their services on the road with a unique mobile clinic.

**FINDING BIGFOOT** follows Bigfoot Field Research Organization (BFRO) president Matt MoneyMaker, researchers James "Bobo" Fay and Cliff Barackman and skeptic scientist Ranae Holland as they take viewers with them on their mission to meet with bigfoot witnesses, believers and other cryptozoologists to gather testimonies, evidence and learn new tactics in their search for this elusive creature. On their quest to find the illustrious Bigfoot, the team members embark on midnight investigations, perform sasquatch calls and use the most up-to-date technology to solve one of the biggest mysteries of our time.

The infectious unknown is a ticking time bomb within the body that can go off at any minute, and **MONSTERS INSIDE ME** reveals the parasites, viruses, bacteria, fungi and foreign objects the can plague unsuspecting victims. The cases are unexpected – and sometimes unexplainable – and doctors must race against the clock to diagnose the culprits. Viewers see the mystery unfold through first-person accounts; interviews with friends, families and doctors; and reenactments of the victim's grueling journey. Host/biologist Dan Riskin provides scientific perspective on the cringe-worthy creatures making their homes within the hidden crevices of our bodies. It seems as if no one is safe from these microscopic monsters.

The journey is the destination for cat expert Jackson Galaxy in **MY CAT FROM HELL**. With a career spanning over 20 years, the Cat Daddy has been on an unbelievable journey, taking him from the gates of heaven to the depths of hell and everywhere in between. Along with Jackson's usual cat wizardry helping hellish felines and their guardians, Jackson is now jumping into the fire with bigger "cat"astrophes as he ventures into the wild looking for order in the world of feral cats, provides inspiration where it seemingly cannot be found and breaks new ground within the shelter community to improve the lives of cats all over the country.

**NORTH WOODS LAW** follows the adventures of the men and women of Maine's elite game wardens, who save lives and fight crime across 18 million acres of rugged, perilous and unpredictable terrain. In

Maine, game wardens must safeguard people and animals within the wilderness while they also must enforce general state law. Each day on the job brings unexpected challenges and intense situations. Whether they're rescuing animals in distress, embarking on search-and-rescue missions or investigating crimes, the game wardens are never far from danger.

**PIT BULLS & PAROLEES** features Tia Torres, a true believer in second chances. For more than 20 years, she has dedicated her life to Villalobos Rescue Center, the largest pit bull rescue center in the U.S. Tia has offered a fresh start to more than 50 parolees and a new lease on life to dogs that were discarded, demonized and abused, often due solely to the reputation of their breed. After relocating to New Orleans from California in 2012, Villalobos is at maximum capacity with more than 400 dogs. Now more than ever, she must rely on her children, their significant others and the parolees to follow in her footsteps and keep the ever-expanding rescue running effectively in multiple locations. Tia fights the never-ending battle and emotional rollercoaster of running the nation's largest pit bull sanctuary where each new day brings happiness or heartbreak – and sometimes both.

**RIVER MONSTERS** features freshwater detective, biologist and extreme angler Jeremy Wade who has spent three decades traveling the world's waterways in search of man-eaters that lurk beneath the surface of rivers and lakes in some of the most inhospitable locations in the world. This series is a weekly murder mystery following Wade's life-long quest to discover which finned suspects are actually man-eaters, and which are victims of mistaken identity or part of an epic myth. No river monster will elude him for long and he'll stop at nothing to solve every cold-case involving a murderous underwater creature.

In the vast terrain of Washington State, Department of Fish and Wildlife police officers are on the front lines Patrolling the city, coast and desert. **RUGGED JUSTICE** follows this elite force from Washington State's Department of Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Program as they police the Evergreen State's unforgiving mountain terrains, twisted back roads and densely populated coastal areas. No matter the danger, these officers tirelessly enforce the law.

In **TANKED**, Las Vegas-based Acrylic Tank Manufacturing (ATM), one of the country's most successful builders of aquariums, and co-owners Wayne King and Brett Raymer, two of Sin City's most imaginative businessmen are tasked with building enormous and awe-inspiring tanks and aquariums for top celebrities, luxury hotels and casinos, Fortune 500 businesses, private homes and homeowners across the country. ATM takes on more than 200 projects every year with tanks ranging from 50 to five million gallons in size that feature the most exotic, unusual, colorful and dangerous fish in the world.

Pete Nelson dedicates his life granting people's dreams of turning peaceful nooks in nature into the ultimate escapes. In **TREEHOUSE MASTERS**, Pete and his team execute the most outrageous treehouses designed to delight every whimsy, form and function. Whether he's contriving magnificent multi-bedroom treehouses with state-of-the-art kitchens and bathrooms or rendering simpler, peaceful one-room escapes, Pete always goes out on a limb to create the most breathtaking treehouses with spectacular vistas.

*\*Excluding Sports*

## **About Animal Planet**

Animal Planet, 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. Animal Planet consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 94 million homes in the US; online assets [www.animalplanet.com](http://www.animalplanet.com), the ultimate online destination for all things animal; Animal Planet L!VE, the go-to digital destination for round-the-clock, unfiltered access to the animal kingdom; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service, and merchandising extensions.

## **About Discovery Communications**

Discovery Communications (Nasdaq: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK) is the leader in global entertainment reaching 3 billion cumulative viewers in more than 220 countries and territories. Discovery satisfies curiosity, entertains and inspires viewers with high-quality content through global brands, led by Discovery Channel, TLC, Investigation Discovery, Animal Planet, Science and Turbo/Velocity, as well as U.S. joint venture network OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network, and through the Discovery Digital Networks portfolio, including Seeker and SourceFed. Discovery owns Eurosport, the leading pan-regional sports entertainment destination across Europe and Asia-Pacific. Discovery also is a leading provider of educational products and services to schools, including an award-winning series of K-12 digital textbooks, through Discovery Education. For more information, please visit [www.discoverycommunications.com](http://www.discoverycommunications.com).

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