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CONTACT: Melissa Berry, (240) 662-2946
Melissa_Berry@discovery.com

**VOLUNTEERS ARE ON A CRUSADE TO RESCUE DOGS IN DIRE NEED
ON ANIMAL PLANET'S NEW SERIES – LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY**

- Southern Hospitality Takes on a Whole New Meaning as Rescuers Engineer an “Underground Railroad” for Pets That Need to be Spirited Up North to Save Their Lives -

(Silver Spring, MD) – Time is running out for millions of animals across the country. In many southern states where spay-and-neuter laws aren't readily enforced and tough economic times are forcing many people to choose between caring for themselves or their pets, the number of stray and abandoned dogs is soaring. Shelters plagued by overcrowding and a lack of resources are unable to provide these animals with one critical thing: time. So the race against the clock begins. Thanks to some incredible people who have dedicated themselves to beating that ticking clock, thousands of dogs every year are rescued and transported to the North, and most of us don't even know that it's happening.

On **Saturday, June 19, at 8 PM (ET/PT)**, Animal Planet will change that as it shines the spotlight on two very special people on a mission and a network of volunteers as they fight to give dogs a second chance at life in **LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY**. This series follows Shelly Bookwalter and Kyle Peterson as they forge an alliance to give unwanted dogs across the South one last chance at survival. With the support of her family and friends, Shelly devotes her time and money to saving stray and unclaimed shelter dogs from a tragic fate. She spends hours finding and placing them with foster families, posting the available pets on Petfinder.com and interviewing potential owners; she successfully places close to 650 rescued dogs with loving families every year. Kyle works with Shelly and her volunteers to pick up adopted dogs to transport them to their new homes in the Northeast.

“**LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY** tells the story of passionate and determined individuals who come together on a mission to save and better the lives of abandoned and stray dogs. It's a privilege to further their work and help save these animals,” says Marjorie Kaplan, general manager and president of Animal Planet. “People looking to adopt a pet are often hooked after just seeing a photo. Being there to witness that first face-to-face meeting and to see the impact that humans and dogs have on each other's lives is incredibly powerful and something I think will inspire and entertain our viewers.”

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"**LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY** is an incredible example of individuals and families from communities all over the country and all walks of life helping our four-legged best friends beat the odds," says Al Roker, executive producer for Al Roker Productions who produces the series for the network. "Animal Planet deserves our thanks for showing pet adoption at its best."

Without the help of Kyle Peterson and his team, including one of his assistants country music singer Lucas Hoge, Shelly's dream of seeing rescued dogs adopted in the North would not be possible. Kyle is the owner of P.E.T.S. Transport Service, which transports dogs from the South to areas all over the Northeast, from Pennsylvania to Maine. Spending four to five nights a week on the road, Kyle packs his trailer rig full of barking dogs, anxious to meet their new families. This heroic journey is repeated almost 52 weeks a year; it's an exhausting ritual but one which finds homes for more than 100-150 dogs each week. Kyle's company has transported nearly 30,000 dogs to their new homes since he started in 2004. The relationship between Kyle and Shelly shows the power these dogs have in bringing people together to work for a common cause.

With Shelly's help and through Animal Planet's partnership with Petfinder.com, viewers will have the opportunity to adopt rescued dogs from around the country as well as some dogs rescued by Shelly herself at AnimalPlanet.com. The web site will feature dog biographies and a "where are they now" section, which will spotlight rescued dogs with their new owners after they travel on the **LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY**.

LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY is sponsored by PEDIGREE® Food for Dogs, which sponsors an annual Adoption Drive that helps raise awareness, funds and food to help the nearly 4 million homeless dogs find loving homes.

LAST CHANCE HIGHWAY is produced for Animal Planet by Al Roker Entertainment. Al Roker, Tracie Brennan and C. Russell Muth are executive producers for Al Roker Entertainment. Lisa Lucas is executive producer for Animal Planet. Marc Etkind is vice president of development for Animal Planet.

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; 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.

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