



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Brian Eley, (212) 548-5153
Brian_Eley@discovery.com
Patricia Kollappallil, (240) 662-2969
Patricia_Kollappallil@discovery.com

ANIMAL PLANET'S "WHALE WARS" RETURNS FROM HIGH SEAS WITH RECORD VIEWERSHIP IN FINALE AND IN SECOND SEASON

-- Friday Night's Finale Docks with 1.3 Million Viewers, Most-Watched Episode Ever --
-- Network Announces Greenlight of Third Season to Begin Filming Sea Shepherds Later this Fall --

(New York, New York, August 25, 2009) – Animal Planet's **WHALE WARS** ended last Friday evening with the most-watched episode ever, a record 1.3M P2+ viewers tuning in to see the fate of the Sea Shepherd crew who, upon returning to port, were detained by Australian Federal Police.

The season finale also set viewership records among HH (877K), P25-54 (807K), W25-54 (375K), and M25-54 (432K), helping Animal Planet rank third among all cable networks in the 9 PM hour among P25-54 (excludes sports). **WHALE WARS** ranked among the top five cable programs last Friday night in terms of P25-54 delivery (excludes sports and movies).

The overall sophomore season of **WHALE WARS** also set new landmarks and is now Animal Planet's second-best performing series in network history, averaging 779K households and more than a million P2+ viewers (1.08M) across its second season. Premiere episodes of the new season have produced double-digit delivery gains compared to the inaugural season average across key demos (HH: +14%, P25-54: +18%, W25-54: +26%, M25-54 +12%, P2+: +14%).

Marjorie Kaplan, president and general manager of Animal Planet, also announced today that **WHALE WARS** would return for a third season next year, following the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's next Antarctic whale defense campaign called *Operation Waltzing Matilda*. The Sea Shepherds are expected to leave on the campaign at year's end with the series anticipated to return as a lynchpin for the channel's 2010 summer.

"It's been terrific to see the success of this groundbreaking series, and its growth creatively and with audiences from the first to the second season. I'm proud to be able to announce the third," added Kaplan. "**WHALE WARS** has really helped to transform the brand of the network and has anchored our Friday night. Now JOCKEYS rides in to continue the momentum and give our viewers a look inside another, very different world."

WHALE WARS follows Watson and the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society as they wage a life-and-death battle to find and stop Japanese ships from hunting whales in the name of research.

For several years, Watson and his eclectic group of international staff and volunteers - labeled activists, heroes or eco-pirates -- have taken a hard-line approach to eradicate whaling, poaching, and shark-finning and other serious ocean conservation issues. **WHALE WARS** follows a masterful chess match at the far end of the globe as both Sea Shepherd and the whalers engage in an environmental showdown that could cost millions of dollars -- all while drawing global attention to the practice of whaling.

WHALE WARS is a production of Lizard Trading Company and RIVR Media for Animal Planet. Liz Bronstein is the executive producer for Lizard Trading Company, and Jason Carey is the executive producer for Animal Planet. Charlie Foley 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 95 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.

#