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**Worldwide Demonstrations Mark Second Annual International Day of
Action for Elephants in Zoos on Saturday
In Defense of Animals challenges zoos to use science, not emotion, in controversial elephant
debate**

San Rafael, Calif. – On its second annual International Day of Action for Elephants in Zoos, In Defense of Animals (IDA) is challenging zoos to embrace the latest science that clearly identifies what elephants need to thrive, rather than continue to confine them in inadequate and unnatural zoo displays that shorten their lives by decades.

On Saturday, IDA and animal advocates in more than 30 cities around the world will hold demonstrations to call on zoos to provide the life-sustaining conditions elephants need or to stop displaying them. The global event has attracted the support of some of Hollywood's most notable celebrities, including actors Lily Tomlin, Steve Guttenberg, and Jorja Fox ("CSI," "ER"), and film producer Dick Donner ("Free Willy"). (Read their statements at http://www.helpelephants.com/celebs_support_idaez.htm)

"Keeping elephants in captivity is not conservation," said IDA President Scotlund Haisley. "If elephants are to survive on this planet, we must focus on protecting them where they naturally live. Caging elephants in tiny, barren zoo displays doesn't help the species. It's condemning some of the most magnificent animals on Earth to misery, disease and early death."

Elephants naturally live in large, tight-knit family groups in which females remain with their mothers for life. They are on the move 20 hours a day, foraging, socializing and exploring home ranges measured in hundreds of square miles. Zoos typically hold small groups of unrelated females in barren enclosures of a few acres or less. The combined size of all U.S. zoo elephant enclosures is less than one square mile.

A study in the journal *Science* found that elephants in zoos are dying far younger than those in relatively protected wild populations. Intensive confinement is causing serious physical and psychological problems, including painful foot disease and arthritis that cripple elephants and lead to premature death, infertility, high infant mortality and stillbirth rates, and repetitive rocking and swaying, signs of psychological distress.

Yet, North American zoos will spend close to half a billion dollars to build or renovate exhibits, even though they don't add enough space or provide conditions to significantly improve elephants' health and welfare. In the U.S., zoos spend more than \$16 million annually just to display elephants. By comparison, the Kenya Wildlife Service has an annual budget of \$25 million for the protection of more than 30,000 elephants and other wildlife in an area greater than 20,000 square miles.

Some zoos have recognized they cannot meet elephants' natural needs. In the U.S., 18 zoos have closed or plan to close their elephant exhibits.

"Mounting scientific evidence shows that zoos are failing elephants," said IDA Elephant

Campaign Director Catherine Doyle. “It’s time for zoos to set aside emotion and take a hard look at the serious problems elephants are suffering under their care. The bottom line is clear: If a zoo can’t meet the physical, social and psychological needs of these highly intelligent and complex animals, it simply shouldn’t have them.”

What: International Day of Action for Elephants in Zoos

When: Saturday, June 19, 2010

Where: Tucson, Phoenix, Ariz.; Los Angeles, San Diego, Vallejo, Calif.; Washington, DC; Miami, Sanford, Tampa, Florida; Atlanta, Ga.; Chicago, Ill.; New Bedford, Mendon, Mass.; Kansas City, St. Louis, Mo.; Albuquerque, NM; Bronx, NY; Portland, Ore.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Greenville, SC; Dallas, San Antonio, Tex.; Salt Lake City, Utah; Natural Bridge, Va.; Seattle, Wash.; and internationally in Toronto, Edmonton, Canada; the U.K., Spain, France and South Africa.

For event locations and times, visit http://www.help elephants.com/idaez_find_an_event.html.

For more information, please visit www.HelpElephants.com.

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