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PRESS RELEASE

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ESTABLISHMENT OF SINGAPORE'S FIRST WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTRE

SINGAPORE, 11 October 2006- The Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (Acres) today announced the establishment of Singapore's first wildlife rescue centre. Spanning two hectares at Sungei Tengah, the Acres Wildlife Rescue Centre (AWRC) will house animals rescued from the illegal wildlife trade in Singapore and will begin operations in April 2007.

Amy Corrigan, Acres Director of Zoology said: "In Singapore, more than 4,000 wild animals were seized from dealers and private homes in the past five years. These animals are typically subjected to severe stress from the point of capture, to the inhumane transport conditions, to being held in inappropriate conditions. The AWRC will provide such animals with an ideal environment in which to recuperate."

The Singapore Zoo has previously been used as the main housing area for confiscated animals. However, the zoo has announced that they are now full. Consequently, most confiscated animals are currently either sent to inappropriate facilities or euthanised.

Globally, the illegal trading in wildlife, timber and other natural resources is now surpassed only by the trafficking in drugs and weapons. The ongoing illegal wildlife trade has severe consequences for the survival of every species involved and their natural habitats.

The AWRC will serve as an educational facility to create the much needed awareness on the detrimental effects of the illegal wildlife trade in Singapore and worldwide. The educational aspect of the AWRC will ultimately move Singapore one step closer towards ending the illegal wildlife trade in the country.

A survey by Acres in 2005 found that one in five pet shops in Singapore was illegally selling prohibited wild animals. Ms. Corrigan said: "There is a need to build public awareness in Singapore about the illegal wildlife trade and its consequences. Consumer demand for prohibited animals may stem from lack of awareness of the illegality of keeping such animals, thus contributing to the illegal trade."

There is also a need to engage Singaporeans in taking a more proactive role in tackling animal protection issues of national and global concern, and the AWRC will serve as a platform to promote volunteerism in Singapore and provide Singaporeans with a hands-on opportunity to help animals.

Mr. Louis Ng, Executive Director of Acres said: "We strongly believe in promoting community involvement in tackling animal protection issues. We do not want Acres to simply own and run the AWRC but hope that the community takes ownership of it and assist us in our efforts. We are glad to announce that Admiralty Secondary School has become the first school to adopt the AWRC. We urge the public to follow their example and contribute to the establishment of the AWRC."

Acres would like to express our sincere appreciation to the International Primate Protection League, Lee Foundation and all the Acres supporters who have provided some initial funding for this essential project. Acres would also like to thank the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority, the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority for their support and approval of this important project.

"Everyone should recognise the importance of protecting animals, especially those rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. It is crucial that they too have a safe place to live in. SLA is hence glad to have played a role in Acres' vision of building Singapore's very own wildlife rescue centre" said Mr Clarence Ti, Director of Land Business & Management, SLA.

Acres will be holding an event on 3rd and 4th November at The Atrium, outside Plaza Singapura, to raise funds for the establishment of AWRC and to raise awareness on the illegal wildlife trade in Singapore. The public can help in the raising of funds by taking part in the event and participating in activities involving the creation of digital photos and videos. This event is supported by the Media Development Authority of Singapore as part of MEDIAAction!, an initiative which aims to inspire Singaporeans to discover the benefits and possibilities of media for work, learning and play.

Acres is currently raising funds for the construction of the AWRC. To donate or find out more information, log on to: www.acres.org.sg

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Notes to editors

- The AWRC will potentially house animals including primates, marsupials, reptiles, small ungulates and small carnivores.
- **Acres**
Acres is a local animal welfare charity aimed at fostering respect and compassion for all animals. The society is driven by its concern for animals and adopts research projects on the use of animals in various fields. Research findings are then used to educate the public to promote active community involvement in the animal welfare movement, as well as strive towards synergistic partnerships with authorities and related parties. Acres has conducted more than 100 roadshows and/or talks to raise awareness on animal welfare issues in Singapore and to create a more socially responsible community. It currently has more than 1,700 individuals on its supporter database.
- **Singapore Land Authority**
Singapore Land Authority (SLA) is a statutory board with the Ministry of Law. Its mission is to optimise land resources for the economic and social development of Singapore. SLA is responsible for the direct management of some 14,000 hectares of State land and 5,100 buildings. It is also in charge of land sales, leases, acquisitions and allocation, developing and marketing land-related information, and maintaining the national land information database through digitised land information services. SLA is also the national land registration authority for property transactions, and the issuance and guarantee of land titles in Singapore. It also manages and maintain the national land survey system, including the defining of boundaries or legal limits of properties based on a coordinated cadastre survey system.
- **Media Development Authority of Singapore**
The Media Development Authority of Singapore (MDA) was formed on 1 January 2003 to champion Media 21, a blueprint to transform Singapore into a global media city. Media 21 seeks to create a vibrant media environment by establishing Singapore as a media exchange, exporting Made-by-Singapore content, internationalising local media companies, nurturing local media talent and developing digital media. More information on MDA can be found on www.mda.gov.sg.
- **MEDIAAction!**
MEDIAAction! is a year-round public outreach initiative organised by the Media Development Authority (MDA), with our partners, to inspire Singaporeans to discover the benefits and possibilities that media can offer for work, learning and play. MEDIAAction! offers all Singaporeans the opportunity to learn more about the media and upgrade their media literacy skills through participation in fun and engaging events. For more information on MEDIAAction!, visit www.mda.gov.sg/mediaction