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## **GFAS Program Director Josephine Martell featured on Larry King Live, Animal Planet, and 20/20**

*Josephine Martell heads up the GFAS Captive Wild Animal Protection Campaign*

March 4, 2010 (Washington, DC) – Today the [Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries](http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org) (GFAS), the nation’s premier organization providing standards for verifying and accrediting animal sanctuaries, announced that GFAS Program Director Josephine Martell will appear on LARRY KING LIVE, Friday March 6<sup>th</sup>. A lively panel will discuss the too-often fatal attraction that “pet” owners have for dangerous exotics, best left in the wild. The panel will be hosted by Jeff Probst (host of Survivor), with Martell serving as a policy/animal welfare expert.

“Josephine Martell is well-recognized for her more than eight years of work regarding captive wildlife, including conducting an undercover investigation into poor care practices for big cats in captivity,” states Patty Finch, Executive Director of GFAS. “She is currently working on research examining the motivations behind big cat ownership in the US. We are delighted to have her leading our Captive Wild Animal Protection Campaign (CWAPC).”

Martell will also be featured on ANIMAL PLANET’S three-part miniseries premiering Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, at 10 PM ET/PT. Titled FATAL ATTRACTION, the series begins with a look at people who “own” venomous reptiles, followed by the March 21<sup>st</sup> premiere examining the issues surrounding those “owning” big cats. The March 28<sup>th</sup> premiere investigates people with chimpanzee “children.” Martell shares her expert analysis, at the same time that owners

unhesitatingly share their experiences that always results in a complete and permanent loss of freedom for the animals involved and sometimes ends in death for both human and animal,

ABC's 20/20 on March 26<sup>th</sup> will examine Steve Sipek (known for his role as Tarzan) and his obsession with big cats. Included is commentary by Martell, interviewed by John Quinone.

“Nationally,” states Martell, “21 states have no laws or ineffective regulations regarding dangerous, exotic animal ownership. Nor is there a federal law that prohibits owning a dangerous, exotic animal as a pet. Buying a tiger or a bear is cheap and easy. You can find one to buy almost as easily as you can a Black Lab puppy. It's a runaway problem that has turned into a national public health and safety issue.”

**About GFAS (Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries)**

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) was formed in 2007 to strengthen and support the work of animal sanctuaries in the United States and abroad through establishing a rigorous accreditation process. GFAS also educates the public on the compelling need to actively support accredited sanctuaries and on the causes and conditions of displaced animals and solutions through the Captive Wild Animal Protection Campaign (CWAPC). Learn more about GFAS and CWAPC at [www.sanctuaryfederation.org](http://www.sanctuaryfederation.org) and [www.cwapc.org](http://www.cwapc.org)