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## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Joins with the U.S. Postal Service to Launch “Save Vanishing Species” Semipostal Stamp to Benefit Wild Tigers, Rhinos, Elephants, Great Apes and Marine Turtles**

### ***Fourth Stamp of its Kind: Proceeds to Help International Wildlife***

The *Save Vanishing Species* semipostal stamp is now available at post offices across the country, giving the public an easy and inexpensive way to help conserve wild tigers, rhinos, elephants, great apes and marine turtles around the world.

By purchasing the stamps, which feature the image of an Amur tiger cub, at a rate of 55 cents per stamp - just slightly above the cost of first-class postage - the public can directly contribute to the on-the-ground conservation programs overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Wildlife Without Borders* programs.

“The *Save Vanishing Species* stamp provides an excellent way for the public to help wildlife around the globe. 11 cents more, can make a real difference for some of the most endangered wildlife on the planet.” said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. “By purchasing this stamp to use for postage or as a collector's item, everyone in the United States can help provide critical funding to support major conservation programs for iconic species like the white rhino, the mountain gorilla and the leatherback marine turtle, among others.”

A semipostal is a stamp issued for sale at a price above the present first-class postage rate. The extra proceeds go to a particular cause. The *Save Vanishing Species* stamp is only the fourth such semipostal stamp to be issued. It represents the first U.S. postage stamp issued in the 164-year history of the Postal Service that will raise funds for international wildlife conservation. Proceeds from the sale of the stamp will directly benefit the *Wildlife Without Borders* Multinational Species Conservation Funds (MSCF), administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *The Save Vanishing Species* stamp will remain on sale for a period of at least two years as authorized by Congress.

The MSCF program supports conservation efforts directed at certain endangered species worldwide considered to be of great importance to the American public and authorized by specific legislation. The five funds presently enacted by Congress are: the African Elephant Conservation Act of 1988; the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994; the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1998; the Great Apes Conservation Act of 2000; and the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004.

“Since 1989, the Wildlife Without Borders - MSCF program has awarded over 1,800 grants through its programs for international wildlife conservation providing vital funding for community-based efforts to protect some of the world’s most endangered animals,” said Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe.

The MSCF supports community conservation, anti-poaching and law enforcement initiatives, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, capacity building, sustainable livelihoods, monitoring and evaluation, outreach and education, wildlife health, coalition/partnership-building and protected area management along with a wide variety of other essential conservation activities.

For example, with funding from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s *Wildlife Without Borders* - Rhinoceros and Tiger Fund, critically endangered Eastern Black Rhinos have been returned to the Serengeti National Park as part of a bold initiative to boost the

viability of Tanzania's rhino population. During the next two years, a total of 32 Eastern Black Rhinos will be returned from South Africa as part of the Serengeti Rhino Repatriation Project, more than doubling the number of rhinos in the Serengeti.

In Panama, funding from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *Wildlife Without Borders* - Marine Turtle Fund has enabled the recovery of endangered Hawksbill Turtles after decades of poaching for their shells completely devastated this important nesting site. The project conducts extensive community outreach, beach monitoring and protection of the nesting hawksbills in an effort to help stem their decline. The project has led to an impressive increase in the number of hawksbill nests over the last seven years and is now viewed as a model marine turtle conservation project.

The first day of issue ceremony took place September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C. Teiko Saito, Assistant Director for International Affairs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Stephen Kearney, Executive Director Stamp Services for the Postal Service were on hand marking a major milestone for international wildlife conservation. The ceremony also featured representatives from the Interior Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Postal Service, the Smithsonian National Zoological Park and representatives of the Multinational Species Fund Coalition. The Coalition represents more than 30 organizations including the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Feld Entertainment, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Safari Club International, Wildlife Conservation Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

To learn more about the *Wildlife Without Borders* Multinational Species Conservation Funds and the Save Vanishing Species stamp, visit:

[www.fws.gov/international/semipostal](http://www.fws.gov/international/semipostal). Follow the Service's International Program on Twitter @USFWSInternatl and on Facebook, USFWSInternationalAffairs.

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of*

*the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).*

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