



World's Top Artists Commit \$13M for Conservation

International artist group creates online gallery supporting over 100 conservation organizations

Vancouver, Canada (March 19, 2007)— Governments may not be leading the response to the growing concerns for the demise of our natural world, but there is a group of today's most talented artists that is doing something about it... and succeeding.

The **Artists for Conservation Foundation** (AFC) - formerly the Worldwide Nature Artists Group (WNAG) - is a non-profit, international organization whose mission is to support wildlife and habitat conservation, biodiversity, sustainability and environmental education through art that celebrates our natural heritage. Based in Vancouver, Canada, the Foundation represents a juried membership of 500 of the world's leading nature artists from 27 countries and includes virtually all of the top names in its field.

Through its website, at www.natureartists.com, the AFC provides a venue for the sale of its members' artwork with a portion of proceeds voluntarily earmarked for conservation after the artwork is sold. Artists choose both the amount of their commitment and a recognized conservation charity as beneficiary. An estimate of the total potential pledge amount is posted on the AFC Web site. Not known as a demographic of financial strength, the artists are so motivated by the subjects of their artwork that they have committed up to \$13 million to further the causes of over 100 conservation organizations worldwide.

"We have been on an amazing journey over the past ten years," beams AFC President and Founder, Jeffrey Whiting, referring to the Group's growth and global status since the organization's inception a decade ago. "We have an important and useful role in working with, and supporting conservation organizations that work in the field. We are in an extraordinary position of being able to bring an unparalleled pool of talent to help these organizations communicate important issues to the public, and to help them raise funds."

AFC, which is funded exclusively by members' dues and staffed by volunteers, also helps by funding expeditions to remote and environmentally sensitive parts of the world to record the fragile wonders of nature. The AFC does not charge brokerage fees or commissions on the sale of members' artwork.

"Sharing a common purpose and passion, our members are capturing the state of our natural environment – from endangered species to the effects of climate change – and making a tangible contribution, through collaboration as a Group. No other major artist collective is taking a substantive leadership role in this regard," explains Whiting.

"I am incredibly proud of the talented group of artists that form the AFC. Naturally, the pledges can only be realized when the artworks are sold. Fortunately, our Group's website has developed an enormous following and is a very effective sales vehicle for members..." continues Whiting. The AFC website is host to the largest "nature" art gallery anywhere in the world – online, or offline – with a collective value of original artworks exceeding \$150M. It is also a major information hub and each month the site receives nearly 400,000 visits and over 12 million hits.

While the artworks often depict nature in all its glory, the underlying message is clear – if the world wants nature to be picture perfect, something needs to be done.

"Given today's state of affairs, as the world's leading artist collective of its kind, it is our responsibility to help communicate what scientists have been screaming for decades – the imperativeness of rapid change toward environmental sustainability. These, along with facilitating the fundraising efforts of organizations that support nature conservancy, form the guiding principles of the Artists for Conservation Foundation." concludes Whiting.

About the Artists for Conservation Foundation: Founded in 1997 as the “Worldwide Nature Artists Group” by Jeffrey Whiting – a prominent Canadian artist, author, biologist and professional software engineer – the Group was renamed in 2007 to the “Artists for Conservation Foundation”. The Foundation’s strength lies in its membership and represents a who’s-who of nature artists worldwide, including well-known names such as John Banovich, Robert Bateman, Guy Coheleach, Glen Loates, Pollyanna Pickering and David Shepherd. New members are admitted by invitation only, through a juried process, and only as placements become available. The Foundation dedicates its resources to nurturing its world-class community of nature artists and leveraging this pool of talent to support its mission through a variety of programs and initiatives. More information can be found at: www.natureartists.com.

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