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aappleby@rareconservation.org

ewhitted@tnc.org or 703-841-8745

Contacts:

Rare – Amy Appleby, 703-265-2463,

The Nature Conservancy – Emily Whitted,

The Nature Conservancy partners with Rare to build local support for conservation

Thirty campaigns to target public apathy and catalyze change

Arlington, VA – The Nature Conservancy and Rare, two international conservation organizations, have teamed up in an unprecedented partnership to bring social marketing campaigns to 30 key international Conservancy sites in order to build support for and help advance conservation over the next three years.

These campaigns are called Rare Pride campaigns. Pride is a methodology developed by Rare that borrows proven marketing techniques traditionally used by consumer product marketers to galvanize public support for conservation – often the missing link to conservation success.

“The Nature Conservancy is thrilled by this partnership. It allows us to combine our organizations’ expertise and enhance our overall impact in the communities that are the highest priority for conservation efforts around the world,” said Steve McCormick, President and CEO of The Nature Conservancy. “The Conservancy knows that the support and involvement of local communities is the key to lasting conservation success. These Pride campaigns are a fantastic way to get people aware of and involved in protecting their natural resources.”

The \$3-million alliance will provide Conservancy’s international country managers the opportunity to integrate the Pride methodology to galvanize support for conservation and thus advance protection and sustainable development activities. Pride has the strongest impact in locations where public apathy and a lack of awareness prevent local people from protecting their environment. For instance, two Pride campaigns run in Mexico’s Sierra de Manantlan Biosphere Reserve inspired community support for the protected area and demonstrated measurable results. Pride efforts there led to a 45% decrease in agriculturally-related forest fires, establishment of the largest community-based recycling program in Mexico, and the censuring of a major watershed polluter.

“At the Conservancy, community-based education isn’t one of our core strengths, yet it needs to be part of our strategy,” said Ed Norton, senior advisor for The Nature Conservancy’s China program. “We have recognized that these are essential conservation objectives, and we need to partner in order to achieve our goals.”

“If we know where the world’s most important place are, and we know that the principal threats to these sites are social, political, and economic, we are left with two questions: What methods best address these challenges and how can we take what works and make it available throughout the world?,” explains Brett Jenks, President and CEO of Rare. “Rare works to develop methodologies that address the human factor. The partnership with The Nature Conservancy is exceptional,

because it enables the proliferation of the methods that have been proven and are ready to be replicated."

Part of an industry awakening, environmental organizations are banding together in partnership to turn the conservation tide. "Collaborations that are effectively run are the future of conservation. In order to achieve the critical mass needed to turn the tide, we must propagate approaches that can catalyze change around the world. Partnerships like this one between Rare and The Conservancy do just that," explains Wendy Paulson, Co-Vice Chair of the Rare Board and Trustee of The Nature Conservancy of New York.

Implemented in 35 countries, 60 Pride campaigns have turned charismatic flagship species—like the St. Lucia parrot or the manatee in Belize—into symbols of local pride. Through a combination of grassroots and mass-marketing techniques, ranging from catchy songs about the flagship species to church sermons, music videos, and puppet shows, these campaigns generate broad based support for ecosystem protection on a regional or national level.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 15 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 102 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. Visit us on the Web at nature.org.

Rare, a pioneering environmental conservation organization, works globally to equip people in the world's most threatened natural areas with the tools and motivation they need to care for their natural resources. Rare believes conservation is a social issue, as much as it is a scientific one. A lack of alternatives and awareness leads people to live in ways that are harmful to the environment. For thirty years, Rare has used proven social marketing campaigns, "edutainment" radio programs, and economic development solutions to inspire communities to protect their natural environment.