

## NEWS RELEASE

### **WILDLIFE RESERVES SINGAPORE BUILDS RIVER SAFARI, ASIA'S FIRST RIVER-THEMED ANIMAL ATTRACTION**

#### **- S\$140 million project scheduled for completion in 2011**

Singapore, February 11, 2009, Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) plans to build a river-themed animal attraction that will contribute to Singapore's tourism landscape and enhance the range of excellent nature-themed attractions in Singapore.

Located within the 89-hectare compound of the Singapore Zoo and Night Safari premises, this attraction will be Asia's first river-themed park. Comprising boat rides, displays of freshwater habitats and other highlights, it will offer a close-up multi-sensory experience for the young and old.

The project is expected to inject S\$140 million into Singapore's economy. Construction will begin in 2009, and the park is targeted for completion in 2011. The new park is estimated to attract at least 750,000 visitors annually.



*Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group*

### **Strong message of conservation**

Says Ms Fanny Lai, Group CEO, Wildlife Reserves Singapore, “The aim of River Safari is to create a greater awareness of freshwater habitat conservation. Freshwater habitats are ecosystems that depend on water flow for their environmental health, and can include caves, swamps, floodplains, rivers and lakes. The term ‘wetlands’ is often used to describe these rich habitats, which carry the most species per unit. However, their biodiversity is disappearing at a faster rate than the forest and marine biomes, with a reported 50% decline in the freshwater species population index in 30 years since 1970. The River Safari attraction will educate visitors on the conservation of fresh water habitats, and also introduce them to the ecosystem’s interesting water wildlife. It will also complement our current collection at our other three parks.

“We started working on this idea about two years ago and we believe this is an opportune time to embark on this project.”

### **Built with Environmental Sensitivity**

As the attraction is located within its current 89 hectare compound, the new development will have minimal impact on the Mandai Nature Reserve area. WRS team had earlier consulted the various government bodies such as NParks and PUB on the environmental viability of the project. For example, it carried out a survey to identify the trees that will be affected by the development. Instead of felling the trees, it is carefully preparing the process of relocating them. In addition to this, WRS plans to plant more than 30,000 new trees in this attraction. Some of the current animal exhibits will be relocated to make way for this attraction. WRS will also acquire new species of animals to reside in the various habitats through animal exchange programmes with other zoological institutions.

## **About Wildlife Reserves Singapore**

Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) is the parent company of the award-winning attractions – Jurong BirdPark, Night Safari and Singapore Zoo. WRS strives to be a world-class leisure attraction, providing excellent exhibits of animals (and birds) presented in their natural environment for the purpose of conservation, education and recreation. Last year (2008), Jurong BirdPark served 900,000 visitors, the Night Safari, more than 1.1 million visitors and Singapore Zoo welcomed more than 1.5 million visitors. WRS parks have been conferred the Best Leisure Attraction Experience Award at the Singapore Tourism Awards 18 times. The record achievement affirms WRS parks' status as Singapore's premier leisure venues. In the areas of conservation and research, WRS parks have undertaken multiple projects through collaborations with various organisations and institution on pangolins, frogs, and proboscis monkeys. In 2008, conservation efforts undertaken include animal exchange of endangered species with zoos overseas. All WRS parks are designated wildlife rescue centres by the governing authority.

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February 11, 2009