

For additional information:

Jaclyn Reeves-Pepin for NABT, 719 310-9782

Jeff Davis for Amphibian Ark, 314 982-7780

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BIOLOGY TEACHERS HOPS INTO FROGGY CAUSE

*NABT's 70th Anniversary in 2008 to Include Partnership with Amphibian Ark Group;
The Goal: Avert Mass Extinction of Amphibian Species*

ATLANTA, Nov. 28, 2007 – Recognizing the role of biology teachers in raising consciousness about the fragility of our living world, the National Association of Biology Teachers announces at its national meeting in Atlanta tonight that it will adopt a special cause for its 70th anniversary next year. NABT will partner with Amphibian Ark to avert a mass extinction of amphibian species that would be the most significant loss of animal life since the dinosaurs.

“Engaging teachers and students in real science solving real problems is a founding principle of NABT,” said NABT President Todd Carter. “We are pleased to celebrate our 70th anniversary by partnering with Amphibian Ark to directly involve students in efforts that address the problem of amphibian extinction.”

NABT will work with Amphibian Ark, which is directing the rescue and captive breeding of threatened amphibian species that cannot be saved in the wild. Amphibian Ark is a joint effort of three principal partners: the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, and the IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group.

These conservation organizations have declared 2008 “The Year of The Frog” to raise awareness of the amphibian crisis.

“Amphibian Ark’s mission is to form partnerships to make a colossal task achievable,” said Kevin Zippel, the organization’s program director and a conservation biologist. “We are thrilled to have the biology teachers behind our efforts. It will speed our ability to save species.”

During a teacher reception tonight, NABT President Carter will introduce a special video address from Jeff Corwin. The Emmy winning cohost of CNN’s “Planet in Peril” series and host of “The Jeff Corwin Experience” on Animal Planet thanks the association for rallying behind a cause that he believes is earth’s most urgent biodiversity crisis.

“I can’t think of a more appropriate cause for a biology teacher to support,” said Corwin, a biologist and anthropologist who made an impassioned appeal for support of the cause in an appearance on The Ellen DeGeneres Show last week. “While the situation for amphibians is catastrophic, it is by no means a lost cause. These teachers can be enormously influential in preventing the loss these keystone species.”

Teachers attending the NABT conference will receive a primer on the crisis and what Amphibian Ark is doing during a special educational session tomorrow led by Ron Gagliardo, Curator of Tropical Collections for the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Gagliardo leads Atlanta Botanical Garden's amphibian program to promote the conservation of amphibians through education, research and “in situ” conservation.

NABT/Amphibian Ark
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Zoo Atlanta's leading herpetologist, Joe Mendelson, and zoo volunteers are meeting with the teachers and answering their questions at the Amphibian Ark booth in the exhibitors hall through the conference's conclusion on Saturday.

Gagliardo and Mendelson's work to protect threatened amphibian species was profiled in the TBS special, "The Last Golden Frog."

About the amphibian crisis and Amphibian Ark

From one-third to one-half of the planet's 6,000 amphibian species – frogs and toads, salamanders and newts, and caecilians, which have thrived for 360 million years – are in danger of extinction. To mitigate this crisis, the world's leading conservationists have joined together to name 2008 "The Year of the Frog" in hopes of raising both awareness and the critical funding needed to address the crisis. Amphibians are often called "the world's canaries in the coal mine," and when hundreds of species are in decline it serves as a global warning to other species.

Amphibian Ark, part of the Global Conservation Network, a 501(c)3 organization, develops, promotes, and guides short-term captive management of the most threatened amphibians. Amphibian Ark's work makes possible the long-term survival of species for which adequate protection in the wild is not currently possible.

About NABT

The National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) is the leader in life science education, empowering educators to provide the best possible biology and life science education for all students. Its 6,000 members worldwide share experiences and expertise, keep up with trends and developments, and promote knowledge and professional growth.

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