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For Immediate Release

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

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## **NIH plans to relocate its chimpanzees from New Iberia to the Federal Sanctuary System**

The National Institutes of Health, after extensive collaboration with the Chimp Haven federal sanctuary, New Iberia Research Center (NIRC), and other organizations, has developed a plan to formally retire directly to the Federal Sanctuary System all of its chimpanzees at New Iberia that were [recently designated as permanently ineligible for biomedical research](#). The NIH animals housed at NIRC, New Iberia, La., are to be transferred to the Chimp Haven sanctuary in Keithville, La., over the next 12-15 months.

"These animals have made important contributions to research to improve human health, but new technologies have reduced the need for their continued use in research," said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D. "We are grateful to all of the organizations that have pulled together to help us transition these animals into formal retirement."

Chimp Haven is home to 106 federally owned chimpanzees that have been retired from medical research. The Federal Sanctuary System was established in 2002 by the [Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance and Protection \(CHIMP\) Act](#) and Chimp Haven operates the Federal Sanctuary System, which is overseen by NIH.

"We are excitedly preparing for the arrival of NIH's chimpanzees from New Iberia and have begun seeking the funds required for their housing and care," said Chimp Haven President and Director Linda Brent, Ph.D. "This plan to benefit the chimpanzees is the result of unprecedented cooperation between many organizations and we look forward to continuing efforts on behalf of additional chimpanzees retired in the future."

Identification of new social group arrangements will allow placement of approximately half of these chimpanzees within the current capacity over the next several months. In order to increase capacity to receive the remaining NIH chimpanzees from New Iberia, Chimp Haven will need to build additional enclosures at a cost of \$2.3 million.

NIH does not have construction funds available to contribute to the effort to increase capacity for the New Iberia chimpanzees. NIH also is nearing a cap on the cumulative dollar amount Congress set for the Federal Sanctuary System under the [Chimpanzee Health Improvement, Maintenance and Protection \(CHIMP\) Act](#). Chimp Haven, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), and the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health, an independent non-profit, have launched coordinated fundraising campaigns to support the \$2.3 million construction project to accommodate all the chimpanzees.

"This is a ray of light for captive chimpanzees," said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of HSUS. "NIH has worked diligently to see that the federally owned chimps at New Iberia

Research Center will be sent to a world-class sanctuary, and The Humane Society of the United States is pleased to fund a portion of the construction costs at this facility."

To allow time for fund-raising and construction, NIH and NIRC have arranged to extend the September 2013 end date of the current NIRC agreement to care for NIH chimpanzees. This time extension provides much-needed flexibility as Chimp Haven works through the complex and time-consuming process of introducing the chimpanzees into new social groups at the sanctuary. Once construction is completed, the remaining animals can begin to move to Chimp Haven for permanent retirement.

In December 2011, the [NIH Director accepted the Institute of Medicine's principles and criteria](#) on the use of chimpanzees in NIH-funded research and [tasked an NIH advisory committee](#) to develop recommendations on how NIH can best implement them. The advisory committee is currently deliberating on the size and placement of NIH-owned and -supported chimpanzees, and on a review process for considering potential future use of chimpanzees in NIH-supported research. The advisory committee is expected to deliver its recommendations early next year.

The Office of the Director, the central office at NIH, is responsible for setting policy for NIH, which includes 27 Institutes and Centers. This involves planning, managing, and coordinating the programs and activities of all NIH components. The Office of the Director also includes program offices which are responsible for stimulating specific areas of research throughout NIH. Additional information is available at <http://www.nih.gov/icd/od/>.

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