

MEDIA RELEASE

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Summerhays Films - Distribution

OCEAN OASIS, GIANT-SCREEN FILM, WINS THE JACKSON HOLE WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL

San Diego,—The giant-screen film, *Ocean Oasis*, directed and produced by Summerhays Films, Inc. of San Diego, in collaboration with the San Diego Natural History Museum, and Mexico's PRONATURA, is winner of the prestigious 2001 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival, the premiere film festival for natural history films worldwide.

Ocean Oasis received the "Best Theatrical Program Award." This award is given every two years "to the program produced for large-format or conventional motion picture theaters that most effectively advances an appreciation of the natural world.

Director/Producer Soames Summerhays of San Diego, was at the Festival to receive the award, presented on Saturday evening, September 30 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The winning programs represent a very select group judged from a field of over 650 films entries. Among the films competing for this award were the other large-format entries, *Amazing Journeys* (Graphic Films Corp.), *Galapagos* (IMAX®), and *Dolphins* (MacGillivray/Freeman Films).

Michael Hager, executive producer of the film and director of the San Diego Natural History Museum said, "*Ocean Oasis* is one of many important results from our long-standing research work in Baja California and the Sea of Cortes," In the past decade alone, Museum researchers have discovered more than 15 new species in the uniquely abundant region.

On June 1, 2001, Mexico's President Vincente Fox attended the premiere of *Ocean Oasis* at El Papalote Museo del Niño in Mexico City. He said, "*Ocean Oasis* is a testament to life, its adaptation and evolution. Both in the deserts and in the deep waters of the sea, millions of species of animals and plants live in harmony. It is especially meritorious that this film is the product of the initiative and work of environmentalists, companies and academics in both Mexico and the United States who are interested in building and consolidating the ecological conscience of the international community."

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After viewing *Ocean Oasis*, President Fox asked the Mexican Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources and the President of the Institute of Ecology to complete the documentation and studies required to elevate the islands in the Sea of Cortés and their surrounding waters to the status of bio-reserve. San Diego Natural History Museum Director, Mick Hager, also reports that the *Ejido* who owned the *Espiritu Santo* island has ended negotiations that have gone on for years, by agreeing to sell the island so it can become part of the bio-reserve.

Sponsored by Sempra Energy, the film has been endorsed by international conservation organizations: Conservation International, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, The Nature Conservancy, and IBOY (International Biodiversity Observation Year, an initiative of DIVERSITAS 2001-2002).

Summerhays Films, Inc. is a San Diego-based corporation and award-winning leader in the production of large-format special exhibit motion picture films seen in giant screen 15/70IMAX®, IMAXDOME®, 8/70 and 15/70 theaters worldwide. Since its inception, Summerhays Films has been positioned on the cutting edge of developing new formats, new technologies, and new filming techniques for giant-screen motion picture presentations.

Three years in the making, the filming of *Ocean Oasis* included more than 12 scouting and filming expeditions in remote locations in Mexico, extensive testing and validation process via a national museum advisory committee in leading institutions in the United States, and scientific integrity assured by a panel of internationally recognized scientists,

Key members of the filmmaking team included noted directors of photography James Neihouse, who filmed the land shots, and Bob Cranston, a native San Diegan who filmed the underwater sequences. Both photographers are recognized in the industry as leaders in the areas of specialty.

Michael Parfit, a prolific nature writer, wrote the script for *Ocean Oasis*. The original musical score was composed by Alan Reeves, “an amazing performer” and composer who has won over 30 international awards. Parfit enlisted the talents of the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra to interpret his musical score.

Sponsored by Sempra Energy, *Ocean Oasis* premiered at the Smithsonian’s Johnson IMAX® Theater at the National Museum of Natural History on September 13, 2000. It is shown daily at the San Diego Natural History Museum in the Museum’s new Charmaine and Maurice Kaplan Theater and is included in the general admission.

Ocean Oasis is currently showing at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History; The Kinemax Theater in Poitiers, France; Museum of Science and Industry – MOSI, Tampa, Florida; San Diego Natural History Museum, San Diego, California; -MORE-

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The Fernbank Museum of Natural History in Atlanta, Georgia; Dallas's The Science Place – In Fair Park; The California Science Center, Los Angeles; The Papalote Museum del Niño in Mexico City; L'Hemisferic – Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias, Valencia, Spain; Liberty Science Center, Jersey City, New Jersey; The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Hong Kong Space Museum, Kowloon, Hong Kong and the Seattle OMNI-Dome, Seattle. Ocean Oasis is to open with a Gala Premiere at the Cine Planetario IMAX Theater at the Centro Cultural Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico on October 18, 2001 with many other giant screen and IMAX® theaters in the coming months.

Over the next five years, over 10 million viewers are expected to see the *Ocean Oasis* in over 100 giant-screen theaters worldwide. Proceeds from *Ocean Oasis* will support conservation, education, and research in the Baja California peninsula and the Sea of Cortés.

For detailed information on *Ocean Oasis*, visit the website, www.oceanoasis.org.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Color slides, JPEG files and black and white photos are available. Call Don Steele at 858 457-8652 or E-mail:DESteele@aol.com