

GRAEME HALL NATURE SANCTUARY, INC.

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Offshore Relocation Considered for Rare and Endangered Species

Environmental and security threats at Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary may force relocation of wildlife breeding programmes

[*Christ Church*, BARBADOS June 15, 2010] Due to increased poaching, illegal trespass and water pollution, Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary has begun negotiations with qualified facilities in North America and Europe to manage its rare and endangered captive breeding programmes.

At stake is the health and welfare of the endangered and captive bird populations in the captive breeding facility, and the Marshland, Gully and Migratory Aviary Exhibits.

In cooperation with the government of St. Vincent, the Sanctuary maintains a captive breeding population of St. Vincent Amazon parrots, one of the rarest parrots on earth with fewer than 600 living in the wild.

The St. Vincent Amazon is the national bird of St. Vincent.

One of the St. Vincent parrots was recently found dead after being assaulted by intruders, and one of the three surviving spoonbill chicks in the Marshland Aviary died after breaking its neck while evading the trespassers.

Water quality is also a major concern for the captive breeding programmes. Ongoing pollution and inconsistent water quality supplied to the Sanctuary sometimes overwhelms water treatment facilities located on site.

The uncertain environmental, security and other conditions in Barbados have caused severe stress in the remaining bird population. The problems pose a challenge for the bird-care and maintenance employees as well as the security personnel who remain at the Sanctuary since it closed over one year ago.

The Sanctuary and the surrounding Graeme Hall area is recognized as an international wetland of critical importance and a RAMSAR site under the Convention on Wetlands treaty.

The owner of the Sanctuary, Mr. Peter Allard, has recently made formal allegations that Barbados has illegally dumped tens of thousands of gallons of raw sewage into the wetland instead of using the approved emergency sewerage discharge structure at Worthing Beach, allegedly violating international environmental treaty conditions and Barbados' environmental protection laws.

Since 1994 Mr. Allard has invested more than \$35 million (US) in the 35-acre Sanctuary to preserve the last significant mangrove woodland and wetland on the island.

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