

GRAEME HALL NATURE SANCTUARY, INC.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bridgetown, Barbados

MONDAY, August 24, 2009

Email Contact: news@graemehall.com

Archives and Art: www.graemehall.com/press

Poachers Caught and Released by Police

On Saturday, August 15, 2009, a group of about 15 fisherman were found in the Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary fishing illegally for its rare tarpon, the largest and most popular exhibit fish in the Graeme Hall wetland. Five of the “ringleader” fishermen were caught and questioned by police and Sanctuary security personnel as the other ten fled.

Another incident like this happened in late March of this year. In both instances police were called, but there was no immediate response, and insistent follow up requests by Sanctuary staff had to be made before they came.

As of Friday, August 21, police had not made any arrests or brought charges in either case, and in fact had allowed the fishermen to leave the Sanctuary with all of the dead tarpon.

According to Peter Allard, owner of the Sanctuary, the value and integrity of the Sanctuary investment depend on enforced protections of wildlife inventory. The long term health of the Sanctuary also depends on the enforcement of Barbados' pollution and other environmental laws within the Graeme Hall wetland and contiguous lands.

To protect his investment, Mr. Allard is making a formal request to the Government of Barbados that immediate criminal trespass, theft, and related environmental poaching charges be brought against all future violators and the ringleaders of the last trespass be immediately notified of this proposed action.

Allard noted that it is also an issue of protecting the last remaining biological reserves of Barbados. This wildlife is part of Barbados' natural heritage within the OS2 Natural Heritage Conservation Area, and is part of the international Convention on Wetlands Multilateral Environmental Agreement (RAMSAR) to which Barbados is a party.

The Sanctuary is also calling upon the Ministry of Environment and all conservation groups to increase their efforts to educate the mainstream public about the seriousness of wildlife and habitat protection in Barbados.

The Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary occupies 35 acres of the 81 acre RAMSAR wetland at Graeme Hall. The RAMSAR designation is associated with the 1971 RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands Treaty for internationally significant areas of biodiversity.

More information about the Sanctuary can be found at www.graemehall.com.

#