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ZOO CELEBRATING THE HEALTHY BIRTH OF TWO CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SUMATRAN TIGER CUBS

November 30, 2017 – Jacksonville, FL – Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (JZG) is celebrating the healthy birth of two critically endangered Sumatran tiger cubs. The cubs' mother, 6-year-old Dorcas, gave birth at 11:40 a.m. on November 20th. The tigers' keepers were able to keep an eye on the process using a closed-circuit camera system.

Both cubs are male, and represent the second litter for Dorcas and father, Berani. The Zoo's first Sumatran tiger birth in its 102-year history is big sister Kinleigh Rose, born on November 19, 2015 – two years and a day before the arrival of her little brothers.

"One of the biggest pleasures as the Zoo's tiger-management program evolves, is watching the effect that it has on the wellness of our animals," said Dan Dembiec, Supervisor of Mammals. "Dorcas started out as a skittish and shy tigress, but she is now a confident and skilled mother. She is a natural at providing her cubs with the necessary care to help them develop, and this is reflective of the care that she has received from the staff at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens."

The cubs received their first medical exam on November 28. Zoo Animal Health staff were able to quickly and efficiently examine the cubs because of the exceptional bonding and training the keeper staff has conducted with the mother. Dorcas was willing and trusting to be separated from the cubs at the request of the keepers.

Dr. Yousuf Jafarey gave the cubs' brief physical examinations and determined they look healthy, are nursing well, and have no congenital health problems. Both cubs weighed in right at 4.5 pounds. Within minutes the cubs were back with their mother in the nesting box, behind-the-scenes in the tiger viewing building.

The cubs will not be on exhibit for several months. They still require a series of health examinations and vaccinations. They'll continue to strengthen the bond with their mom, and even require a swim test before the cubs are ready to explore their outdoor habitat in public viewing areas. A live video feed of the nest box can be seen in the tiger viewing building, on either side of the donor wall.

The birth of two Sumatran tiger cubs is especially significant because the Zoo's tigers are part of a globally-managed species program. Zoological facilities around the world, including Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' work to maintain a healthy population. There are currently less than 400 Sumatran tigers in the wild.

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens' cubs will help staff highlight the work being conducted in Indonesia to protect Sumatran tigers and their prey. The Zoo supports an elite Wildlife Protection Unit consisting of four highly-trained rangers, risking their lives each day to protect BBS National Park, one of the last of the tigers' strongholds. The Zoo has supported the Unit for the past three years - since the opening of the Land of the Tiger exhibit in 2014. Seventy-five cents of each paid admission is dedicated toward conservation. In the past five years, guests and members have helped the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens contribute more than \$1million US dollars to conserving plants and animals in the wild.

Still Photos [Dropbox Link](#)

B-Roll and Produced Video [Link](#)

About Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

For over 100 years, the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens has aimed to inspire the discovery and appreciation of wildlife through innovative experiences in a caring environment. Starting in 1914 with an animal collection of one red deer fawn, the Zoo now has more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals and 1,000 species of plants, boasting the largest botanical garden in Northeast Florida. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit organization and a portion of every ticket sold goes to the over 45 conservation initiatives Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens supports around the world, and here in NE Florida. JZG is proud to be an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. For more information, visit jacksonvillezoo.org.