



## Press Releases

For Immediate Release: 12/05/16

### **Born Free USA and Ian Somerhalder Foundation Announce Partnership to Support Born Free USA's Fur for the Animals Campaign**

#### **Collaboration begins with 2017 youth program called Give it Back**

Washington, D.C. -- Today, Born Free USA and the [Ian Somerhalder Foundation](#) (ISF) announced a partnership to support both organizations' efforts to educate youth on wildlife conservation and animal welfare. The collaboration will begin with a youth program called *Give it Back*, which is a project involving Born Free USA's *Fur for the Animals* campaign and the ISF Youth Program. ISF youth volunteers will be collecting fur for Born Free USA's donation drive: a successful initiative launched in 2014 to collect unwanted fur coats and accessories, which are repurposed and sent to wildlife rehabilitation centers around the country to help [comfort orphaned and injured wildlife](#). *Give it Back* will take place throughout 2017, with events focused on getting fur back where it belongs—with the animals.

"We are excited to work with Born Free USA on anti-fur trapping campaigns and in engaging youth to take action through their *Fur for the Animals* project," said Ian Somerhalder. "What better way to teach youth compassion and responsible actions than by having them encourage people to *Give it Back*?"

According to Adam M. Roberts, CEO of Born Free USA, "We are tremendously excited to partner with Ian's well-respected Foundation and grateful to the passionate ISF youth volunteers. It is so important for us to get kids involved in the compassionate anti-fur message and have them do hands-on work to promote the fact that cruelty is not fashion. The success of *Fur for the Animals* not only shows that the public is increasingly turning away from fur, but it also serves as a powerful reminder that fur comes from the intense suffering and painful deaths of millions of animals. We are looking forward to a strong partnership and thank the Foundation for its important work to save animals."

*Fur for the Animals* has received more than 1,700 fur donations since it launched in 2014, worth an estimated \$3.5M, from more than 54,000 animals.

"The Born Free USA Fur for the Animals campaign will give young people a hands-on chance to get involved and learn about cruelty-free consumerism, upcycling, wildlife conservation, and sanctuary animals, while looking at an ugly issue of trapping and finding a feel-good way to create action and outreach," added Kate Harms, ISF Creatures Division Manager.

**About Born Free USA:** Through litigation, legislation, and public education, Born Free USA leads vital campaigns against animals in entertainment, exotic "pets," trapping and fur, and the destructive international wildlife trade. Born Free USA brings to North America the message of "compassionate conservation"—the vision of the United Kingdom-based Born Free Foundation, established in 1984 by Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna, stars of the iconic film *Born Free*, along with their son, Will Travers. Born Free USA's mission is to end suffering of wild animals in captivity, conserve threatened and endangered species, and encourage compassionate conservation globally. More at [www.bornfreeusa.org](http://www.bornfreeusa.org), [www.twitter.com/bornfreeusa](https://twitter.com/bornfreeusa), and [www.facebook.com/bornfreeusa](https://www.facebook.com/bornfreeusa).

**About ISF:** The Ian Somerhalder Foundation, founded by actor and environmental/animal advocate Ian Somerhalder, is dedicated to empowering, educating and collaborating with people and projects to positively impact the planet and its creatures. ISF focuses on raising awareness about environmental and animal protection issues, and supporting initiatives to promote green energy, global conservation and anti-animal cruelty programs, as well as empowering youth to become a united and spirited force for change.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

Photos of the hundreds of pounds of donated fur at the Born Free USA office, some with price tags, donor thank you notes, and more:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bornfreeusa/albums/72157665149565236>

Photos of orphaned wildlife at rehabilitation centers using donated fur collected by Born Free USA from last year's campaign:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bornfreeusa/albums/72157645678555131>

Photos from Born Free USA's trapping investigation (WARNING: some images are extremely graphic):

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bornfreeusa/albums/72157626059046521>

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