

## **Exotic Wildlife Association Fights to Save Targeted Species**

INGRAM, Texas — While legal wrangling threatens the systematic and deliberate extinction of three exotic species, the Exotic Wildlife Association (EWA) is fighting to preserve these majestic animals for future generations. The EWA has filed an appeal against a recent federal judge's ruling which overturned a special rule put in place by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Department that allowed three antelope species to be born, raised and freely traded in the United States without the USFWD permitting process.

In July 2009, Federal Judge Henry Kennedy Jr. of the U.S. District Court, Washington, DC ruled that the three species — the scimitar-horned oryx, dama gazelle and addax — which are born and raised in the United States will no longer be exempted from their listing on the endangered species list. As a result, ranchers who have owned and cared for these animals for years will be required to cease all breeding, transport, culling or other management activities without explicit approval from the federal government.

"Without the special rule, these rare animals which have rebounded by the thousands because of our conservation efforts will decline and pass from the face of the earth," says Charly Seale, executive director of the Exotic Wildlife Association.

Although these three animals are classified as an endangered species, the special rules by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service enacted in September 2005 made it possible for owners of captive herds to engage in activities including the purchase and sales of the animals and to breed these animals on ranches across the United States. In fact, the program has been so widely successful that it now fuels a \$1.3 billion industry and thousands of jobs mostly in rural America.

Seale explains that the scimitar-horned oryx is a perfect example of how successful the special rules exemption has been to the species' survival. While these animals are all but gone in their native country, there are currently thousands of these amazing animals being cared for and raised on preserves and ranches across the country. The Exotic Wildlife Association has also established a partnership with the renowned Sahara Conservation Fund and the two groups are working to reintroduce the species back into their native countries.

"The success of the game ranches in breeding rare and endangered species, like the scimitar-horned oryx, is an example of how private conservation can affect the worldwide preservation of such animals," says Seale. "Many endangered species are virtually extinct in their native lands, but are flourishing in the United States because ranchers are able to buy, sell and breed the animals."

But Seale warns that the program has only been successful because the animals have intrinsic value during times in which the herd must be culled.

'These three species will cease to have any value to breeders and could become

extinct worldwide," says Seale. "We are fighting that. We are fighting to save these animals, and we're asking for anyone who loves wildlife to help us save these rare and majestic species from a real death warrant."

To learn more about the Exotic Wildlife Association or to donate to the Save Exotic Wildlife Fund, call 830.367.7761, email [saveanimals@exoticwildlifeassociation.com](mailto:saveanimals@exoticwildlifeassociation.com) or visit [www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com](http://www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com).

*Headquartered in Ingram, Texas, the Exotic Wildlife Association is dedicated to encourage and to expand the conservation of indigenous and non-indigenous hoofstock animals, and to foster development of the alternative livestock market through agricultural diversity. For more information on EWA, call 830.367.7761 or visit **[www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com](http://www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com)***