

Great Ape TRUST OF IOWA

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July 19 *Bowling for Apes* will be held as scheduled, despite Great Ape Trust flooding *Annual fundraiser benefits imperiled great apes in the wild*

Des Moines, Iowa – June 26, 2008 – The *Third Annual Bowling for Apes*, a Great Ape Trust of Iowa conservation fundraiser to benefit endangered apes in the wild, will be held as scheduled, despite the serious flooding recently experienced at Great Ape Trust.

The event will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, July 19, at AMF Bowling Center, 3839 E. 14th St., Des Moines. Registration begins at 4 p.m. Tickets are limited, so bowlers are encouraged to sign up early.

Great Ape Trust leaders had briefly considered canceling this year's bowling event because keeping it on schedule means deploying staff members away from important flood-recovery duties. Life has returned to normal for the orangutans and bonobos who live at Great Ape Trust, but returning the campus to pre-flood condition is an arduous process. In the end, though, the organization's leaders weighed the crisis faced by rapidly disappearing apes in the wild against the crisis at Great Ape Trust.

"Despite all we are going through, the situation is much more dire for apes in the wild," said Andy Antilla, a senior orangutan caretaker who oversees the annual fundraiser. All species of great apes are endangered and some, like the critically endangered Sumatran orangutan, could become the first great ape to become extinct in modern times. In the last 100 years, 80 to 90 percent of the great apes in the wild have

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disappeared.

A full 100 percent of the money raised will go to offset Great Ape Trust's conservation budget, which supports projects in the range countries where wild great apes live. The Trust financially supports prominent conservation initiatives, such as those associated with the long-running Ketambe Research Center in Sumatra, where orangutans are studied, and the Rwandan National Conservation Park, a recently announced initiative of Great Ape Trust, the Rwandan government and Earthpark, a national environmental education center proposed for Pella, Iowa. In the Rwanda project, one of Africa's most extensive reforestation efforts to date, a 30-mile tree corridor will be planted to connect the Gishwati Forest Reserve, where a group of about 15 chimpanzees is isolated, to Nyungwe National Park.

Great Ape Trust conservation grants also support smaller projects focused on such issues as local capacity building, conservation, useful science and education outreach in range countries.

Here's how the *Bowling for Apes* fund-raiser works: Bowlers pay \$20 and receive a sponsorship form. The registration fee covers three games of bowling and shoe rental, and includes a limited supply of pizza and soda. There is no ceiling on the amount of money bowlers can raise in sponsorships, but they are asked to raise a minimum of \$40 in tax-deductible sponsorship donations. Completed sponsorship forms and donations should be brought to the registration table the night of the event. Checks, made payable to Great Ape Trust of Iowa, are preferred, but cash will be accepted. Tickets are non-refundable.

Individuals who are not interested in bowling, but would still like to support the effort, should consider becoming a sponsor for one of the bowlers, Antilla said. Or, they could consider making a flat donation and earmarking it for *Bowling for Apes*.

The 2008 event will again feature a silent auction of unique items. That list will be posted at www.GreatApeTrust.org at a future date. Also, the bowler raising the most money will receive a personalized tour of Great Ape Trust, with spots for three guests.

Last year, bowlers raised some \$20,000, improving on the 2006 total of \$7,600.

Additional information may be obtained by e-mailing bowlinginfo@greatapetrust.org.

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GREAT APE TRUST BACKGROUND

Great Ape Trust of Iowa is a scientific research facility in southeast Des Moines dedicated to understanding the origins and future of culture, language, tools and intelligence. When completed, Great Ape Trust will be the largest great ape facility in North America and one of the first worldwide to include all four types of great ape – bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans – for noninvasive interdisciplinary studies of their cognitive and communicative capabilities.

Great Ape Trust is dedicated to providing sanctuary and an honorable life for great apes, studying the intelligence of great apes, advancing conservation of great apes and providing unique educational experiences about great apes. Great Ape Trust of Iowa is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization and is certified by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). To learn more about Great Ape Trust of Iowa, go to www.GreatApeTrust.org.

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Insights Through Collaborations with Apes