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CONTACT:

Linda Hardwick
VP of Marketing, Communications & Events
lhawdwick@phoenixzoo.org
602.663.3254

Comic Conservation Exhibition Opens September 4 at the Phoenix Zoo's Wild Side Gallery

Includes Original Work of Art by Legendary Comic Artist Todd McFarlane to be Raffled

PHOENIX (September 3, 2025) – The Phoenix Zoo's Wild Side Gallery is proud to debut its newest exhibition, Comic Conservation, opening Wednesday, September 4, 2025, and running through January 25, 2026. This vibrant and thought-provoking exhibit fuses the bold world of comic art with the inspiring mission of wildlife conservation – and it's included with general Zoo admission.

Comic Conservation features original works from a diverse group of acclaimed comic artists from the Southwest and beyond. With themes ranging from animal-inspired superheroes to imaginative storytelling rooted in the natural world, the exhibition brings conservation to life through an engaging and colorful artistic lens.

Participating artists include Jay Fotos, Mark Kidwell, Ryan Huna Smith, Hanna Strauss and many others – each offering their own unique take on the connection between animals, nature and imagination.

Adding to the excitement, the Zoo is also honored to feature a special contribution from legendary comic book creator Todd McFarlane – creator of *Spawn*, co-creator of *Venom*, and one of the most iconic *Spider-Man* artists of all time. A signed print from McFarlane will be displayed in the gallery as part of the exhibition.

To celebrate this unique collaboration, the nonprofit Phoenix Zoo is holding a raffle for the chance to win an original piece of artwork signed by Todd McFarlane. Raffle tickets are \$10 each and proceeds directly support the Zoo's mission to inspire and care for the natural world through education, conservation and engagement. Tickets can be purchased at the Zoo and online at <https://e.givesmart.com/events/KL7/i/Auction/wukU/> starting September 4.

"Comics are a powerful and widely loved art form," said Bert Castro, President & CEO of the Phoenix Zoo. "Their visual storytelling and pop culture appeal make them an engaging and effective way to bring conservation messaging to the masses in a fun, approachable way. We're thrilled and proud to showcase such incredible artwork – including a piece for display by Todd McFarlane, as well as an original piece for raffle – in our Wild Side Gallery."

About the Exhibit

The Comic Conservation art exhibit is open Thursday through Sunday, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. inside the Phoenix Zoo's Wild Side Gallery. It is included with general Zoo admission and offers guests of all ages a fresh and exciting way to experience wildlife and the arts.

The exhibition will be further celebrated with a special Comic Conservation Event on Saturday, October 4, featuring:

- Educational activities and games
- Artist meet & greets
- Character mascot appearances
- And two exclusive, ticketed sessions with an artist yet to be named.

For more information, visit: phoenixzoo.org/events/comic-conservation

About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation

The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.4 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 3,000 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit www.phoenixzoo.org.