



Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance Responds to Netflix Docuseries *Tiger King*

The abuse and exploitation of captive big cats in the U.S. is a serious problem that endangers both the animals and the public. The Netflix docuseries *Tiger King* shines a light on this important issue, however, it falls short in many ways, as legitimate captive wildlife sanctuaries that are on the frontlines well know. Unfortunately, the series fails to fully expose the plight of captive big cats. (See BCSA's "What *Tiger King* Doesn't Tell You: Ten Things You Need to Know about Captive Big Cats.")

Animals in these dangerous and inhumane attractions often spend their lives in grossly sub-standard conditions, denied basic necessities, such as adequate food and water, shelter, veterinary care, and space to freely move. As a result, they may suffer captivity-induced health problems and neurotic behaviors. Unfortunately, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which is charged with enforcing the federal Animal Welfare Act, has allowed facilities comparable to those featured in *Tiger King* to continue to operate.

The Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance (BCSA) works to end the private ownership and commercial exploitation of big cats and other wild cats, while providing expert resources to its sanctuary members aimed at improving the health and welfare of rescued captive wild cats.

The BCSA is proud of its members, which include licensed big cat rehabilitators, reputable sanctuary operators, and highly-regarded national and international partner organizations. Big Cat Rescue, featured in the docuseries, is a BCSA member with a reputation for outstanding rescue work. The organization has saved countless animal lives and works tirelessly to end the abuse and exploitation of captive big cats.

Many BCSA sanctuary members are accredited or verified by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, which ensures a high level of animal care, and all members must adhere to a strict code of ethics. Members cannot buy, sell, trade, breed, or otherwise exploit their animals. To provide the greatest protections, member facilities must use protected contact management in which caregivers and wild animals do not share the same physical space. Public contact is never allowed with a wild animal of any age.

BCSA member sanctuaries are on the receiving end of the problem when big cats who were bred for petting operations are later abandoned, confiscated, or become homeless. As a result, sanctuaries bear the considerable financial burden of providing lifelong care for animals that are irresponsibly bred and sold throughout the U.S.

The BCSA urges the public to:

- Never take a selfie with or handle a wild animal of any age.
- Avoid traveling shows that feature big cats including circuses, magic acts, and big cat attractions at county fairs.
- Visit only those sanctuaries accredited or verified by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and/or that are members of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance. Both are signs that a facility is operating according to the highest standards.
- Call for and support stronger laws at the local, state, and federal levels to end the private ownership of big cats and their use in entertainment.
- Support the federal Big Cat Public Safety Act.

Visit www.bigcatalliance.org to learn more about the problems associated with the private ownership and commercial exploitation of captive wild cats in the United States.

View the [2011 undercover investigation of GW Exotic Park](#) owned by Joe Exotic, conducted by BCSA member the Humane Society of the United States.