2023 BIG CAT SANCTUARY ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 18-19 | SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON SAN DIEGO BAY DOWNTOWN

Presented By:

Hosted By:

THANK YOU TO OUR DIAMOND SPONSOR
Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to San Diego, California! We are thrilled to welcome you back to the fifth big cat conference presented by the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance (BCSA). We are also celebrating 10 years of collaborating since the first workshop in 2013 held in North Carolina. The BCSA was created by attendees of this same conference in 2016. It was recognized that a collaboration between sanctuaries and partner organizations could allow us to speak with one strong voice against the exploitation of big cats in this country. We now have 28 members organizations, composed of many of the leading big cat sanctuaries and partner organizations in the United States. Our mission is to eliminate private ownership and the commercial exploitation of wild cats in the United States. This conference is devoted to facilitating collaboration and networking between sanctuaries, partner organizations, and other leaders in the industry to work towards this mission.

The conference theme is Roaring Ahead: Charting the path forward after the BCPSA. We have brought together a diverse list of speakers including our keynote speaker, Dr. Andrew Kushnir, a trained wildlife and shelter veterinarian sharing his experiences providing on the ground veterinary support to animals in Ukraine during war. We will also have presentations on topics such as veterinary case studies, strategic planning, donor engagement, and so much more. We are confident this year’s conference will exceed your expectations and provide the opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, meet some new ones, and enjoy spending a few days together in beautiful San Diego!

We are honored to have this year’s conference hosted by Lions, Tigers & Bears in Alpine, CA, just a short drive east of San Diego. A full tour of the sanctuary, appetizers and pizza will be provided at the conclusion of the conference. We look forward to continued collaboration providing outstanding animal care while working together to stop the exploitation of big cats in the United States.

Emily McCormack
BCSA Steering Committee Chair
Animal Curator and Intern Coordinator
Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge
Eureka Springs, Arkansas

Bobbi Brink
Founder/Director/Vice President
Host Sanctuary:
Lions, Tigers & Bears
Alpine, California
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DR. ANDREW KUSHNIR

A trained wildlife and shelter veterinarian, Dr. Kushnir has a passion for working with vulnerable animal populations around the globe. A native of San Diego, he has spent much of the last few years working at wildlife sanctuaries, shelters, and rescue centers to help provide the best possible medicine to the animals in his care.

FINDING HOPE, AMIDST WAR

Join Dr. Kushnir as he recounts his experiences providing on the ground veterinary support to animals in Ukraine during war. From assisting Ukrainian refugees with their pets in Poland, to caring for and coordinating the evacuation of lion cubs rescued from the black market, Dr. Kushnir will share his reflections about what animal rescue looks like during a time of war.

THANK YOU TO OUR PLATINUM SPONSOR

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES
## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Tuesday, October 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:00-7:00 PM</td>
<td>Registration (Hotel Lobby/Atrium)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30-7:00 PM</td>
<td>Welcome Reception (Two free cocktails for hotel guests + light appetizers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Dinner on Your Own</td>
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### Wednesday, October 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:15-8:00 AM</td>
<td>Registration (Outside the Monterey Ballroom)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00-8:30 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30-9:00 AM</td>
<td>Welcome, Opening Comments (Monterey Ballroom for all workshops &amp; Wednesday dinner)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Emily McCormack, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, BCSA Chair</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00-10:30 AM</td>
<td>Finding Hope, Amidst War</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Keynote Speaker: Dr. Andrew Kushnir</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30-10:45 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-11:30 AM</td>
<td>How (Not) To Do an International Rescue from an Active War Zone</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Meredith Whitney, BCSA Individual Member</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30-12:15 PM</td>
<td>Coordinated Management Approaches for Confiscated Wildlife</td>
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<td><em>Sara Walker, Association of Zoos and Aquariums</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15-1:15 PM</td>
<td>Lunch and Vendor Tables Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15-2:00 PM</td>
<td>Beyond Big Cats: The Need for Sanctuary Placement for Non-Felid Species</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Brittany Peet, PETA and Erika Fleury, North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-2:45 PM</td>
<td>The Small Cat Crisis</td>
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<td><em>Tammy Thies, The Wildcat Sanctuary</em></td>
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<td>2:45-3:00 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00-3:45 PM</td>
<td>Prep for Success: The Strategic Planning Process</td>
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<td><em>Kristin Leppert, Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3:45-4:30 PM</td>
<td>Building Your Dream Team - Strategies for a Successful Non-Profit Board of Directors</td>
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<td><em>Stefanie Kraus, WildCat Ridge Sanctuary and Jeanna Hensler, The Wildcat Sanctuary</em></td>
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<td>4:30-5:15 PM</td>
<td>Donor Engagement Strategies Fuel Fundraising</td>
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<td><em>Eric Anderson</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5:15-5:30 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30-7:00 PM</td>
<td>Cocktails + Light Appetizers</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00-10:00 PM</td>
<td>Reception Dinner and 10th Anniversary Celebration</td>
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<td>(Silent auction bidding and raffle ticket sales for a free 2024 BCSA Conference registration will end, and winners will be announced at 9:00 PM.)</td>
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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, October 19

6:00-8:30 AM  Breakfast at Hotel
8:30-9:15 AM  Enforcement of the Big Cat Public Safety Act
               Jim Stinebaugh, USFWS
9:15-10:00 AM  Metabolic Bone Disease & A Serval Named Chili
                Dr. Joanne Kamper
10:00-10:15 AM  Break
10:15-11:45 AM  Disaster Tabletop Exercise
                Meredith Whitney, BCSA Individual Member
                and John Madigan, Crown Ridge Tiger Sanctuary
11:45-1:00 PM  Lunch
1:00-1:45 PM  San Diego Zoo Tiger Emergency Recall
               Nicki Boyd, CPAT-KA, CPBT-KA, San Diego Zoo
1:45-2:30 PM  The Use of Solensia (Frunevetmab) to Manage Pain Associated with Osteoarthritis in Non-Domestic Felids
               Dr. Rebecca Richard
2:30-2:45 PM  Closing Comments
               Jeanna Hensler, BCSA Events Committee Chair
3:00 PM  Depart Hotel for Lions, Tigers and Bears Sanctuary
3:45 PM  Lions, Tigers and Bears Tour with Enrichment Demonstration
         Appetizers and Wood-Fired Pizza Dinner - Sponsored by Lions, Tigers & Bears!
7:00 PM  Depart Lions, Tigers and Bears for Hotel
8:00 PM  Enjoy an evening in San Diego!

Friday, October 20

8:30-9:30 AM  BCSA Events Committee Meeting (Santa Fe Room)
9:30-12:30 PM  BCSA Steering Committee Business Meeting (Santa Fe Room)
Meredith Whitney has more than 25 years of experience working with wildlife in a variety of settings. She was most recently the Wildlife Rescue Program Manager at the International Fund for Animal Welfare where she co-developed the first federally funded training program for international wildlife confiscators. She has worked for the US State Department, US Air Force, and the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore as the curator of reptiles and amphibians, and is proud to serve on the board of the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council.

HOW (NOT) TO DO AN INTERNATIONAL RESCUE FROM AN ACTIVE WAR ZONE

In 2022, multiple individuals and organizations came together to relocate big cats who were rescued in the wake of the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia. Four lion cubs were transported from Odessa and Kyiv, Ukraine to Minnesota, US. This presentation will share, in detail, the permit and transport process for those lions. I'll talk about what went well and what didn’t.

Sara Walker is the Senior Advisor on Wildlife Trafficking at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, spearheading the Wildlife Trafficking Alliance and AZA’s Reduce the Risk initiative. She has over 15 years of experience working in the international environmental conservation field, including wildlife protection, clean energy initiatives, climate communications, and natural resource policy; and has extensive experience working on environmental and natural resource policy at the state legislative and regulatory levels.

Due to the increasing number of live animal confiscations, and the complexities involved in caring for the live wildlife that are the victims of the illegal trade, it is important that effective and coordinated management approaches are implemented. In 2023, AZA’s Wildlife Trafficking Alliance launched the Southern California Wildlife Confiscations Network, a pilot program establishing a framework to provide a cooperative and coordinated response to the care and welfare of confiscated wildlife. The pilot program will be replicated nationwide throughout 2024.
The passage of the Big Cat Public Safety will likely drastically reduce the numbers of big cat cubs who are bred in roadside zoos in the U.S., ultimately reducing the demand for big cat sanctuary placements, and creating opportunities for sanctuaries to expand the species they accept. Learn from two long-time captive animal welfare advocates about the desperate need for placement of captive non-human primates, other mammals large and small, and reptiles, and how your sanctuaries can expand beyond felids to help even more species being abused and neglected in roadside zoos, laboratories, and private ownership.

**BEYOND BIG CATS: THE NEED FOR SANCTUARY PLACEMENT FOR NON-FELID SPECIES**

Brittany Peet is General Counsel for Captive Animal Law Enforcement for the PETA Foundation. Peet works on behalf of animals held captive by roadside zoos, traveling shows, and the film and television industries through legal and regulatory actions and public advocacy campaigns. She was part of the legal team that secured the landmark legal ruling holding that big cat cub petting violates the federal Endangered Species Act. Peet also negotiates and coordinates wild and exotic animal rescues on behalf of PETA, and has overseen the rescues of nearly 700 animals, including 78 big cats, 80 bears, and 24 chimpanzees.

Erika Fleury has 17 years of experience working with primate sanctuaries, and has served as the Director of the North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance since 2014. In 2019 she began leading Chimpanzees In Need, a $4M collaborative fundraiser that rescued 40 chimpanzees from a closed refuge. A co-founder of World Chimpanzee Day and a member of Jane Goodall Institute’s Captive Primate Welfare Expert and Partner Meeting, Erika is the author of “Monkey Business: A History of Nonhuman Primate Rights,” the forthcoming “The Founders,” and various chapters and articles in academic and mass media publications. She lives in Los Angeles with her family and wolfy rescue dog.

**BEYOND BIG CATS: THE NEED FOR SANCTUARY PLACEMENT FOR NON-FELID SPECIES**
The Big Cat Public Safety Act created protection for big cats, but the US has a growing small cat crisis, too. Small exotic and hybrid cats are all the rage on social media, made especially popular by influencers and A-List celebrities. Whether it be an African serval, caracal, bobcat, lynx, Savannah or Bengal cat, their stunning beauty and high prices have caused over-breeding and impulse purchases. After the novelty has worn off, they’re often cast aside due to unwanted behaviors. Serval and Savannah Cats are in the headlines weekly for escaping their owner’s house or being turned out because of their poor litter box habitats. Finding sanctuaries that have space for these small cats has become a growing challenge, with no sanctuaries recently having space for bobcats. As one of only a few sanctuaries that specialize in the small cat species, we’re always at capacity. Learn how we created quarantine space and free-roaming habitats that can accommodate a serval/bobcat or even a tiger/lion. Make your sanctuary space versatile so you can help the next cat in need, no matter their size. And learn how to share their rescue stories in a way that garners much-needed donor support. They’ll love the littles just as much!

**SESSION SPEAKERS**

**TAMMY THIES**

Tammy Thies is the founder and Executive Director of The Wildcat Sanctuary (TWS) in Sandstone Minnesota, a nonprofit that provides a safe home to over 130 cats including, cougar, tiger, lynx and other wild cats with an emphasis on psychological well-being. As a true sanctuary, TWS does not breed, buy, or sell animals. Committed to public education about the captive wildlife crisis, TWS seeks to create a world where animal sanctuaries are no longer needed. The sanctuary is not open to the public but creates changes through their social media platforms through millions of followers.

For the last 25 years, Thies has led rescue efforts in 4 countries and 34 states and has provided services to the United States Department of Agriculture, Department of Justice, US Fish and Wildlife Service as well as state and local agencies. The cats TWS takes in receive specialized care by their full-time vet staff in their onsite hospital. TWS is accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, and a member of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance. TWS is also rated as a 4-star charity by Charity Navigator.

**THE SMALL CAT CRISIS**

The Big Cat Public Safety Act created protection for big cats, but the US has a growing small cat crisis, too. Small exotic and hybrid cats are all the rage on social media, made especially popular by influencers and A-List celebrities. Whether it be an African serval, caracal, bobcat, lynx, Savannah or Bengal cat, their stunning beauty and high prices have caused over-breeding and impulse purchases. After the novelty has worn off, they’re often cast aside due to unwanted behaviors. Serval and Savannah Cats are in the headlines weekly for escaping their owner’s house or being turned out because of their poor litter box habitats. Finding sanctuaries that have space for these small cats has become a growing challenge, with no sanctuaries recently having space for bobcats. As one of only a few sanctuaries that specialize in the small cat species, we’re always at capacity. Learn how we created quarantine space and free-roaming habitats that can accommodate a serval/bobcat or even a tiger/lion. Make your sanctuary space versatile so you can help the next cat in need, no matter their size. And learn how to share their rescue stories in a way that garners much-needed donor support. They’ll love the littles just as much!

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**PERFORMING ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY**

**A&F SINCE 1962**
**KIRSTIN LEPPERT**

Kristin Leppert joined the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) in 2019 as the Wildlife Accreditation Director for the Americas. Prior to GFAS, Kristin was the campaign director for Save Endangered Animals Oregon - a statewide coalition that successfully banned wildlife trafficking in 2016. She also worked in Washington, D.C. for several years where she led the Fur-Free Campaign for The Humane Society of the United States. Kristin’s investigative research led Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein and Kenneth Cole to adopt fur-free policies and supported the passage of the Truth in Fur Labeling Act in 2010.

**PREP FOR SUCCESS: THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

Strategic planning is critical for animal sanctuaries as lives are at stake. A strategic plan provides a clear and concise plan of action that outlines your organization's goals, objectives, and priorities. The process of formulating a plan produces alignment throughout your sanctuary team which goes a long way toward achieving your mission and vision effectively. This session is an overview of the strategic planning process. Who should be involved? What are the elements to a strong plan? What happens after the plan is created? Let's do this!

**JEANNA HENSLER**

Jeanna Hensler is the Donor Services Manager at The Wildcat Sanctuary. She has extensive experience in donor relations, event planning, and IRS compliance. Prior to 2016, Jeanna supported TWS as a volunteer while pursuing a 10-year career in philanthropy, after serving eight years in companion animal shelter management. During that time, Jeanna also served on Boards of Directors for local animal welfare organizations. Today, Jeanna manages the fundraising and communication department at TWS. She splits her time between Sandstone and Minneapolis where she lives with her partner, 2 dogs, and 2 cats.

**BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM - STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL NON-PROFIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Your Board of Directors serves as the protectors of your organization's reputation, maintaining trust with your donors and helping with long-term strategy. How you build your Board matters! Dedicated individuals are your partners in making a positive impact while prioritizing the mission over personal interests. In an ideal world, your independent non-profit board is a tight-knit circle of allies. We will be talking about board roles and responsibilities, the stages of a non-profit board and the challenges of board growth and recruitment. We'll share some of our personal experiences and learning, and we will provide practical tools that will help you with the transition into an independent board.
STEFANIE KRAUS

Alongside her day-job as a UX Designer, Stefanie Kraus has dedicated the last 13 years to animal advocacy and rescue. She currently serves as the Board Chair at WildCat Ridge Sanctuary. In addition, Stefanie is a board member and Marketing Chair at Cat Town Oakland, and a board member with Compassionworks International. Earlier, from 2010 to 2014, Stefanie served on the board of Berkeley Humane, followed by a four-year stint as a board member at Friends of Berkeley Animal Care Services. Her commitment extends to continued education in nonprofit leadership, furthering her impact in the animal rescue and sanctuary world.

BUILDING YOUR DREAM TEAM - STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL NON-PROFIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to these additional sponsors, vendors, and supporters.

Thank you to the following generous supporters:

Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics,
4imprint one by one, & an anonymous private donor.

Lions, Tigers & Bears for sponsoring dinner on Thursday.

Vendor: Safari, Ltd.
EMPLOYEES AND WORKERS

Most employees and workers are involved in direct contact with the public. They often interact with customers, patients, or clients on a daily basis. This interaction can be face-to-face, via phone, or through digital communication. Understanding and respecting the perspectives of the people they encounter is crucial.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The employees and workers at this organization actively participate in community events and support local initiatives. They view their involvement as a way to give back to the community and strengthen the bond between the organization and its surroundings.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Marketing and promotion strategies are designed to reach a wide audience, leveraging social media, email campaigns, and direct mail. The goal is to showcase the organization’s unique offerings and foster a positive brand reputation.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Effective financial management is essential to ensure sustainability. This includes budgeting, financial forecasting, and regular audits to maintain fiscal responsibility.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

The organization prioritizes safety and health, ensuring a safe working environment for all employees. Regular training sessions and health check-ups are implemented to promote well-being.

SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

Establishing strong relationships with suppliers is critical to the success of the organization. Trust and communication are key components in these partnerships.

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

A commitment to continuous improvement is evident in the organization’s culture. They encourage feedback and implement changes as necessary to enhance services and operations.

SUSTAINABILITY

Recognizing the importance of environmental stewardship, the organization is committed to sustainable practices. They promote recycling, energy efficiency, and other eco-friendly initiatives to minimize their ecological footprint.

SUMMARY

In summary, the organization thrives on a strong foundation of customer service, community engagement, financial stability, and environmental responsibility. Their dedication to these core values is reflected in their daily operations, and they continue to evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs of their stakeholders.

REFERENCES


**DR. JOANNE KAMPER**

Dr. Joanne Kamper graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine in 2001. She currently practices veterinary medicine at a small cat clinic in a suburb or Minneapolis. Dr. Kamper has been part of the Vet Team at The Wildcat Sanctuary in Minnesota since 2018.

**METABOLIC BONE DISEASE & A SERVAL NAMED CHILI**

Dr. Kamper will provide an overview of Metabolic Bone Disease and how it affected the development of a serval named Chili at The Wildcat Sanctuary.

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**NICKI BOYD CPAT-KA, CPBT-KA**

Nicki Boyd is the Curator of Behavioral Husbandry at the San Diego Zoo. Her educational background includes graduating from Moorpark College’s Exotic Animal Training and Management Program, Mesa College’s Vet Tech Program, a bachelor’s in business and she is currently getting her master’s in biology from Miami Ohio Universities Project Dragonfly.

She is on the Animal Behavior Management Alliance Board, the AZA’s Behavior Scientific Advisory Group and Animal Ambassador Scientific Advisory Group. She is a certified professional animal and bird trainer. She is a mother of 3 awesome kids, a world traveler and a cat person (but don’t tell her dog)!

**SAN DIEGO ZOO TIGER EMERGENCY RECALL**

Learners in the course will understand the concepts behind the true emergency recall training program for tigers at the San Diego Zoo. Many cats will recall or shift on a reliable basis but what happens during an emergency or if you are competing with “other” reinforcing things. This presentation will describe the training plan, understanding critical components to ensure success and how to maintain this behavior in perpetuity.
DR. REBECCA RICHARD

Dr. Richard graduated from the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in 2001 and practiced large animal medicine for thirteen years before turning to zoological medicine. Her practice, Wildlife Veterinary Services, cares for animals in sanctuaries, rehab centers, and performing animals in over a dozen states. She worked at the Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Big Bear Zoos, and the Wildlife Waystation and served as professor at Moorpark College’s Teaching Zoo. Her professional areas of interest include rescue, disaster and emergency preparedness, USDA management, and field anesthesia. She is a founding director of Predator Healing Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue of apex predators and US veteran services.

THE USE OF SOLENSIA (FRUNEVETMAB) TO MANAGE PAIN ASSOCIATED WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS IN NON-DOMESTIC FELIDS

This talk will review the recently FDA-approved medication, Solensia (frunevetmab), its mechanism of action, potential side effects and how it works to mediate pain in cats. Case studies in tigers, snow leopards, and bobcats will be presented, and methods of administration and dosing will be addressed. Concurrent osteoarthritis management, recommendations for preventative care programs, and the pros and cons of therapy will also be covered.

THANK YOU TO OUR SILVER SPONSORS
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE 2023 BIG CAT SANCTUARY ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

THANK YOU CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Jeanna Hensler  
*BCSA Events Committee Chair*  
The Wildcat Sanctuary  
Sandstone, Minnesota

Emily McCormack  
*BCSA Steering Committee Chair*  
Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge  
Eureka Springs, Arkansas

Kathryn Bertok  
Carolina Tiger Rescue  
Pittsboro, North Carolina

Pam Fulk  
Carolina Tiger Rescue  
Pittsboro, North Carolina

Bobbi Brink  
Linda Paradise  
Lions, Tigers & Bears - *Hosting Sanctuary*  
Alpine, California

Jonathan Kraft  
Keepers of the Wild  
Valentine, Arizona

John Madigan  
Crown Ridge Tiger Sanctuary  
Ste. Genevieve, Missouri

Meredith Whitney  
BCSA Individual Member

Kathy Blachowski  
Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance

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