

Steven L. Monfort, DVM, PhD
Director, Smithsonian's National Zoo and
Conservation Biology Institute



Biography

Dr. Steve Monfort, an international authority in zoo and conservation biology, serves as the Director of the Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute. He oversees the National Zoo's collection of more than 1,800 animals, representing 300 species based in Washington, D.C. and the Conservation Biology Institute headquartered on 3,200-acres in Front Royal, VA, where scientists study and breed more than 20 species, including some that were once extinct in the wild. More than 300 National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute scientists and staff are working to save species by conducting research and training in more than 30 countries worldwide.

Dr. Monfort is a subject matter expert in Zoo Biology, Animal Health, Reproductive Biology, Behavioral Ecology and Conservation Biology. He pioneered noninvasive hormone monitoring techniques that revolutionized assessments of reproduction and stress in wildlife species maintained in zoos and in nature. He has published 150 scientific papers in the broad discipline of reproductive physiology, endocrinology and behavioral ecology, and also was a wildlife veterinary practitioner for 20 years.

As an educator, Dr. Monfort co-founded the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation, an in-residence program at SCBI with a mission of "Sustaining global biodiversity by advancing the theory and practice of conservation biology with transformative, transdisciplinary education." The School seeks to provide transformative, hands-on education and professional development in conservation biology and allied fields for undergraduates, graduates, professionals, and others interested in advancing conservation.

As a conservationist, Dr. Monfort is a founder of a number of important conservation initiatives, including: the Sahara Conservation Fund; Conservation Centers for Species Survival; Panama Amphibian Rescue & Conservation Project; and the Global Tiger Initiative. He has served as the chair of the Asian Wild Horse Species Survival Plan, and currently is a member of IUCN's antelope, cervid and conservation breeding specialist groups.

Born in San Diego, California, Steve received a BA in Biology from the U.C. San Diego, doctor of veterinary medicine (1986) and master's (1987) degrees from the U.C. Davis, and doctorate in environmental biology and public policy (1993) from George Mason University.