

WILD HOPE
The Serpent's Lair

1.	TIME CODE	VIDEO	AUDIO
2.	01:00:00:00		<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>ALL AROUND THE WORLD, THE FACES OF POPULAR CONSERVATION EFFORTS ARE CREATURES YOU ALREADY KNOW, AND PERHAPS LOVE.</p> <p>BUT IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES, PEOPLE ARE ON A MISSION TO PROTECT TWO REMARKABLE ANIMALS THAT ARE JUST AS WORTHY.</p> <p>THEY'RE JUST A LITTLE LESS, FURRY.</p>
3.	01:00:29:08	<p>GRAPHIC: TITLE WILD HOPE: THE SERPENT'S LAIR</p>	<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>You might think of things such as lions and bears, but we have these endangered reptiles that are so important.</p> <p>We should all care about eastern indigo snakes, gopher tortoises, just like we care about wolves and tigers. We need to try to work to save all of them.</p>
4.	01:01:02:15	<p>GRAPHIC L3: DR. CHRIS JENKINS Wildlife Biologist</p>	<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>Indigo snakes are the largest native snake we have in North America. I like to call them a "predator of predators."</p> <p>It's a snake-eating-snake.</p> <p>These are animals that keep predator populations from exploding, keeping the world in balance.</p>

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5.	01:01:32:01		<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>INDIGOS USE STRENGTH, NOT VENOM, TO OVERPOWER THEIR PREY. BUT WITH HUMANS, THEY ARE HARMLESS, EVEN DOCILE.</p>
6.	01:01:44:07		<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>I can put a 7½ foot snake in the hands of a 3-year-old child. They really become almost like a gentle giant.</p> <p>They're also one of the most beautiful snakes that we have on the planet.</p> <p>They're just great ambassadors for snakes in general.</p>
7.	01:02:08:13		<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>Unfortunately, their populations have declined significantly.</p> <p>Indigo snakes are listed on the Endangered Species Act as threatened.</p>
8.	01:02:20:13	<p>GRAPHIC: Map of eastern indigo snake range</p>	<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>THE GREATEST THREAT INDIGO SNAKES FACE IS THE LOSS OF WILD HABITAT TO DEVELOPMENT.</p> <p>AS THEIR RANGE HAS DIMINISHED, EACH REMAINING POCKET BECOMES MORE CRITICAL. THOSE TO THE NORTH HAVE HARSH WINTERS, AND HERE THE SNAKES RELY ON ANOTHER REPTILE'S INGENUITY TO SURVIVE.</p>
9.	01:02:46:10		<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>Gopher tortoises are one of the best examples in the world of a keystone species.</p> <p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>THAT MEANS, THEY HELP MAINTAIN THE ABUNDANCE AND DIVERSITY</p>

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			OF OTHER SPECIES IN THE ECOSYSTEM.
10	01:03:10:10		<p>CHRIS:</p> <p>So, I would say perhaps more than any animal, it excites me to find these guys, 'cause I really kind of think of them as like the glue that holds everything together.</p> <p>These front legs are really, like, kind of spades.</p> <p>Like a gopher, they end up digging into the ground, and they end up creating these burrows that go maybe 20, 30 feet.</p>
11	01:03:42:13		<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>THE BURROWS ARE WHAT HELP INDIGOS SURVIVE WINTER.</p> <p>CHRIS:</p> <p>Once you get to those depths, the temperatures are much warmer than the surface.</p> <p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>THE BURROWS DON'T JUST HELP SNAKES.</p>
12	01:03:57:13		<p>CHRIS</p> <p>Over 350 species of other animals - insects, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians - they use the burrow that the tortoise creates.</p> <p>Without this animal, hundreds of other animals would disappear. The indigo snakes need the tortoises, they need the burrows.</p>

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13	01:04:22:17		<p>NARRATOR: THE SNAKES, IN TURN, ARE VITAL TO OTHER CREATURES. WITHOUT THEM, THE PREDATORS THEY KEEP IN CHECK - VENOMOUS VIPERS AND BIRD EATERS – WOULD MULTIPLY, REDUCING PREY AND THROWING THE ECOSYSTEM FURTHER OFF BALANCE.</p> <p>BOTH OF THESE REPTILES ARE STEWARDS OF THIS FOREST.</p> <p>BUT FOR THEM TO THRIVE, THE FOREST THEY LIVE IN MUST TOO.</p>
14	01:04:54:02		<p>CHRIS: The longleaf pine is really a special thing, almost like a gem of the South.</p> <p>NARRATOR: OVER TIME, THAT JEWEL HAS LOST ITS LUSTER.</p> <p>LONGLEAF PINE SAVANNAS ONCE BLANKETED THE AMERICAN SOUTHEAST.</p> <p>BUT CENTURIES OF DEFORESTATION, CONSTRUCTION, AND ROAD BUILDING HAVE DECIMATED THEM.</p>
15	01:05:21:19		<p>CHRIS: We were at a point not so long ago where we were down to say 3% of the original ecosystem.</p> <p>And when those landscapes become fragmented, it can become a real problem.</p> <p>Every year here in South Georgia, snakes are found <i>dead</i> crossing roads.</p>
16	01:05:45:21		<p>CHRIS: You can't just conserve the Indigo snake in a vacuum.</p>

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			<p>You need to care about the longleaf pine, you need to care about tortoises, you need to care about the whole ecosystem.</p>
17	01:05:59:05		<p>NARRATOR: CHRIS HELPS LEAD A THREE-PRONGED CONSERVATION STRATEGY. STEP ONE: BUY UP THE MOST IMPORTANT TORTOISE HABITAT IN GEORGIA.</p> <p>[Chris: This looks like a pretty good burrow. Why don't we scope this one?]</p> <p>NARRATOR: HIS TEAM SEARCHES FOR TORTOISE HOTSPOTS, THEN MONITORS HUNDREDS OF BURROWS FOR ACTIVITY.</p>
18	01:06:24:10		<p>CHRIS: We have almost half of the Gopher tortoises in the state of Georgia now protected in some form of conservation land.</p> <p>[Ryne: We've got a tortoise!]</p> <p>[Chris: Nice, that's exciting!]</p> <p>[Ryne: Definitely.]</p> <p>[Chris: Oh that's great to see his face.]</p>
19	01:06:40:06		<p>NARRATOR: STEP TWO IS TO RESTORE THE FORESTS WHERE NECESSARY.</p>
20	01:06:47:20		<p>CHRIS: We've planted somewhere between half a million and a million longleaf pines. It's a huge accomplishment.</p> <p>But we're also trying to restore the groundcover.</p>
21	01:07:01:14		<p>NARRATOR:</p>

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			<p>A HEALTHY LONGLEAF PINE SAVANNA HAS AMPLE ROOM BETWEEN TREES FOR A RICH VARIETY OF VEGETATION TO FLOURISH, RIGHT AT TORTOISE HEIGHT.</p> <p>CHRIS: All of the grasses and forbs are those important green groceries that the tortoise feeds on.</p>
22	01:07:24:17		<p>NARRATOR: LEFT UNCHECKED, OTHER TREES CAN MOVE IN AND BLOCK SUNLIGHT FROM REACHING THIS UNDERSTORY.</p> <p>CHRIS: So if we want to have habitat for gopher tortoises and indigo snakes, we need to use an important tool, fire.</p>
23	01:07:42:20		<p>NARRATOR: THESE PINE FORESTS NATURALLY BURNED EVERY TWO OR THREE YEARS, UNTIL PEOPLE BEGAN SUPPRESSING THE WILDFIRES.</p> <p>CHRIS: This is the smell and the feel of conservation in action.</p>
24	01:08:16:06		<p>CHRIS: If we never burned this tract of land, a lot of other species would shade out all of those native grasses and forbs, and the tortoise would leave.</p>
25	01:08:29:12		<p>NARRATOR: CREATURES THAT EVOLVED IN THIS LANDSCAPE CAN COPE WITH THESE PASSING BLAZES – SOME WITH HELP FROM THE TORTOISES.</p>

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			<p>THIS HEALTHY HABITAT, FULL OF BURROWS, TORTOISES AND TREES, IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE FINAL STEP IN THE INDIGO CONSERVATION EFFORT: INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SNAKES.</p>
26	01:08:56:06		<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>THE ORIANNE CENTER FOR INDIGO CONSERVATION IS THE ONLY FACILITY OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD, AND IT'S WHERE THE FUTURE OF THE SPECIES IS BEING SECURED.</p> <p>DR. JAMES BOGAN BREEDS INDIGOS TO REPOPULATE AREAS WHERE THEY'VE DIED OFF.</p>
27	01:09:20:07	<p>GRAPHIC L3: DR. JAMES BOGAN Veterinarian</p>	<p>JAMES:</p> <p>This breeding program is the hope for the future. Right now we have 123 eggs.</p> <p>When they start hatching, that's the best. You know, you start seeing the babies come out and, alright I know that one's going to make it.</p> <p>It really makes this all worth it.</p>
28	01:09:36:22		<p>NARRATOR:</p> <p>CARETAKERS HAND RAISE EVERY SNAKE FOR THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF ITS LIFE.</p> <p>JAMES:</p> <p>They feed them, they care for them, they clean up after them, they get them ready, growing up and ready to take on the world.</p>
29	01:09:53:21		<p>JAMES:</p> <p>This little fella here is destined to be released back in the wild.</p>

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			<p>On the release day, we'll go up to those individual burrows and one at a time, place the snake into the burrow.</p> <p>The indigo snake will go back to the same burrow every winter.</p> <p>We got the news that they're seeing babies in the wild.</p> <p>They're growing up and making babies of their own. That's what the whole project's about.</p> <p>This is the future of the wild population. It does make me proud (laughs).</p>
30	01:10:33:15		<p>CHRIS: Working together, we can scale up our impact.</p> <p>We've now released over 300 Indigo snakes into the wild. We're restoring tortoise populations. And we're restoring our longleaf forests.</p> <p>We have a lot of great signs that give us hope.</p>
31	TRT Approx. 11:47:22		OUT