

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MEDIA CONTACT: Allison Alvarez Hedrick
Vice President of Communications
P: 800.354.9338 ext. 2240 E: ahedrick@wedu.org

PBS' Groundbreaking BIG BLUE LIVE Sets New Bar for Digital and Social Audience Engagement in a Natural History Series

WEDU PBS to Host Free Live Screening Event at Tampa Theatre of BIG BLUE LIVE



Southern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris nereis*). Credit: Courtesy of © Monterey Bay Aquarium, Photo by Randy Wilder.



Tampa, FL – For three nights at 8:00 p.m., starting August 31, **WEDU** will air **BIG BLUE LIVE**, PBS' first live nature program centering on the extraordinary annual confluence of marine life in and around Monterey Bay, California. The series is inspiring the largest and most diverse digital and social engagement integration in PBS history and one of the largest ever for a natural history program. Elements include a robust multimedia presence on numerous social and digital platforms, additional as-it-happens content on pbs.org/bigbluelive, and integration of social and digital elements into the three-night live broadcast.

WEDU will also host a viewing event on the final night of the series at the **Tampa Theatre**. On September 2, 2015, doors will open at 6:00 p.m. and guests will be able to experience a collection of interactive displays, meet local scientists and professionals from Tampa Bay's marine biology community. The program will begin at 6:45 p.m. with a panel discussion with Dr. Jacqueline Dixon, Dean, College of Marine Science at the University of Florida; Margo McKnight, Vice President of Biological Operations at The Florida Aquarium; Peter Clark, Founder and President of Tampa Bay Watch. The panel will be moderated by Dr. Shannon McQuaig, host of WEDU Quest. The live broadcast of the third and final episode of BIG BLUE LIVE will begin at 8:00 p.m.

Seating is limited and reservations are requested. Free tickets are available online at www.wedu.org/bigbluelive.

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ABOUT WEDU PBS

WEDU PBS is West Central Florida's primary PBS station and public media company reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of media platforms including: television programming, station's website, wedu.org and various social media platforms, monthly member magazine *Premiere*, educational outreach activities and a myriad of special events. WEDU's focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for men, women and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (ORC International's DualFrame CARAVAN, January 2015). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU PBS, visit wedu.org, WEDU Public Media on Facebook and Twitter or call 813.254.9338.

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