

## Spotlight On Conservation

### “The Jungle Book” Rhino Rescue Inspires Real Rhino Rescue Efforts

(NAPSA)—Inspired by the rescue of an animated rhinoceros who was all but extinct, Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment contacted the International Rhino Foundation to obtain rhinoceros facts and help spread awareness about the growing concerns surrounding the survival of rhinos around the globe.

The Disney Animation Research Library researchers made an astonishing discovery while transferring old drawings into their new digital files: a key character developed by Walt Disney himself, who was almost lost to obscurity when he was deleted from the final version of “The Jungle Book.” The rhinoceros is named Rocky and he has not only been saved from extinction, but will be available for everyone to enjoy for generations to come because he stars in his own featurette, “The Lost Character: Rocky the Rhino,” included with this year’s Diamond Edition of “The Jungle Book,” which is available for the first time ever on Blu-ray and Digital.

Rocky’s likeness was based on a greater one-horned or Indian rhino. Walt described Rocky as a “loveable rhinoceros who is half blind and extremely dumb.” Rhinoceroses do have small brains compared to their large body size, so the story team stuck to the facts when Rocky was referred to as “marble-brained.” At the time, Rocky’s personality was given life through the voice of Frank Fontaine. With Fontaine’s distinctive voice and the many volumes of developmental sketches, it seemed Rocky was on his way to becoming a star as part of “The Jungle Book”’s beloved animal ensemble.



Yet in the final stages of production, Walt decided Rocky just wasn’t necessary to tell Mowgli’s story.

As Disney delved into Rocky’s “background,” it became evident that the prospects for real rhinos to be around for future generations are not very good unless people act now. Thousands of years ago, the rhino population was diverse, widespread and abundant throughout much of the world. Today, however, only five species survive in Africa and Asia (2014, [www.rhinos.org](http://www.rhinos.org)).

While committed institutions such as the International Rhino Foundation and dedicated people worldwide have had some success in protecting the bulk of the world’s remaining rhinos, most populations remain threatened due to the loss of their critical habitat and from poaching for their horns. Struggling but surviving rhino populations include the three Asian species: the Javan rhino (with no more than 44 in the wild), Sumatran rhino (no more than 100) and the greater one-horned rhino (approximately 3,300). Africa’s black rhino is also endangered, with a population of just over 5,000, and the white rhino, while the most numerous species with just over 20,000 remaining, is also the species most heavily impacted by poachers.



Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund has worked with the International Rhino Foundation for the past 20 years to help protect rhinos in the wild and raise awareness about the problems that they face, but more still needs to be done.

#### Things You Can Do To Help Rhinos:

- Visit and support the International Rhino Foundation ([www.rhinos.org](http://www.rhinos.org)).
- Adopt a Rhino ([www.rhinos.org/adopt-a-rhino](http://www.rhinos.org/adopt-a-rhino)).
- Share on Facebook and Twitter.
- Stay informed ([www.rhinos.org/get-involved](http://www.rhinos.org/get-involved)).
- Encourage children to share with teachers and others at school.
- Watch the “Jungle Book” bonus feature and spread the word about the rhino problem.
- Learn more about Disney’s conservation commitment at [www.disney.com/conservation](http://www.disney.com/conservation).