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Last Chance for Animals Condemns Marineland Canada for the Death of Gia the Beluga Whale and Inadequate Care of Other Marine and Land Animals

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 14, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Last Chance for Animals (LCA) mourns the death of Gia, a beluga whale that was at the center of a [five month undercover investigation](#) of the inadequate care and abuse of the theme park's marine animals.

“It is absolutely heartbreaking to learn of Gia’s death at Marineland Canada, but sadly, not surprising,” said Hayden Hunter, LCA director of Investigations. “LCA documented her decline over five months in 2015 and reported the neglect that led her to become undernourished, emaciated, and isolated from her pod to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals -- but no action was taken. Gia is another casualty of the ongoing failure of Marineland Canada to meet the most basic standards of care for their animals.”

During the summer and fall of 2015, LCA’s investigation found the majority of Marineland Canada’s 46 beluga whales were being confined to three shallow, concrete pools without sufficient protection from the sun, park spectators and the harmful chemicals that are used to purify the water in their enclosures. Overcrowded pools forced dominant and subordinate whales into close quarters without adequate space to escape acts of aggression, which left all of the animals bearing scars and bite marks. Other findings from the undercover investigation include:

- beluga cows suffering for months from an undiagnosed medical conditions that caused them to rub themselves constantly against the concrete tank until blood was visible in the water;
- belugas exhibiting signs of eye abnormalities, such as redness, irritation, and cataracts
- numerous belugas suffering from hyper salivation, regurgitation and raw, red throats, in some cases for prolonged periods of time;
- routine deprivation of food for training purposes;
- unregulated breeding that led to the birth of 5 calves, one of which died after sinking to the bottom of its pool

“We will continue our efforts to push Canada to enact S-203, “Ending the Captivity of Whales and Dolphins Act,” said Hunter. “Gia’s death and the Crown’s decision on August 11, 2017 to [drop 11 counts of land animal cruelty](#) against the park, that resulted from [another LCA complaint](#), only fuels our commitment to hold Marineland accountable and get justice for Gia.”

For more information about LCA’s Marineland investigation, please visit [LCAanimal.org](http://www.LCAanimal.org).

ABOUT LAST CHANCE FOR ANIMALS

Last Chance for Animals (LCA) is an international non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating animal exploitation through education, investigations, legislation, and public awareness campaigns. Since its formation

in 1984, LCA has succeeded as one of the nation's pioneer animal advocacy organizations. LCA's educational and public outreach programs have empowered others to make positive changes for animals. For more information, visit www.lcanimal.org or follow @LC4A on Twitter.

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