WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 11, 1998 — SIERRA CLUB RECEIVES SUBSTANTIAL GRANT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS/ENVIRONMENT LINK Goldman Fund Gift Will Support Joint Campaign with Amnesty International

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WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 11, 1998 --
For immediate release

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The Sierra Club announced today that it has received a three-year grant from the San Francisco-based Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund for $900,000 to support the organization's international Human Rights and the Environment Campaign. Amnesty International, a campaign partner, received a grant for the same amount. The gift will be used by the groups to defend threatened environmentalists worldwide and to push for stronger US foreign policy support and protection of environmental activists abroad.

"We are very excited about this new partnership with Amnesty International and by the good work this generous grant makes possible," said Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope. "We'll be using the money to continue to shame irresponsible multinational corporations and repressive governments into respecting the environment and the rights of people to protect it."

"This is the kind of leadership we have come to expect from the Goldman Fund," said Pope, "and that's why we have been so proud to serve as a nominating organization for the Goldman Environmental Prize, the world's largest financial award for grassroots environmental heroes."

The Sierra Club's Human Rights and the Environment Campaign was established in 1993 following the harassment and arrest of prominent Kenyan environmental advocate Prof. Wangari Maathai. The Club has since waged vocal campaigns on behalf of the Ogoni people of Nigeria, including a rarely-used member boycott of Royal/Dutch Shell, and on behalf of former Soviet submarine captain Alexander Nikitin who has been charged with espionage by Russian authorities for exposing illegal nuclear waste dumping in the Arctic.

"The purpose of our joint campaign with Amnesty International is to secure for our colleagues abroad the same rights we have in this country to speak out on behalf of the environment," said Stephen Mills, Sierra Club's International Program Director. "We'll be pushing the Clinton administration to recognize the role that environmentalists have in promoting democracy abroad and we'll provide direct support for activists who are threatened because of their environmental advocacy."

The Sierra Club and Amnesty International are not the only organizations to receive funding from the Goldman Fund to pursue the human rights and environment link. The Washington, DC-based Center for International Environmental Law, EarthRights International based in Washington, DC and Bangkok, and a team of three San Francisco-based organizations -- the Natural Heritage Institute, Human Rights Advocates and the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development, all received substantial grants from the Goldman Fund.

"The Goldman Fund is providing the resources we need to support volunteer activists who know that the US acting alone cannot solve all of the planet's environmental ills," said Mills. "From global warming, to air and water pollution, citizens from around the world must be involved if we are to succeed in protecting the environment for our families and for our future."

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