



## THE WILDCAT SANCTUARY



### Press Release for Immediate Release

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## Lion cubs rescued from Ukraine hope to call Minnesota's Wildcat Sanctuary home

**(Sandstone, MN)** – Four lion cubs crossed the Ukraine-Poland border after traveling for 36 hours out of war-torn Ukraine.

The cubs, all younger than four months, arrived safely at the Poznan Zoo in Poland, where they will be cared for until onward transport to a long-term care sanctuary is arranged.

They have had a harrowing first few months of life, surviving the recent drone attacks and sporadic bombings in Kyiv.

According to their permits, all of the cubs were surrendered to animal rescue organizations, one in Odesa and [Wild Animal Rescue](#) in Kyiv, after local officials started to enforce laws on the exotic pet trade in Ukraine.

“An estimated 200 lions live in private homes and as the war rages on, they face increasingly grim outcomes,” says Meredith Whitney, Wildlife Rescue Program Manager at the [International Fund for Animal Welfare](#) (IFAW).

“These cubs were in critical need of rescue and we worked with two exceptional organizations in Ukraine to move them to safety as quickly as possible.”

As the majority of big cats bred in captivity have limited care options and cannot be released back to the wild, IFAW aims to bring these cats to two legitimate sanctuaries, The Wildcat Sanctuary (TWS) in the United States and another in Europe, to provide lifelong care for each of the cubs.

“IFAW reached out to us about the four lion cubs because our team is experienced in international big cat translocations,” says Tammy Thies, Founder and Executive Director at [The Wildcat Sanctuary](#) (TWS).

IFAW previously worked with TWS to support the intake care of [two white lions rescued from Tiger King](#) Park in United States. Pending issuance of all required permits, IFAW and TWS will partner to ensure the safe translocation of the lion cubs, and provide a safe haven for them to live out their days.

“There was a bit of serendipity in this rescue because we have an enclosure that is specifically designed for a pride of lions and the cubs are a male and three females. We were thrilled to be able to offer these cubs a beautiful, one acre habitat together and hope to welcome them home soon,” Thies added.

-ENDS-

Media assets can be accessed [via this link](#)

**About IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare)** - IFAW is a global non-profit helping animal and people thrive together. We are experts and everyday people, working across seas, oceans and in more than 40 countries around the world. We rescue,



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rehabilitate and release animals, and we restore and protect their natural habitats. The problems we're up against are urgent and complicated. To solve them, we match fresh thinking with bold action. We partner with local communities, governments, non-governmental organizations and businesses. Together, we pioneer new and innovative ways to help all species flourish. See how at [ifaw.org](http://ifaw.org)

**About TWS (The Wildcat Sanctuary)** - The Wildcat Sanctuary (TWS) is the only accredited, non-profit sanctuary in the Midwest. TWS provides a natural sanctuary to wild cats in need and inspires change to end the captive wildlife crisis. Combining natural and spacious habitats with a life free of exhibition, TWS allows all residents to live wild at heart. As a true sanctuary, we do not buy, breed, sell or exhibit animals. The Wildcat Sanctuary is accredited by the American Sanctuary Association and the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries. More information can be found at [WildcatSanctuary.org](http://WildcatSanctuary.org)