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**Marine Ecologist Receives Prestigious Heinz Award
Pioneer in Researching Dead Zones in Bodies of Water, Dr. Nancy Rabalais
is Committed to Restoring Ocean Health**

PITTSBURGH, September 13, 2011 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Nancy Rabalais, Ph.D., a marine ecologist, as a recipient of a \$100,000 Heinz Award. Dr. Rabalais is the executive director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium in Chauvin, La., where she is also a professor.

Dr. Rabalais was the driving force behind identifying and characterizing the dynamics of the dead zone (low oxygen) in the Gulf of Mexico — the largest in the United States and second-largest worldwide, about the size of Massachusetts. She revealed that this dead zone was caused by nutrient runoff from farming areas of the Mississippi watershed. Because dead zones can significantly impact regional fishing economies and the health of coastal environments, Dr. Rabalais' work is key to restoring oceans so that both marine and human life can thrive.

“Dr. Rabalais' hard work, research and courage have driven remarkable discoveries in what we know about ‘dead zones’ – one of the most significant environmental problems facing the oceans,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “She simultaneously advances the state of our knowledge of the causes and consequences of dead zones and helps develop public and private responses to those challenges.”

Now in their 17th year, the Heinz Awards honor visionaries who have made extraordinary contributions to the environment, a life-long area of commitment for the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. Dr. Rabalais and nine others are recognized for their significant efforts benefitting the environment. This year's awards total \$900,000.

“Oxygen depletion wreaks havoc on our oceans,” said Dr. Rabalais. “The Gulf of Mexico has been hit with a double whammy: the world's second-largest human-caused dead zone and a massive oil spill. It's critical that we restore the marine environment that so many species and the region's economy depend on.”

In 2000, she led one of six research teams documenting the state of the science on the dynamics of the Gulf dead zone, an assessment that was overseen by the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources of the White House Office of Science and Technology and synthesized information for a 2008 science re-assessment. Dr. Rabalais leads an annual survey of the Gulf's dead zone, now in its 27th year. The work of Dr. Rabalais and her collaborators over decades clearly demonstrates the connection of water quality in the Mississippi River watershed and the coastal ocean of the Gulf of Mexico.

Dr. Rabalais serves on numerous boards and panels, including the National Research Council Committee on the Mississippi River and the Clean Water Act and the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission, and for three years served as chair of the Ocean Studies Board of the National Research Council. She is an Aldo Leopold Leadership Program Fellow and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Dr. Rabalais is constantly working to keep the issue of ocean dead zones in front of the public by testifying before Congress, educating state environmental legislators and working with the media. Her work was featured in the 2010 public television documentary *Troubled Waters: A Mississippi River Story*.

In addition to Dr. Rabalais, the 17th Heinz Awards are honoring the following individuals:

- **John Luther Adams**, Independent Composer (Fairbanks, Alaska) *For his musical compositions that invite us to hear the whole world as music*
- **Richard Alley, Ph.D.**, The Pennsylvania State University (University Park, Pa.) *For his polar ice discoveries that showed abrupt climate change is possible and for engaging his students, policymakers and the public*
- **Janine Benyus**, Biomimicry Institute (Missoula, Mont.) *For inspiring us to look to nature's engineering for solutions to our biggest challenges*
- **Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis**, Wicked Delicate Films, Truck Farm and FoodCorps (Brooklyn, N.Y.) *For using humor and innovative programming to engage people about sustainable food*
- **Louis J. Guillette, Jr., Ph. D.**, Medical University of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C.) *For being a leader in the field of hormone disruption and the impact chemicals have on wildlife*
- **Joan Kleypas, Ph.D.**, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Institute for the Study of Society and Environment (Boulder, Colo.) *For conducting breakthrough research on the impacts of environmental change on coral reefs and engaging both scientists and policymakers*
- **Nancy Knowlton, Ph.D.**, National Museum of Natural History (Washington, D.C.) *For broadening the understanding of ocean biodiversity and the impacts of humans on marine life*
- **Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D.**, Ithaca College, (Ithaca, N.Y.) *For highlighting the link between toxic chemicals and diseases through her written work, as well engaging the public as a cancer survivor*

About the Heinz Awards

The Heinz Awards annually recognize individuals creating and implementing workable solutions to the problems the world faces through invention, research and education while inspiring the next generation of modern thinkers. While this year the awards focus singularly on the environment, winners were chosen who address the intersection of the environment with one of the other award categories recognized in many previous years, including arts and humanities, human condition, public policy, technology and the economy.

The Heinz Family Foundation began as a charitable trust established by the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. His widow, Teresa Heinz, established the Heinz Awards in 1993 to honor and sustain the legacy of her late husband.

Nominations for the Heinz Awards are submitted by invited experts who serve anonymously. Award recipients are selected by the board of directors for the Heinz Awards upon recommendation by a blue-ribbon panel of jurors.

In addition to the \$100,000 award for their unrestricted use, recipients are presented with a medallion inscribed with the image of Senator Heinz on one side and a rendering of a globe passing between two hands on the other. The Heinz Awards will be presented at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on November 15. For more information about the Heinz Awards or the recipients, including photographs, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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