



## Ripley's Begins Building \$130-Million World-Class Family Aquarium in Toronto

Nearly six-million litres of water and thousands of fish

**TORONTO (Aug. 17, 2011)** – Toronto is one big step closer to getting a major new attraction as Ripley Entertainment Inc. and dignitaries from all three levels of government gathered at the base of the CN Tower to announce details of Ripley's Aquarium of Canada — a \$130-million facility now under construction and set to open during the summer of 2013.

"What I like most about an aquarium is that all ages, from toddlers to pre-schoolers to retired grandparents can really enjoy the wonders of the sea," said **Jim Pattison**, Chairman and CEO of the Jim Pattison Group, which owns Ripley Entertainment Inc. "I want to thank all of the people in Ontario that have helped us bring this aquarium to Toronto."

Pattison made the announcement today with federal MP **Ted Opitz**, Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture **Michael Chan**, Toronto Mayor **Rob Ford**, **Mark Laroche** President and CEO Canada Lands Company, and **Jim Pattison Jr.**, President of Ripley Entertainment Inc.

"Canada Lands Company is investing more than \$10 million to redevelop the John Street corridor with new signage and other improvements that will increase and improve the flow of pedestrian traffic from Front Street to the site. This is an important entryway to Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, as well as the CN Tower and Rogers Centre," said **Mark Laroche**, President and CEO of Canada Lands, which owns the land the Aquarium will be built on.

"The McGuinty government is proud to support the development of the first Ripley's Aquarium in Canada," said **Michael Chan**, Ontario Minister of Tourism and Culture. "Getting an aquarium of this calibre in Toronto is a major win for our province. It will entertain and educate, bring in millions of visitors, fill our hotels and create hundreds of jobs for Ontario families."

"This state-of-the art facility will provide jobs for our residents and a wonderful tourist attraction for our city. I want to thank Jim Pattison for being here with us today, as Toronto could not have found a better company to work with to develop this major new attraction," said **Rob Ford**, Mayor of Toronto. The City of Toronto will provide property tax incentives (estimated to be between \$8 million and \$12 million) over a 12-year period under the Imagination, Manufacturing, Innovation, Technology (IMIT) Grants program; which supports new building construction in targeted sectors, including tourism.

“Toronto is a world-class city and we are building a world-class aquarium,” said **Jim Pattison Jr.**, President of Ripley Entertainment Inc. “It’s about fish, family and fun, education and entertainment — along with a commitment to conservation and animal welfare. Ripley’s Aquarium will attract families from across Toronto, Canada and worldwide, and will generate significant jobs and economic activity in both the short- and long-term.”

### **Quick Facts**

- ◆ Aquarium construction will create more than 600 jobs, generating an immediate economic impact of more than \$50 million, \$35 million of which will be labour income. In addition, during the two-year construction timeline, the project is forecasted to generate more than \$25 million in taxes for all three levels of government;
- ◆ When operational, the Aquarium will generate 300 to 350 jobs and will have a projected annual economic impact of more than \$35 million on GDP;
- ◆ During the first 20 years of operation, the Aquarium is expected to generate more than \$220 million in tax revenues for all three levels of government;
- ◆ The most exciting new family attraction in Toronto since the Hockey Hall of Fame, Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada is expected to draw nearly two-million visitors each year;
- ◆ Through marketing partnerships with the CN Tower and other family attractions, the Aquarium is another milestone in the rediscovery and creation of a new Gateway to Toronto’s waterfront;
- ◆ Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada brings another family-friendly destination to the Bremner Blvd. Corridor, joining the CN Tower and its new EdgeWalk attraction, the Rogers Centre, the Air Canada Centre, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (MTTC), Steam Whistle Brewery and The Roundhouse, among others;
- ◆ The Aquarium will be one of the largest in North America, with a capacity of 5.7-million litres (1.5-million gallons);
- ◆ Featuring 450 species, the Aquarium will be home to more than 13,500 inhabitants;
- ◆ The Aquarium will be a major educational attraction for school groups and families to learn about the diversity of aquatic life;
- ◆ Programs to provide students and guests with an exciting interactive educational experience will be created and designed to meet the curriculum standards set forth by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Our goal is to provide students with a deeper understanding of why it is important to protect and conserve our aquatic environment;
- ◆ The two existing U.S. Ripley’s aquariums are accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the organization that sets and maintains the highest level of animal welfare standards, a distinction of which the company is proud;
- ◆ Well-trained staff dedicated to the highest standards of aquatic husbandry will include biologists, scientists, divers and aquarists who work diligently to ensure all the animals are safe, well-tended to, and allowed to flourish;
- ◆ The Aquarium will conduct ongoing breeding/conservation programs for endangered species, including ongoing tagging and tracking programs for sand tiger sharks in conjunction with universities and government agencies;

- ◆ Aquatic life-support systems with special recovery basins inside the Aquarium that will reclaim, clean and re-use the water.

### About Ripley's Aquarium of Canada

Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, set to open in summer 2013, is a member of the Ripley Entertainment family of worldwide entertainment facilities, which includes two existing aquariums.

Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies in Gatlinburg, Tenn., is the second-most-visited attraction in the state, and was voted the No. 1 aquarium in America by TripAdvisor.com. Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach, S.C., is that state's most visited attraction. The two aquariums have entertained nearly 30 million visitors since 1997.

Ripley's aquariums are known for



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Ripley's 80-plus  
countries each year.

Entertainment Inc. is a  
Pattison Group, the



For more detailed information, high-resolution downloadable photos and renderings, and broadcast quality b-roll, please visit Ripley's Aquarium of Canada's [website](#). (**NOTE:** The website will be activated on August 17 and will be populated with video and photos at approximately noon, Eastern Daylight Time.)

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