



Surprisingly Human

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**ANIMAL PLANET INTRODUCES THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF
ALASKAN PROGRAMMING WITH “THE LAST ALASKANS” SPECIAL
DOCUMENTARY EVENT**

– Special Eight-Part Original Documentary Event Captures for Posterity the Last Humans Allowed to Live in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge –

– One-Hour Premiere Kicks Off Monday, May 25 at 10/9c –

– New Episodes Air Sundays at 8/7c Beginning May 31 –

(New York, New York) – In 1980, the US government banned new human occupation in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, a protected area home to thousands of native animals and pristine terrain spanning roughly the size of South Carolina. Currently, only a handful of families spread across seven permitted cabins are allowed to remain in the refuge. Within less than 100 years, all remaining permits will reach expiration, and there will be no human presence left. On **Monday, May 25 at 10/9c**, Animal Planet premieres **THE LAST ALASKANS**, a new eight-part special event that documents the lives of some of the most isolated people in America – the last of their kind – as they struggle and thrive in Alaska’s untouched wilderness located hundreds of miles from roads, civilization and each other. New one-hour episodes will air **Sundays at 8/7c beginning May 31**.

THE LAST ALASKANS chronicles the daily rituals of four families choosing to live in seclusion, vast distances from each other as they overcome harsh arctic conditions, frustrating setbacks, and aggressive wildlife while they survive in one of the last great unspoiled and unforgiving wildernesses on the planet. In the refuge, prop planes, canoes and dog sleds replace the modern luxuries that most people take for granted. Humans cohabit with the animal world and often share the same emotions and struggles while they discover that they are not necessary at the top of the food chain. Utilizing an authentic and organic approach to document the weeks leading up to and during the winter season, **THE LAST ALASKANS** sets a distinctive and vibrant tone unlike any other docu-series before to completely immerse the viewer into a world that would otherwise be lost in history. Complete with stunning aerial shots via drones and a pace that honestly depicts the lives of nonconformists who choose to live off the land and off the grid, the eight-episode series provides viewers with an unbiased look and deep exploration into the unique perspectives of America’s last frontiersmen and their loved ones.

“This series beautifully portrays the core values of Animal Planet’s Surprisingly Human brand: authenticity, great characters and the constantly changing relationship between man and the wild,” says Rick Holzman, General Manager and Executive Vice President of Animal Planet. “**THE LAST ALASKANS** is not only a game changer for Animal Planet but for the entire off the grid genre – both visually and editorially.”

Throughout the eight-part event, viewers will join four families as they physically and mentally prepare for the upcoming winter season:

- **Heimo and Edna Korth:** The venerated godfather of the final frontier, Heimo Korth, has lived one of the most extreme lives of anyone in the arctic. As a teen, he left a blue-collar life as a welder in Wisconsin to

become a mountain man in Alaska and never looked back. Eccentric, energetic and extremely likeable, Heimo and his wife, Edna, have raised four daughters 400 miles from civilization. Today, it's just the two of them, surviving off the land surrounded by memories of the triumphs and tragedies of a life lived in a world where the main challenges are to "keep your mind together and keep yourself alive."

- **Ray Lewis and Family:** Father, husband and backwoods superman, Ray Lewis grew up in rural Michigan and values his ability to outsmart his prey, and he uses only the simplest methods possible. His rule of thumb: never trust anything with a battery. Over the course of his 30 years living off the land, he and his wife, Cindy, have raised three daughters, who are now teenagers. But their time as a family is coming to an end as the girls prepare to leave and venture out into the world to find their own unique path. But despite their impending departure, Ray's adventurous spirit still thrives, ever pushing him to rely on his own primitive survival skills, such as fashioning his own weapons and traps to provide for his family in the remote Alaskan wilderness.
- **Bob Harte:** Bob Harte is infamous across Alaska's interior for surviving more brushes with death than anyone can remember including wildlife attacks, gunshot wounds, fires, crash landings in his prop plane and other traumatic events. Hailing from New Jersey and motivated by what he explains as a "wanderlust to go where I wanted to go, to live free, and to have a life I loved," Bob hitchhiked his way to Alaska after he dropped out of college. He has spent that last 40 years living in isolation, many of those with his daughter and former wife. A notoriously wild rebel who lives by his own rules, Bob brews his own beer in the bush and has a soft spot for his dogs, particularly his new puppy, Ruger.
- **Tyler and Ashley Selden:** Inspired to leave their city lives and relocate to the arctic tundra after hearing about the legend of Heimo Korth, the Seldens ventured to Alaska only two days after being married and managed to find a unique 'in' to the territory via an abandoned trap line. One of the younger couples to live so far removed from civilization in the refuge, the Seldens openly admit that they've survived by trial and error, learning the harsh reality of living this existence day by day. Rejecting most forms of mechanized technology, the Seldens utilize a dog team to sled hundreds of miles around their cabin in the winter.

THE LAST ALASKANS is produced for Animal Planet by Half Yard Productions. John Jones, Abby Greensfelder, and Sean Gallagher are the executive producers, John Collin is the supervising producer, Jared McGilliard is the showrunner and co-executive producer, and Jim Campbell is the co-executive producer for Half Yard Productions. For Animal Planet, Keith Hoffman is the executive producer, and Sarah Russell is the associate producer. The series was developed by Animal Planet's Kurt Tondorf.

Animal Planet, a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. Animal Planet consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 94 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; Animal Planet LIVE, the go-to digital destination for round-the-clock, unfiltered access to the animal kingdom; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service, and merchandising extensions.

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