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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Classic Wisconsin Ducks Celebrate 65 Years on Land and Water**

WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. (April 15, 2010) – It is a truly classic Wisconsin experience: a ride aboard a nostalgic WWII “Duck” that is part scenic tour, part thrilling adventure. The rugged amphibious “Ducks” are revered by many as one of the most unique tourist offerings in the state. This year, the operation that started it all – Original Wisconsin Ducks – celebrates 65 years traversing the wooded trails and scenic waterways of Wisconsin Dells.

“Over the years, people have always said ‘*You haven’t done the Dells, if you haven’t done the Ducks*’ and we’re proud to live up to that legacy by simply continuing to be an exemplary tourism attraction not only for Wisconsin Dells but for the entire state,” said Dan Gavinski, general manager of Original Wisconsin Ducks.

As the largest fleet of tour ducks in the country, Original Wisconsin Ducks takes great pride in preserving the unique amphibious vehicles. Maintaining the distinct fleet takes special skill and expertise. A staff of six full-time maintenance personnel keeps the land-and-water Ducks in top shape. Their focus is on preserving the integrity of the fleet and keeping safety at the forefront. Combined, the staff has about 150 years of experience working on the Ducks.

All of the Original Wisconsin Ducks are authentic, built for the World War II effort. However, most in the fleet of 90 never saw wartime action. They were surplus, purchased stateside. Some have been procured from collectors or other tour operators. In all, General Motors manufactured 21,200 Ducks for the war effort from 1942 to 1945. Today, preserving the legacy of these exceptional vehicles is an important part of the Original Wisconsin Ducks operation.

“It takes great care to maintain the large fleet so that generations to come can enjoy the Wisconsin Dells beauty and learn the significance of the historical amphibious Ducks.” said Gavinski.

Ducks were lauded by WWII military leaders for their brawn and versatility to move troops and supplies in and around the rugged terrain of Europe and the South Pacific. Now part of the civilian landscape, Ducks have shuttled generations of travelers through the Lower Dells Scenic Park, a 600-acre picturesque backdrop for the Ducks to perform their land-to-water maneuvers. Because of the area’s varied topography, Ducks were introduced here in 1946 as a way to show off the beautiful land while still preserving the environment.

The one-hour tour travels by way of exclusive wilderness Duck Trails that wind through evergreen forests and traverse the tops of the Dells’ famous bluffs. The trails are historically significant; derived from old lumber roads, an ancient stagecoach run and the primitive streets of the city of Newport, which was once located here. This exceptional stretch of the river running through Wisconsin Dells is one of the most spectacular geological sites in the country; the beautiful rock formations carved out by glaciers and shaped by wind and rain over time. The 8½-mile journey splashes down into the Wisconsin River where visitors get an up-close view of the towering rocks and the stories that go with them. The 21-passenger Duck maneuvers through narrow gorges ripe with lush ferns and other natural vegetation and makes a second water entry into beautiful Lake Delton.

“A duck tour is one for the generations. Everyone in the family can climb aboard as a group, enjoy a nostalgic adventure on land and water, and learn some history and geology along the way,” said Gavinski.

With more than 90 vehicles, Original Wisconsin Ducks is the largest “flock” of amphibious tour Ducks in the United States. There are about a dozen Duck tours nationwide with only about 300 operational Ducks combined. Original Wisconsin Ducks’ 2010 season runs mid-March through early November, weather permitting. For more information about Original Wisconsin Ducks, please call (608) 254-8751, or visit [www.wisconsinducktours.com](http://www.wisconsinducktours.com).

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