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NEWS RELEASE

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**Newly Remounted Marshalls Creek Mastodon to Highlight State Museum Exhibition *Tusks! Ice Age Mammoths and Mastodons*
January 24 to May 2, 2010**

Harrisburg, PA – The State Museum of Pennsylvania will host the traveling exhibition *Tusks! Ice Age Mammoths and Mastodons* from January 24 through May 2, 2010.

This exhibit, created by the Florida Museum of Natural History, tells the story of mammoths and mastodons, extinct relatives of modern elephants who roamed much of North America until the end of the last Ice Age, 10,000 years ago.

The exhibition features more than 80 specimens that include extinct proboscideans and some of their Ice Age neighbors, such as carnivores, horses, giant ground sloths and giant armadillos. Colorful interpretive banners feature artists' reconstructions of the animals and photo murals of scientists at work.

The opening of the exhibition marks the debut of The State Museum's recently remounted Marshalls Creek Mastodon, one of the most significant fossil specimens recovered from Pennsylvania. This specimen was discovered in a peat bog in Monroe County, Pennsylvania in 1968 and ranks as one of the most complete mastodon skeletons ever recovered.

For years, only half of the skeleton was mounted in a display adjacent to The State Museum's Mammal Hall while the other half was in storage. This full skeletal display will allow visitors to view the entire animal from all sides to get a true sense of its size and beauty. This remount was completed by the Pittsburgh studio of Phil Fraley Productions, Inc., one of the leading firms in the world for such work. After the Tusk exhibition closes, the mastodon will move to a new permanent home in The State Museums 3rd Floor Hall of Geology, currently

under renovation. In addition to the dramatically remounted mastodon, additional fossil specimens and new and updated dioramas will create a richer experience for visitors. The gallery is expected to officially reopen some time in the fall of 2010.

The remounting is supported in part by the non-profit Friends of the State Museum through a **BUY-A-BONE** campaign launched in November. The Friends' goal is to raise \$250,000 to help defray the extraordinary costs of reconstructing the mastodon and building the new Paleontology Gallery where the mastodon will reside permanently. Information on **BUY-A-BONE** is available at www.pabookstore.com

The State Museum of Pennsylvania, located at 300 North Street, is one of 25 historic sites and museums on the Pennsylvania Trail of History®. Museum hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 12 noon to 5 p.m. General admission is \$3.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children/senior citizens. Individuals who need special assistance should call (717) 787-6778 or the Pennsylvania TDD relay service at (800) 654-5984. For more information on *Tusks!* as well as other programs, exhibitions and events at The State Museum, click on www.statemuseumpa.org.