



**2010 annual plan to the Parks Superintendent
December 1, 2009**

Public Comment is being accepted on this plan December 1, 2009 through midnight, January 4, 2010. Comments may be sent to webkeeper@zoo.org or mailed to WPZ Annual Plan, 601 N. 59th Street, Seattle, WA 98103

This annual plan for Woodland Park Zoo for 2010 is submitted to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation as specified by the Zoo Operations and Management Agreement between the City of Seattle and the Woodland Park Zoological Society. The purpose of the annual plan is to briefly describe and highlight major programs and programmatic changes, capital improvements or other key issues for the coming year.

Public Participation and community comments: Submitted annually in the fourth quarter, the plan is available for review and comment on the zoo website, www.zoo.org, as well as in hard copy at the zoo's administrative offices, 601 N. 59th St. Copies are provided as well to the zoo's Neighborhood Liaison Committee, which consists of representatives of the neighboring community councils and other groups.

Overview and major goals: The major focus of the zoo's capital program in 2010 will be the opening a new west entry near Phinney Avenue North and North 55th Street. That opening is scheduled for May 1 and will coincide with the opening of a new meerkat exhibit. May 1 is also the day each year when the zoo expands its operating hours through September 30.

The zoo's operations budget for 2010 is expected to be approved by the Zoo Society Board of Directors at its meeting in December. Operating revenues of \$30.4 million represent 1% growth over expected results for 2009. Because of cost increases, and flat revenues, the zoo will reduce some operating costs to meet 2010 targets, including a reduction in force of approximately 12 full-time equivalent positions and closure of one exhibit.

The 12 positions include full-time, part-time and unfilled positions. A Voluntary Separation Plan has been offered to staff who qualify -- through a combination of age plus years of service. The zoo will close the Night Exhibit portion of the Day and Night exhibits. That exhibit was chosen because of its operating costs -- it is the zoo's most expensive user of energy -- and there will be an evaluation of how to renovate and retrofit the building to be more energy efficient.

Attendance was strong in 2009 because of a very popular and successful new Humboldt penguin exhibit, one of the nicest summer seasons in years and a continuing economic recession that caused people to look for opportunities closer to home. Depending on December attendance, 2009 likely will be the second-highest year on record for zoo attendance, or about 1.2 million people. The zoo expects attendance to continue to increase in 2010 because of continuing economic issues and the continued popularity of the zoo's exhibits.

The zoo sponsored 13 ZooTunes concerts in 2009 and worked with the local neighborhood groups to manage parking and traffic issues through increased signage and staffing, as well as a shuttle from Northgate. In 2010, the number of concerts is expected to remain about the same, although no contracts have been signed and the final number could decrease to 12. The zoo will begin this year to charge for parking in zoo lots at the concerts. We also will begin to examine whether to renovate the concert stage. This is currently the only evening concert series in the city.

Capital planning: The new west entry will consolidate the zoo's current north and west entries and provide new ticketing procedures to reduce waiting times – which can stretch from 30 minutes to 45 minutes on a crowded day – to less than five minutes. The entry will include restrooms, guest services, stroller and wheelchair rental and a store. It will connect the north and west sides of the zoo with an accessible, landscaped walking path – which does not require entrance to the zoo for use.

Work on entry began in September by Unimark, a general contractor with a 50-year history in Seattle, which was selected through a competitive-bid process. The project is on schedule. The zoo expects to achieve LEED Silver status for this project.

Lancer Hospitality, a new food concessionaire that began at the zoo in January 2009, will complete renovation of the Rain Forest Food Pavilion – the zoo's main food venue – to improve operation and guest service.

Meerkats, known from the popular Animal Planet program "Meerkat Manor," will return to Woodland Park Zoo in time for summer 2010. These playful animals were previously exhibited here until 2000. A section of the Adaptations Building is being retrofitted to accommodate a family grouping of eight of these rambunctious animals, known for their intricate social networks and playful behavior. Meerkats are extremely popular with zoo visitors.

Other significant capital-asset management projects anticipated include:

- Replacing one of the last three oil fired boilers on grounds with high efficiency gas unit, and removing the existing oil tank.
- Replacing the main domestic water pump with variable speed drive for energy efficiency.

- Upgrading the zoo irrigation system to reduce water consumption and labor.
- Repairs to leaking vaults associated with the Lemur and Debrazza water recirculation system.
- Structural repairs to the Northern Trail boardwalk, and repair or replace asphalt and fencing in various locations.

Also in 2010, planning and design are expected to begin a new naturalistic and immersive exhibit for Asian tigers and bears. This will involve replacing some of the oldest exhibits at the zoo and renovation of the 1950's era Feline House (or Adaptations Building) as part of the project. This project will also provide the main path cross-connect called for in the Long-Range Physical Development Plan.

Field conservation: Inspiring guests to take action that helps save species and habitat is a chief goal at Woodland Park Zoo. Our commitment is to encourage visitors to take action, in their own backyard as well as in the world by sharing with them the global and regional field conservation projects we support through our Partners for Wildlife program.

Field conservation programs at the zoo focus on three major areas of the world: Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Pacific Northwest. Our Partners for Wildlife programs stress practical solutions that incorporate habitat and species conservation, research, education, capacity-building and community support, all recognizing the human element necessary for conservation to be successful

In 2010, the Field Conservation Department will continue to solidify the relationships with 17 Partners for Wildlife program members in 28 different countries and move towards a more widely accepted method of reporting and evaluating the individual program. Information about field conservation will be integrated into zoo signage and other messaging.

The department in 2010 will launch a conservation e-newsletter, and publish its annual report in a new format, utilizing the zoo's quarterly magazine as a vehicle for the report in an effort to reach out not only to peers and colleagues, but to take the conservation message and partner achievements to a broader audience: zoo members.

Woodland Park Zoo's flagship field conservation project is the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP); an unprecedented community-based effort, protecting wildlife habitat and local communities in Papua New Guinea. In 2009, the government of Papua New Guinea agreed to set aside from development more than 187,000 acres of tropical wilderness, which is home to the tree kangaroo as well as thousands of other rare and endangered species.

This accomplishment comes after more than a decade of work with local indigenous communities to conduct scientific research, education and health projects. Now, in order to ensure the long-term protection of the area, the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program will focus on community capacity-building, management planning, and fund development. Woodland Park Zoo will continue its commitment to this program by providing infrastructure, financial, and administrative support.

Education programs:

Education programs at the zoo are integral to the overall mission of inspiring and cultivating an informed community of conservation stewards. From early learners to senior learners, on and off zoo grounds, our developmental approach to lifelong learning is to foster empathy for nature, build conservation knowledge and skills, and increase people's personal ownership for action that benefits wildlife and habitat.

Strategic initiatives for 2010 include:

- **Connecting Children to Nature :** The zoo will offer a wide array of programs for children and caregivers that provide opportunities for exploration and play in nature and nurture respect and caring for animals, including:
 - Zoo classes, camps, and other programs including early childhood programs in Zoomazium.
 - Zoo Overnight and Evening Adventures in various zoo venues including Zoomazium.
 - Zoomazium programming including Nature Exchange trades, animal experiences and creative learning opportunities extending outside to Zoomazium's Backyard and across the zoo.
- **Science Education:** The zoo will provide expanded opportunities for Washington students and teachers to access quality, hands-on, experiential education programs, including:
 - Zoo Experiences for Students and Teachers (ZEST) docent-guided school programs which spark students to observe and discover the interconnections between plants and animals in the biomes represented at the zoo.
 - School-to-Zoo programs funded by King County levy funds, including Forest Explorers for 1st – 3rd grades, which bring science kit concepts to life through learning experiences on zoo grounds.
 - Wild Wise outreach programs and field trips at community centers and schools throughout King County (and at a few select locations around the

state) which engage students in observations and discovery of Washington's wildlife.

- Up CLOSE outreach programs which bring animal experiences to schools and community centers throughout King and South Snohomish counties.
- Ready, Set, Discover outreach programs involving low income schools in Seattle and south King County in multiple engagements with the zoo over a two year period, including Wild Wise indoor and outdoor programs at the schools and local parks, and zoo visits with emphasis on ecosystems, inquiry and Nature Exchange activities.
- Professional development workshops for teachers which enrich educators' abilities to integrate inquiry and use the zoo to enhance their classroom teaching.
- Engaging Zoo Experiences: These are experiences on the zoo grounds for all guests.
 - Keeper talks, African Savanna cultural interpreter programs, Zoomazium programs and raptor programs.
 - Animal contact opportunities in the Family Farm, Zoomazium and at select locations on grounds.
 - Animal feeding opportunities at giraffes and Willawong Station.
 - Increased messaging about climate change and easy conservation actions
- Community & Youth Engagement: These in-depth programs will provide youth and adults with the skills and experiences necessary to be conservation stewards and empower them to become future conservation leaders:
 - Expanded efforts to educate and inspire people to create backyard wildlife habitats by redeveloping a backyard habitat exhibit on zoo grounds and offering workshops (on and off zoo grounds) with community partners.
 - Restructured program for Zoo Corps teens on and off zoo grounds focusing on the development of environmental stewardship and habitat restoration.

Animal management:

Animal management staff will be integral to the opening of the new meerkat exhibit, in which a portion of the Adaptations Building will be refurbished to create an exhibit space for a family group, with space to allow for managed reproduction and future breeding.

Closure of the Night Exhibit will require staff expertise to relocate some animals in other areas of the zoo, and others to be appropriately placed in other AZA institutions.

In 2010, there will be continued breeding attempts for the two young *Kruger* lions, which were introduced to each other and the lion exhibit in 2008. The zoo also has a pair of young jaguars who will be introduced in 2010. The zoo also hopes to have a giraffe breeding in the next five years.

In 2009, a genetically valuable male tree kangaroo was imported from a zoo in Singapore. This year, the zoo will receive his designated mate and breed them. The zoo also received a female red panda in 2009 to pair with our male for breeding in 2010.

Overall, the zoo participates in 39 SSPs, or Species Survival Programs, whose breeding programs are integral to species preservation.

Our continuing commitment to elephant conservation is part of this effort. In early 2005, each AZA facility managing elephants was asked to formally commit to their elephant management program goals. WPZ established a commitment to continue an Asian elephant breeding program, with the goal of creating a matriarchal herd with a bull, or bulls, managed separately. Our plans also include artificial-insemination procedures for our breeding female. In the next five years we anticipate expanding our elephant herd with at least one birth. Elephants provide an educational cornerstone for the zoo visitor, offering each, especially children, a chance to experience the wonder of their sheer size and bulk as well as a close up opportunity to see, hear and smell an elephant. Elephants are a high conservation priority with significant *in situ* conservation needs, and are the focus of numerous scientific and reproductive investigation and captive management efforts. WPZ supports elephant conservation, as well as that of many other species, through Partners for Wildlife and small grants programs.

Also in 2010, the zoo will sponsor community-education programs which bring to the Seattle area elephant experts whose work includes conservation in Asia.

Proposed 2010 mammal acquisitions include Rocky Mountain goats, striped skunk, kinkajou and Virginia opossum.

Enhancements to the Humboldt penguin exhibit may include the addition of Guanay cormorants. Like the penguins, wild populations have recently been affected by habitat loss and degradation, over-fishing and climactic events. This makes them an appropriate complementary species for conservation messaging.

In addition, over the next several years, we will focus on amphibian conservation efforts locally and internationally, due to the accelerating global amphibian extinction crisis. We support amphibian conservation centers in Central and South America. We will continue headstarting native Oregon spotted frogs (*Rana pretiosa*) in partnership with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, federal agencies, and other Northwest zoos. We will

investigate the possibility of displaying a small group of these frogs at the Day Exhibit. This would be an opportunity to help educate guests about the amphibian crisis and to connect them with a local species and our current conservation efforts.

Reptiles and amphibians represent an important part of the presentation animal collection, and new kinds will be acquired, and others retired, to prevent stagnation and maintain guest interest. New reptile/amphibian acquisitions for the expanded animal presentation program will include species such as sand boa, black rat snakes and gopher or bull snake.

New invertebrate species used for presentations in 2010 will include vinegaroon, Chilean rose tarantula, and silkworms.

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