

**Woodland Park Zoo submits 10,000+ public comments in support of the
Endangered Species Act**

***Proposed changes would prompt unprecedented attacks to the nation's
landmark conservation policy***

SEATTLE—Woodland Park Zoo has joined zoos, aquariums, and environmental and conservation organizations across the nation in submitting more than 800,000 comments to the U.S. Department of the Interior in support of the Endangered Species Act.



The Endangered Species Act is considered one of the most successful conservation policies in the world because of an effective governmental process that continues to bring species back from the brink of extinction. Proposed changes to the nation's landmark conservation policy would grossly weaken protections for animals facing extinction and struggling to survive.

In particular, three regulatory changes would alter the way the government manages species protected under the Act, as well as species being considered for future listing. One proposed change would redirect already-reduced government resources on economic impact studies to gather data on the "cost" of protecting a species, explained Woodland Park Zoo President and CEO Alejandro Grajal, PhD. "With wildlife conservation at the core of Woodland Park Zoo's mission, we believe the only factor that should be taken into consideration when saving species is *science*, not economic impact or the cost to saving a species. The Endangered Species Act stands as a law of last resort."

At a press conference held last week at Woodland Park Zoo, U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) addressed concerns about the proposed changes. "It has become abundantly clear that these rule changes will dramatically weaken the effectiveness of the Endangered Species Act and the efforts of organizations like Woodland Park Zoo, which are working around the world to save species," said Jayapal. "Our national emblem, the bald eagle, was once on the brink of extinction. Because of the Endangered Species Act and a rigorous plan for recovery, the bald eagle soars high above our Seattle skyline today."

Lisa J. Graumlich, PhD, a scholar, an environmental scientist and a Woodland Park Zoo Board member, voiced her concerns about the proposed regulatory changes to the Endangered Species Act, particularly how one of the proposed regulatory changes would limit considerations of long-range climate change projections when determining the future of species protections. "In the face of climate change, the Endangered Species Act should be strengthened, not undermined. When planning for the future of threatened species, we must use the best available science, and that includes robust projections of future climate."

During the 60-day public comment period, Woodland Park Zoo collected 10,701 signatures from zoo guests, members, donors and the community to rescind the proposed changes. "We are very grateful to our zoo family and community in joining us to amplify our voices. Animals do not hire lobbyists. Animals do not execute marketing campaigns. It falls to us to speak for them," said Grajal.

Founded in 1899, Woodland Park Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and certified by the rigorous American Humane Conservation program. The Humane Certified™ seal of approval is another important validation of the zoo's long-standing tradition of meeting the highest standards in animal welfare. Woodland Park Zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats through more than 30 field projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Each year, the zoo engages more than a million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and walks of life in extraordinary experiences with animals, inspiring

them to make conservation a priority in their lives and a difference in our planet's future ecological health and sustainability. Visit www.zoo.org and follow the zoo on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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