

The Sustainable Zoo

Walking our Talk

Much like Woodland Park Zoo's naturalistic exhibitry transformed zoos in the 1970s, our investments in green technology and operations will define the zoo of the future.

As stewards for the care of thousands of rare animals, plant species and our historic built environment, our zoo's leadership in green practices models a more sustainable future for our community. Climate change dramatically impacts wildlife — the heart of our mission. Leading zoos reduce their environmental impact and inspire visitors to make choices that benefit all species sharing the planet.

The zoo has a long history of green leadership. Guests learn about sustainable building and living roofs in Zoomazium, the first building among zoos nationally to receive gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED). Our new Humboldt penguin exhibit's innovative constructed wetland and geothermal features result in dramatic water and energy savings that educate and inspire our visitors to help save ecosystems.

Day after day, examples of our environmental commitment abound: our popular Zoo Doo compost; extensive zoo-wide recycling; backyard habitat workshops; sustainable food concessions; solar panels on our Historic Carousel and in the Family Farm; employee transportation alternatives and dozens more.

While we are proud of these successes, we have many more ahead to achieve. The best way to engage our visitors in environmental conservation is by modeling more green leadership ourselves. As our region's premier zoo, and in keeping with Seattle's climate partnership goals, we seek to raise the bar of our environmental performance and become the community's most hands-on, living showcase of sustainability.

Above: Sea of green. Since 1950, the zoo's canopy has increased four-fold, creating a lush, green oasis cherished by many in the heart of our increasingly urbanized city.

MORE **WONDER.**
MORE **WILD.**



AT A GLANCE

HABITAT

An urban oasis and a natural, living showcase for environmental sustainability

NUMBERS

Our zoo influences the hearts, minds and behaviors of more than one million visitors annually

OPPORTUNITY

Support our quest to be among the nation's greenest zoos. We will increase our commitment to the preservation of biodiversity by meeting more ambitious sustainability goals in our day-to-day operations and future planning, serving the Pacific Northwest community as a model for sustainability in action.

PRIVATE FUNDING GOAL

\$2 million private support (leveraging other investments of earned revenue and public support)

Raise the Bar of Our Environmental Performance

As a trusted community resource and a leader among zoos, we have a heightened obligation to operate in the most environmentally sound ways possible, embracing our private and public partners in the effort.

Leveraging the expertise and tools of our zoo-wide Green Team, a comprehensive, environmental management system will advance a data-driven approach to improve existing, and implement new, sustainability programs. Our goals include:

- reducing carbon emissions to 7% below 1999 levels by 2012, and 20% by 2020;
- reducing water use 30% from current usage by 2020;
- reducing waste by 50% by 2020; and
- educating and engaging our visitors in green choices.

As we update exhibits and facilities, we will target more energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling for our highest energy-use buildings. We will also target opportunities to generate renewable energy, such as biomass, wind and solar power, while replacing an additional third of zoo



Our horticulture team's Natural Care Management program has turned our historic rose garden into one of the nation's largest, organically managed public rose gardens.



Interpretive kiosks, with lively videos and "You can, too" messages help visitors learn how they can make greener choices at home.

vehicles with alternative fuel models. Our employee transportation management program will further reduce our carbon footprint.

Greener exhibits mean cleaner waterways for Puget Sound. Many of our animals rely on large bodies of water to thrive. Older "dump and fill" practices are being replaced with sustainable innovations. Our new Humboldt penguin exhibit features state-of-the-art environmental engineering for filtration and heating — a model for sustainable design and future zoo exhibit plans.

To divert more materials from the waste stream, we will increase zoo-wide recycling by 50% and improve our popular Zoo Doo program, which creates one million pounds of compost a year for community gardeners, saving the zoo more than \$60,000 in disposal costs.



Zoo staff and volunteers planted more than 21,000 native plants on Zoomazium's "living roof," truly a visitor favorite.

Showcase Sustainability for Our Community

Our zoo is a unique place to experience nature. With a huge, receptive audience, it is only natural that we exhibit sustainability more publicly and use our exhibitry, education and communication platforms to engage millions of visitors in actively protecting the environment.

Using traditional and emerging media, we will amplify green success stories in our all interpretive vehicles and education programs. We will also make behind-the-scenes green innovations more visible in high visitor traffic areas, such as storm water diversion in the new west entry or solar panels on the historic carousel roof overlooking the meadow.

Showing how our biomes, conservation initiatives and environmental values work together is a winning combination to inspire generation after generation. If just 30% of our visitors took new action, that would mean more than 400,000 people in our community each year contributing to a more sustainable future for all species sharing the planet.