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 Sacramento, CA 95822-1123
 saczoo.org

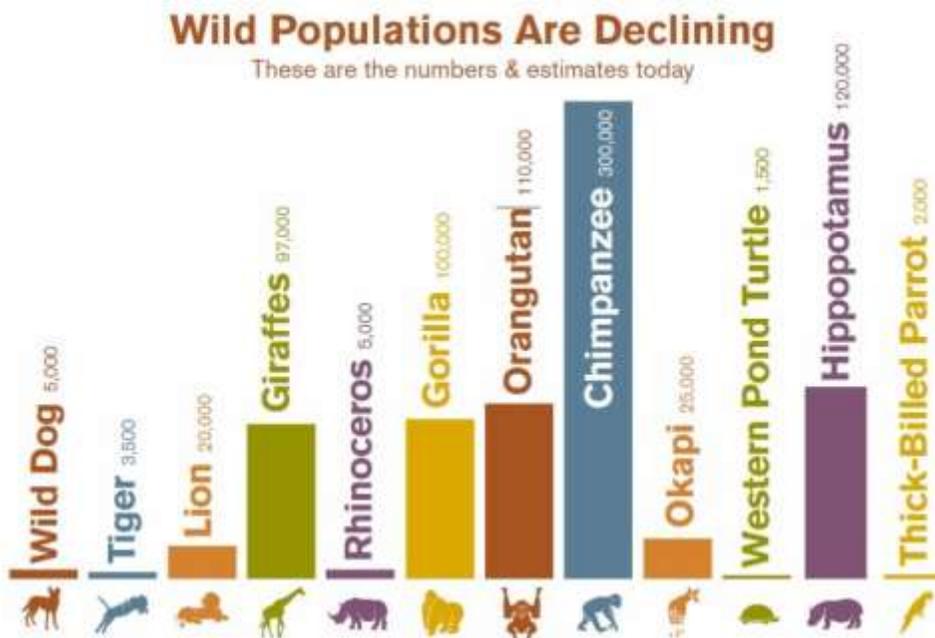
Media Release

Laurel Vincent | Marketing & PR Manager
 Ph: 916-808-7443 | Call: 530-513-0495

The zoo’s exciting future: to continue to meet the zoo's mission and become a world-class facility, plans are being explored for relocating and expanding

The Sacramento Zoo is one of the city’s most beloved institutions. But after nearly a century spent welcoming millions of visitors and caring for thousands of animals, the zoo urgently requires significant capital improvements — and increased space—to meet the evolving standards of animal care, conservation and education required to be a viable and accredited zoological facility.

The Sacramento Zoo is proud to be one of only 230 institutions accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. As an accredited facility, the zoo is held to stringent standards — including standards regarding the care we provide to our animals and the facilities in which they live. Due to the size and aged infrastructure of our nearly century-old facility, and changing AZA requirements for habitat size, the Sacramento Zoo has faced hard decisions with regard to housing a number of important and iconic animals in recent years — including hippopotamus, tiger, and bear. As a result, you can no longer find these, or many of the other animal species you would typically expect to find at a world-class zoo, here in Sacramento. It is also clear based on this trend that if the Sacramento Zoo continues to operate in its current location, it will have no reasonable choice but to become a niche zoo featuring a smaller variety of smaller animals.



The Sacramento Zoo believes that these animals and our community deserve better. Far more than a zoological park, the Sacramento Zoo is a non-profit organization devoted to saving species around the world. Within California we support critical programs to save local species such as the western pond turtle and giant garter snake. In Tanzania, we support scientists helping to save the giraffe from a silent extinction. And in Nepal, we help save red panda habitats. These are just a few ways in which the Sacramento Zoo, with this community’s support, participates in efforts to address the very real and critical threat to animals on this planet.

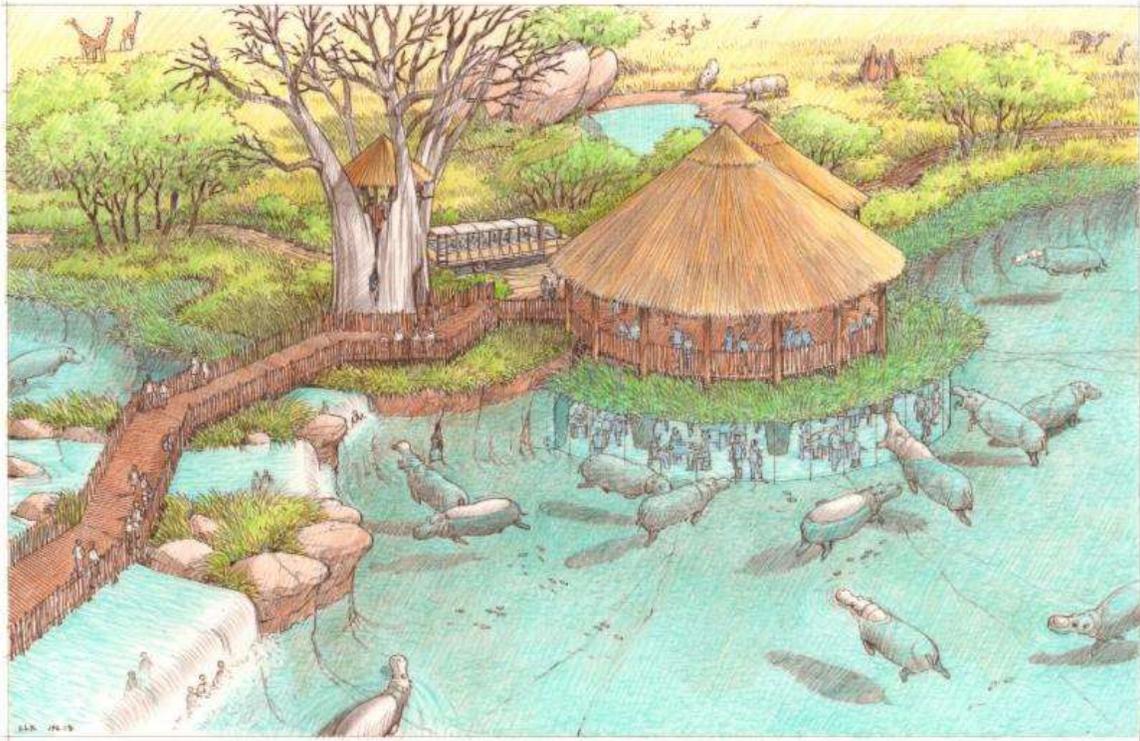


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The truth is that many species, both iconic and lesser known, are facing incredible challenges in the wild. There are less than 3500 tigers left in Asia, and by some estimates orangutans may be extinct in the wild within the next decade. Closer to home, the western pond turtle is also threatened with extinction. While we are incredibly proud of how we have been able to support conservation efforts to date, it is undeniable that our ability to do this good work is substantially limited by our current facilities. It goes without saying that a key component of conservation is educating our community about the challenges wildlife face and what each person can do to help save these incredible animals and their homes. There is no better way to do that than to give people personal experiences with animals they may never see in the wild, and in some cases would never even have heard of or cared about were it not for the education provided at the zoo. Our space constraints necessarily limit our ability to provide these opportunities. Another key component of the effort to save species is building capacity in our institutions to house and support rare and endangered species, including in family groups more in keeping with the experience these animals would have in the wild. The zoo's space constraints limit our ability to do this as well.

Every animal has a story to tell. However, it is undeniable that even though the Sacramento Zoo has world-class conservation programs for reptiles and amphibians, our guests still often ask where our tiger went, what happened to our hippo, or why we do not have gorillas and rhinos. The reality is that these kinds of iconic species are the animals that bring guests to a zoo, and consequently help to save hundreds of other lesser-known species that might not have the same public draw.

With all of these concerns in mind, we looked carefully at three options for the future viability of the Sacramento Zoo: status quo; expansion of the existing site; and relocation. After an extensive evaluation of the zoo's aged infrastructure, its 14-acre footprint, and the lack of parking, it became abundantly clear that the only viable option to meet the zoo's mission and operational needs is relocation.

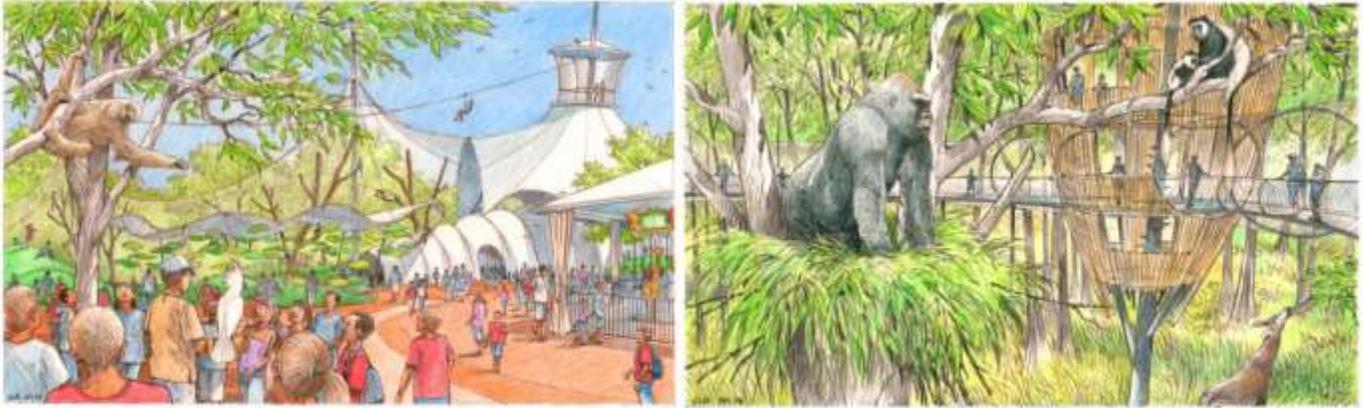


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We then reached out to our City partners to begin exploring an exciting vision for the future of the Sacramento Zoo. The plans being discussed include a new, larger and more accessible location with modern, state-of-the-art animal care and guest experience facilities where wildlife will thrive and visitors can engage and learn about nature like never before.

Although we are admittedly in the early stages of this process, we have no doubt that such an effort would result in a world-class zoo for Sacramento that would both fulfill our mission and enrich the community as a whole. Imagine an African Savannah larger than the entire current Sacramento Zoo, providing visitors an opportunity for a safari-type learning experience observing herds of giraffe, zebra, antelope, gazelle and other species living together as they do in nature; a world-class hippopotamus habitat with underwater viewing; and animals from lions and tigers to chimpanzees and gorillas living in large, complex and enriching habitats where visitors enjoy a more fulfilling and memorable zoo experience. These and the other possible guest experiences would also showcase modern facilities providing exceptional care and homes for each of these – and hundreds of other – animals.

We do not know where this effort will take us, but we believe it is the only viable option for this zoo to meet its mission and serve this community. We also know that we cannot do this without the community's support. We welcome your questions, your feedback, and your support as we embark on this critical and exciting effort.

For more information and future updates, visit saczoo.org/Relocation