



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
August 22, 2024

TOPIC: Santa Ana Zoo Operations Report

AGENDA TITLE:

Receive and discuss the Santa Ana Zoo Operations Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Each month, city staff provides an operations report to the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission related to the Santa Ana Zoo.

DISCUSSION

ANIMAL CARE

1. Butterflies

We are mid-season with the Flight! butterfly experience and it is very popular with visitors. Zoo staff are now using a virtual queue to allow visitors to check in via QR code upon arrival, and receive notification via text message when it is their turn to enter Flight. This reduces long lines and wait times at the habitat entrance, and allows visitors to enjoy the zoo while they wait instead. Flight will run until the end of September.

2. Camels

New dromedary camel Amina arrived from the Oasis Camel Dairy Farm in Ramona, and joined resident dromedary camel Amir. You can find them in their shared habitat.

3. Primate Moves

The ring-tailed lemurs have been moved out of their habitat and are currently living behind the scenes as the zoo animal care team prepares for some animal relocations within the zoo primate area. To maximize animal wellbeing, habitat space is consistently evaluated; these relocations are aimed at creating dynamic habitats that are best suited for each species. Expect more changes in the primate area of the zoo as we work on primate habitat expansion and renovation.

4. Mountain Yellow Legged Frogs (MYLF)

Twenty-nine more MYLF that were reared from tadpoles at the zoo were transported by zoo partner USGS and released into Dorr Canyon in the San Gabriel Mountains.

OPERATIONS

1. New Website

The zoo launched its new website through ProudCity. The domain is the same: www.santaanazoo.org. Feedback is welcome and can be submitted through the site.

2. Museums for All

The Zoo began its participation in the Museums for All program on 7/1/2024. SNAP/EBT cardholders can purchase up to four general admission tickets for \$3 apiece. Over 1700 tickets were sold via this program in July. More information about the program and qualifications for this discounted pricing can be found at <https://www.santaanazoo.org/tickets/>.

3. Hive Education and Community Hub Building

Plans for this building entered plan check at the end of July. We anticipate construction beginning early 2025. This project will provide space education and community meeting space, as well as a new dedicated entrance for education groups and a bus drop off zone to increase access and safety.

4. Pathway Accessibility Project

This project will replace many existing dirt pathways with more accessible concrete pathways. The proposed pathways will still maintain an aesthetic that complements both the design and landscape of the facility. Contractor proposals were due on. We anticipate construction beginning in November 2024 and lasting through February 2025.

5. Wall Project

This wall will replace a failing fifty-year-old wood telephone pole fence at the north end of the zoo along First St. The new wall design is complete and has been submitted for plan check. The new, structurally sound wall will improve zoo security while reducing noise from First Street and the 5 Freeway onramp. The project will also improve mobility through the north end of the zoo via realignment of the wall-adjacent service road.

6. Santiago Park ECO Center

The center is open Friday – Monday. Designs for the new exhibits inside the center are complete and entering fabrication. We anticipate installation in early November. The center was recently painted, and staff are offering programs, including Creekside Storytime on Mondays at 11:30 a.m., and ARTimals art programs on the second and fourth Saturday of each month. The center is also hosting a California Coastal Cleanup Day event from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 21, 2024.

7. ABC Public Notice

Zoo café Bean Sprouts received its Public Notice of Application to Sell Alcoholic Beverages from the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The notice will be posted in the zoo ticket booth for the required 30 days.

8. Giant River Otter and Primate Trails

This project is under construction with contractor G.B. Cooke, and proceeding swiftly. Remaining tasks include installing stainless steel netting for the primate habitat and pathways, and completing the indoor animal facilities. We are optimistic for completion of construction by end of 2024.

9. Groundwater Treatment Construction

The Orange County Water District and City of Santa Ana PWA Water Resources department broke ground in the east end of the zoo overflow parking lot on new water treatment facilities. The construction is expected to last for about a year. Parking at the zoo will be impacted for the foreseeable future.

10. Alligator Pond

Work on the habitat intended for a Chinese alligator has progressed and its pond reconstruction is nearly complete. While there is not a timeline yet for an alligator arrival, it is exciting for the safety fencing in the farm to come down and to see the new waterfall feature in action.

11. Rainwater Capture in the Farm

Greywater Corps is making progress on installation of a rainwater capture system for buildings in the farm. You can see the water storage tanks of various sizes next to the barn and Carriage House buildings. The tanks will capture water from the roofs of those buildings, and stored water will be deployable through the farm irrigation system.

12. Storytime at the Zoo

The zoo offers weekly storytimes on Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m. at the Rip Ribble stage in the Crean Family Farm. Monday storytime – Leer Lunes - is bilingual in Spanish.

13. HEART Program

The zoo is a site for the City's low-cost mobile spay and neuter clinic for dogs and cats with HEART. This program brings services to pet owners who reside in the Qualified Census Tracts areas in Santa Ana. The program runs through the end of the year and more information is available at <https://heart4pets.org/spay-neuter/>

14. Movie in the Park at the Zoo

Finishing out the Summer Movies in the Park series, the zoo presented "Tarzan" (1999 version) on Friday, July 26. This free event was popular for its second year, with over 1000 moviegoers in attendance.

VOLUNTEERS

1. Volunteer Updates

The zoo welcomes volunteers to its next new volunteer orientation in October. Additional information is available at <https://www.santaanazoo.org/volunteer-at-the-zoo/>.

FUNDRAISING

1. Primate Forest

FOSAZ and City staff continue to work together on the capital campaign for the Primate Forest. FOSAZ is looking to hire a capital campaign manager and campaign consultant in the near future.

This is the largest capital campaign we have embarked on for zoo improvements, and will help us replace the oldest infrastructure in the zoo.

2. Zoofari

Zoofari is the zoo's premier fundraising event, and features live and silent auctions, outdoor dinner, animals, and dancing. Port of Call Zoofari was held August 17, 2024. For updates, see <https://www.santaanazoo.org/zoofari-gala/>.

3. Extreme Heat Grant

Zoo staff completed application for an ICARP Grant Programs/Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program grant. Funds will be used for: acquisition, installation, and implementation of a Big Hanna composting unit to reduce zoo's carbon footprint, utilize an abundant resource on grounds, and share the process and product with the community. We are awaiting news on this grant application.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact

EXHIBIT(S)

Meeting Date Display

Submitted By:

Ethan Fisher, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Deputy Director (Zoo)

Approved By:

Hawk Scott, Executive Director Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Agency