

Abilene Zoo

Elephant Management
Resource Manual

+ Diagram of Elephant
Exhibit

+ Zoo Master Plan

20 ~~20~~ pages follow

Abilene Zoological Gardens

Elephant Management Program Resource Manual

2002

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Section 1

Elephant Management Policies

The elephant program at the Abilene Zoo will be managed using protected contact protocols. By AZA definition, protected contact is defined as:

"Handling of an elephant when the keeper and the elephant do not share the same unrestricted space. Typically in this system the keeper had contact with an elephant through a protective barrier of some type, while the elephant is not spatially confined and may leave the work area at will."

Staff

The following personnel are approved to shift elephants and operate hydraulic doors.

Director: Jeff Bullock
Curator: Mike Higgins
Mammal Supervisor: Stephanie DeGesero
Area 1 keeper: Tammy Finstad
Area 1 keeper: James O'Brien
Maintenance director: Rayetta Dorman
Herp/Fish supervisor: Becky Irby

No other staff is permitted to operate hydraulic doors and/or shift elephants without prior approval of Elephant Management Team

Elephant Management Team members:
Manager: Stephanie DeGesero (mammal supervisor)
Members: Jeff Bullock, Mike Higgins, Tammy Finstad, James O'Brien

Primary Elephant Team Keepers:
Stephanie DeGesero
Tammy Finstad
James O'Brien

The primary keepers are the only people designated to give the elephants commands unless in certain situations. Prior supervisor, curator, or director approval is required.

Statement of Purpose

The Abilene Zoological Gardens is dedicated to maintaining an elephant management program that is safe as possible for the animal keepers and zoo visitors while providing excellent husbandry and veterinary care for the zoo's two elephants. The Elephant Management Team will be responsible for all aspects of the elephant program. The elephant program will comply with all AZA guidelines and USDA regulations. The goals of the Abilene Zoological Gardens elephant program are excellence in safety, husbandry, veterinary care, education, scientific study, and customer service.

Monthly or every other month meetings will be held with all members of the elephant management team. The team manager will announce the meeting date, time, and location.

A meeting agenda by the manager and notes during the meeting will also be taken.

Elephant Barn Protocol
0.2 African Elephants (Tanzy & Tanya)
Protocol when two primary elephant keepers are present

Communication is paramount in the elephant barn, both trainers should discuss let-out or let-in plans with each other prior to beginning protocol

AM duties

1. Turn on Elephant Restraint Chute (ERC) at wall switch. Open rear door and barn door to allow Tanzy access to chute
2. Clean and rake yard. Remove all fecal piles and loose hay laying in yard. Drain and refill pool if needed or on scheduled cleaning day. Rinse concrete if time and weather permit
3. Press Start button on hydraulic barn separator gate
4. Once yard is cleaned, elephants are ready to go out

"Let Out" Procedures

Two people must be present in order to let out elephants

Commands used:

1. "Back up"-bridge once rear reaches back of stall
2. "Kneel"-bridge once front knees are on floor and trunk is up
3. "Steady"-very important-reinforce with voice if attempt made to break from kneel
4. Open middle gate
5. Open front gate to chute
6. At handler's discretion, release Tanzy using "All-right" as release word
7. Release Tanya using "All-right" as release word
8. Once both elephants are out in yard, close front gate of chute
9. Close rear gate and turn of ERC
10. Feed one bale of hay in yard; do not put any hay on east corner of yard - doing this to avoid aggression between elephants. Also, do not put any other types of treats in this location

Begin Barn clean-up

1. Remove water barrels from stall front and place in front corner of barn alley
2. Scrape and remove all feces and hay from barn
3. Rinse stalls: including ceiling, walls, and stall fronts
4. Hose down stalls with ecolyzer using sprayer
5. Allow ecolyzer to sit for at least 10 minutes

6. Rinse thoroughly

"Set Up" Procedures

1. Turn on ERC and middle barn gate
2. Chain water barrels to stall fronts and begin filling each with water
3. Place one bale of hay in each corner of stall. Tanzy-front right, Tanya-front left
4. Place grain buckets against wall opposite each stall

****Two people must be present to bring elephants inside****

"Let In" Procedures

Keeper that brings elephants from yard to barn must make sure to say, "Elephants are coming in" to the other keeper before going to get them

Commands Used:

1. Have both elephants "back-up" to concrete pad-bridge once both are there
2. "Kneel"- bridge once both are in position
3. "All-right"-releases both elephants to come inside. Tanya will enter first, then Tanzy
4. Once inside, each trainer has elephant "back-up" to back wall, "kneel" and "steady"
5. Close barn door and middle barn door
6. While elephant is still in kneel position and trunk is up, pour grains into stall
7. Release elephant using "All-right" as release word
8. Remove empty grain buckets
9. Close front and rear chute doors and turn off chute at power switch, put remote back into holder
10. Turn off middle barn door
11. Turn off main barn lights and exit barn (only turn off right switch, leave night light on all of the time)
12. Lock main barn door

Things to Remember

When giving commands:

1. Always say animal's name first, then give command
2. Bridge accordingly and give food reward only when appropriate
3. Try to refrain from repeating commands- really reinforce a response at the first request
4. Maintain a positive training situation. If elephant becomes stressed or annoyed, walk away for a few minutes and try again later.

5. There are always changes to the training going on at elephant program by the primary keepers, this protocol is a basic outline to follow for people who may not be primary keepers but are approved to shift elephants.

The following protocol is when only one primary elephant keeper is present:

A secondary back-up person must be present at all times for safety reasons. This person is responsible for radioing for assistance and calling for help should an emergency arise with the keeper and the elephants

1. Keeper follows same procedures as listed above except he/she gives all commands to both elephants.
2. The only reason one primary keeper would be present is due to staffing issues and also to maintain consistency in training of the elephants.
3. The elephant keeper is only to have the elephants perform the basic let-out or let-in procedures. No additional training of the elephants is permitted unless two primary keepers are present.
4. If two primary keepers are on zoo grounds, both keepers must work the elephants together.
5. The back-up person is to give no commands but is permitted to operate the hydraulic doors and/or feed the grains during the let-in procedures.

As of July 16, 2002, a recommendation was made by the zoo director to approve only primary keepers are to give commands to the elephants. In the event that only one primary keeper is on grounds, that one keeper is authorized to give the elephants the basic let-out or let-in commands alone with a secondary person present for safety reasons. This policy was adopted in order to maintain consistency within the elephant-training program. The secondary person can be anyone from the keeper staff and this person's responsibility is to only provide a secondary person to call for help in the event of an emergency. This person is not to give any commands or operate any hydraulic gates unless they have been authorized to do so by the elephant management team.

Elephant Specimen Information
"Tanzy"

"Tanzy" came to the Abilene Zoo in 1998. She is approximately 43 years old. At the time she came here, we had one female approximately 19 years old. "Tanzy" came to the Abilene Zoo from a free contact program at the Oklahoma City Zoo. She has had a history of aggression towards her keepers and also other elephants. Upon her arrival, major aggression was displayed by "Tanzy" towards "Tanya". This aggression has decreased considerably and adaptations were made to the stall "Tanzy" occupies to provide safer conditions for the keepers. In recent months, "Tanzy" has responded extremely well to the changes in staff, training philosophies, and techniques within the elephant program and has truly become a considerably more manageable elephant than in years past.

Current diet:

4 ½ lbs. Oats

4 ½ bs. Horse & Mule

½ cup clovite, ½ cup stock salt, 1 Tbsp. Cattle mineral

Tuberculosis test dates and results: Week of April 1, 2002

Results: all negative

Date of last visual exam by the vet:

May 7, 2002 by Dr. Hembree

Date of recent fecal examinations: all negative

Feb 19, 2002

May 7, 2002

June 11, 2002

Elephant Specimen Information "Tanya"

Tanya came to the Abilene Zoo in 1981 after she had been wild caught during a culling of a herd in Zimbabwe. She was approximately 2 years old upon arrival here at the zoo. She came to the zoo with a male of approximately the same age from the same herd she came from. The genetic relationship between "Tanya" and the male named "Ahmed" is unknown but they lived here at the zoo together until his death in 1992. In 1997, she was sent to the Caldwell Zoo in Tyler, Texas during the renovation of the elephant barn and yard in order to convert the free contact program into a protected program. In 1998, the zoo received a 43 year old female from the Oklahoma City Zoo. During free contact, "Tanya" was a very manageable elephant and continues to be easy-going in protected contact. Future training goals with "Tanya" include reproductive assessment and possible artificial insemination.

Current diet:

4 ½ lbs. Oats

4 ½ lbs. Horse & Mule

½ cup clovite, ½ cup stock salt, 1 Tbsp. Cattle mineral

Various produce in treat bucket each morning

Tuberculosis test performed:

Week of April 1, 2002

Results- negative

Last visual exam by the veterinarian:

May 7, 2002 by Dr. Hembree

Recent fecal examination dates: All fecals negative

Feb. 19, 2002

May 7, 2002

June 11, 2002

Elephant Program Enrichment Policy

It has been clearly documented that a solid enrichment program is needed in order to provide the mental and physical stimulation to elephants in captivity. Despite the small staff size, enrichment in some form should be provided to the elephants at a minimum once daily. A varying array of enrichment is necessary to properly stimulate the elephants' senses. Keepers are to log all enrichment provided to the elephants in either the daily data sheets located in the elephant barn or in the mammal enrichment notebook located in the keeper breakroom. All enrichment that has not been previously tested should be approved by supervisor prior to introduction to the elephants. Enrichment can focus on both the exhibit areas and also the barn holding areas. Attached is a list of enrichment tested and approved for use with the Abilene Zoo elephant program. Also attached is an approved browse list for the elephants.

Tested and Approved Elephant Enrichment

Food:

Allow visitors to throw some of the morning produce to the elephants from the visitor viewing area

Any fruit available

Any vegetable available

Apple peelings

Bread

Browse-in yard and/or stalls

Cooked green beans

Flakes of alfalfa (small amounts)

Grass clippings scattered in piles around yard

Onions

Place evening grains in boxes and give to them in stalls

Place evening grains in paper grocery sacks

Place grains or hay in plastic 50-gallon barrels with holes cut out and hung from stall

Potatoes and peelings

Produce frozen in 5 gallon buckets with chains in them to allow hanging

Scatter and/or hide morning produce pieces around yard

Stock salt piles scattered around yard

Sunflower seeds

Variety of produce placed in empty apple boxes put in yard

Vary location of evening hay bale within stall

Whole coconuts

Whole watermelons

Olfactory:

Basil

Garlic

Old shavings from rat pens

Onion powder

Oregano

Vanilla extract sprayed on structures in yard

Auditory:

Various types of music played in barn for short periods of time

Structural:

Bring in a load of dirt

Chew chains attached in various locations

Create wallow in area of yard

Disturb dirt in yard with a front end loader

Metal pipe with chain running through it attached to structure

Piñatas

Plastic 50-gallon barrel placed in stall

Plastic barrel lid hung in yard or in stall

Plastic trash can lid to play fetch or leave in stall overnight

Plastic trash cans filled with leaves in yard (approved browse leaves only)

Street sweeper attached with a chain to solid (non-perimeter fence) structure in yard

Tires chained in yard

Other:

Spray down with water hose

Scrub with stiff brush

Training sessions

Exhibit and Barn Mechanical & Layout Information

The Elephant Restraint Chute (ERC) was installed at the Abilene Zoo in 1997 by Dusty and Bill Cummins from Garden City, Kansas. It is the responsibility of the primary elephant keepers to regularly check the hydraulic fluid levels of the chute motor and the hydraulic barn door motor. Any problems with the ERC should be reported to the mammal supervisor, curator, and Building Maintenance Supervisor immediately. There is a reserve motor located in the maintenance shop in case the current one should experience major problems. Other aspects of the barn keepers are responsible for include making sure the sprinklers, electrified fence, and perimeter fencing are all working properly and in good condition at all times. Attached is a layout of the elephant yard.

Future plans for the elephant yard include replacing the electrified fencing with electrified cable and steel pipes welded to the current steel perimeter fence.

Care should always be taken when presenting any new items, especially enrichment items, that the mechanical and structural integrity of the elephant exhibit and barn are never jeopardized.

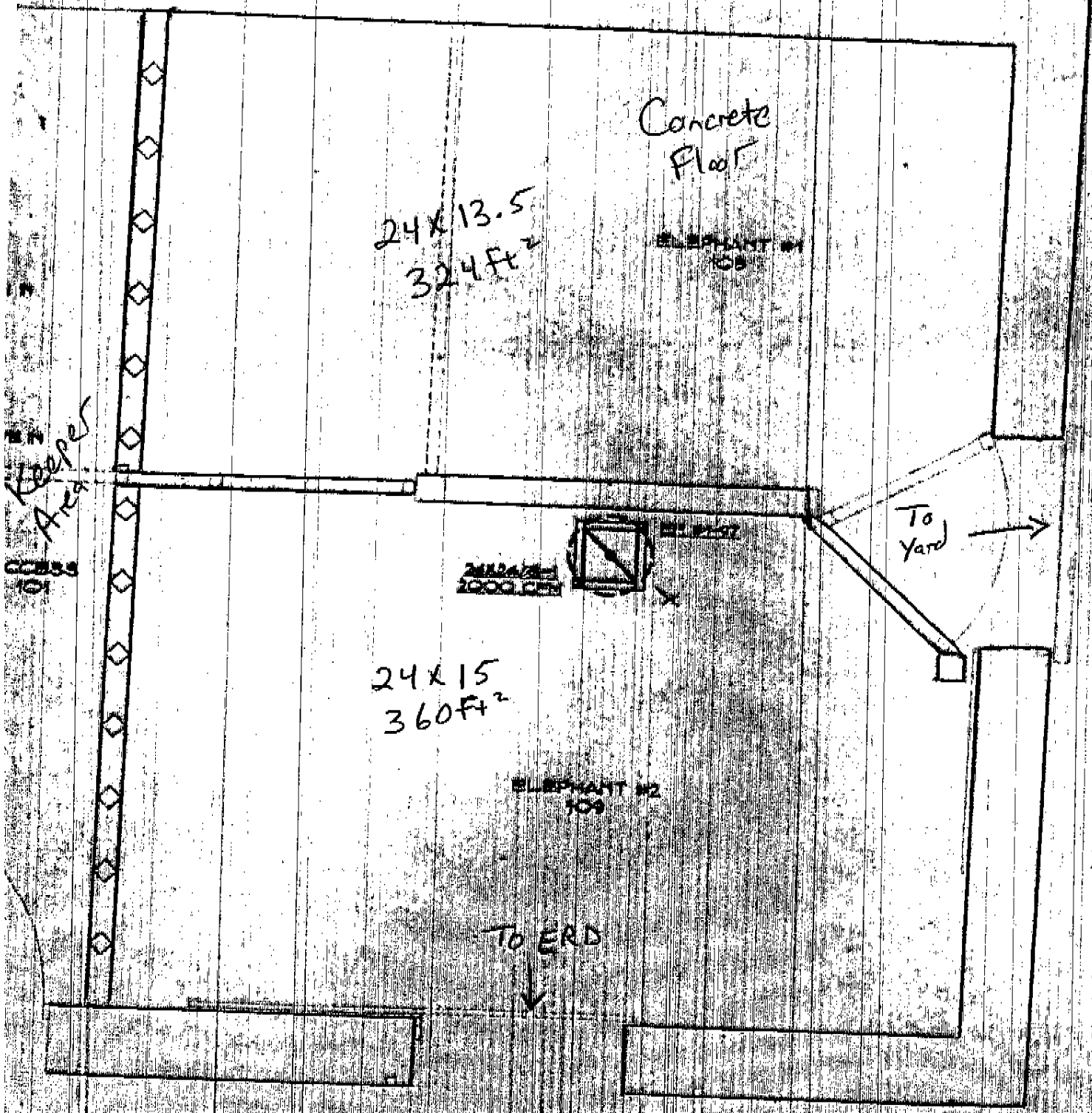
Barn Rules

Elephants in Barn:

1. From 8am-10am and 4pm-5pm: Only authorized personnel allowed in barn
2. After Dark- No personnel permitted in barn unless emergency situation exists
3. Two people must be present when cleaning barn when temperatures are below 40 degrees or 45 degrees with wind
4. Only authorized personnel permitted to shift elephants
5. Always lock barn doors when elephants are inside barn

Elephants Out of Barn:

1. Entry into barn only permitted with authorized personnel present
2. No socializing around barn if work remains to be done
3. Any person can help clean barn but one elephant team member must be present
4. No ankus allowed in or around barn and/or elephants



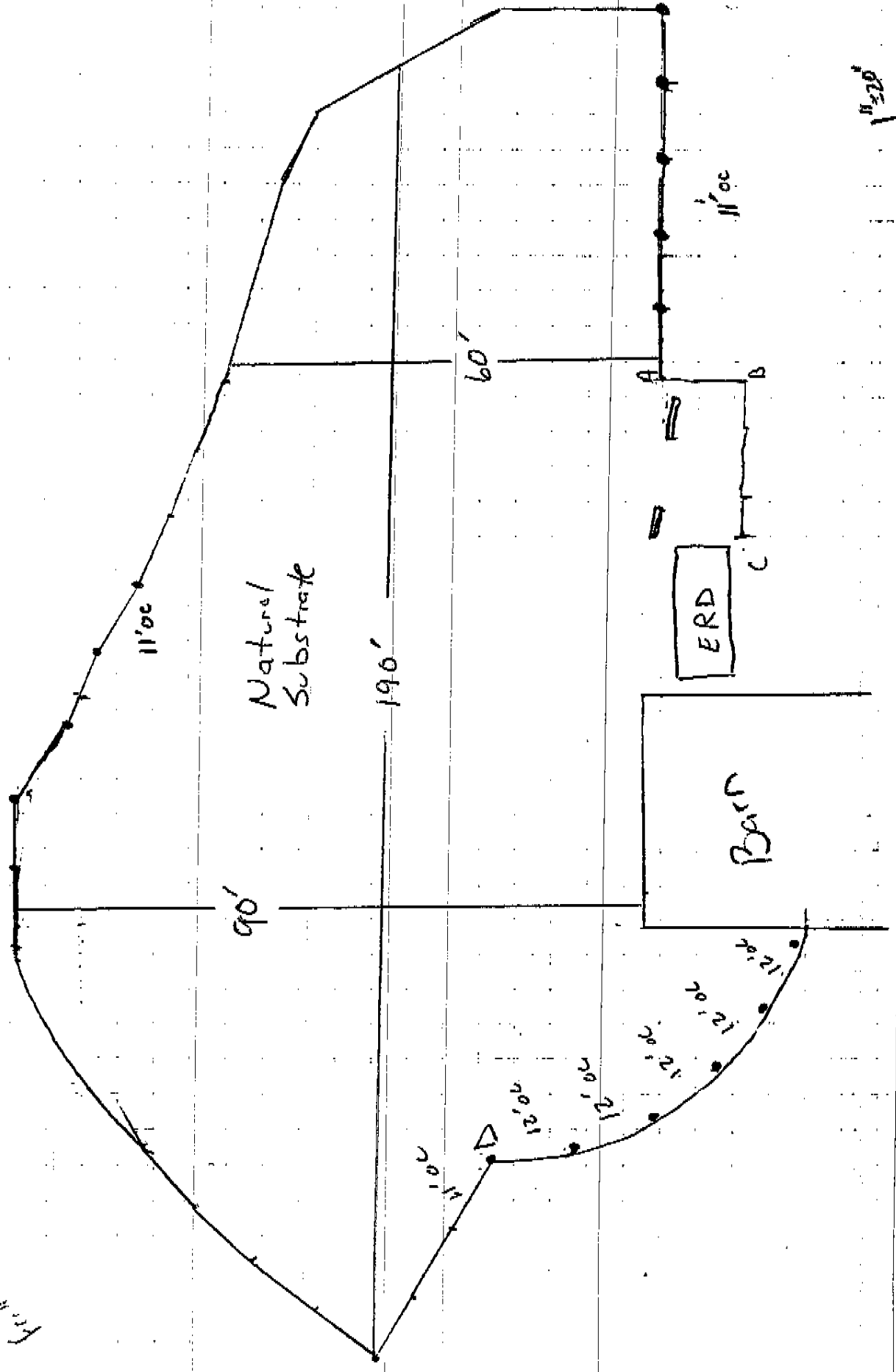
NOTES INDICATED BY NUMBER IN 

1. 6" FLUE FROM WH #1-97 UP THRU ROOF IN EXISTING OPENING TO APPROVED CAP.
2. TURN 1/2" COPPER COLD WATER

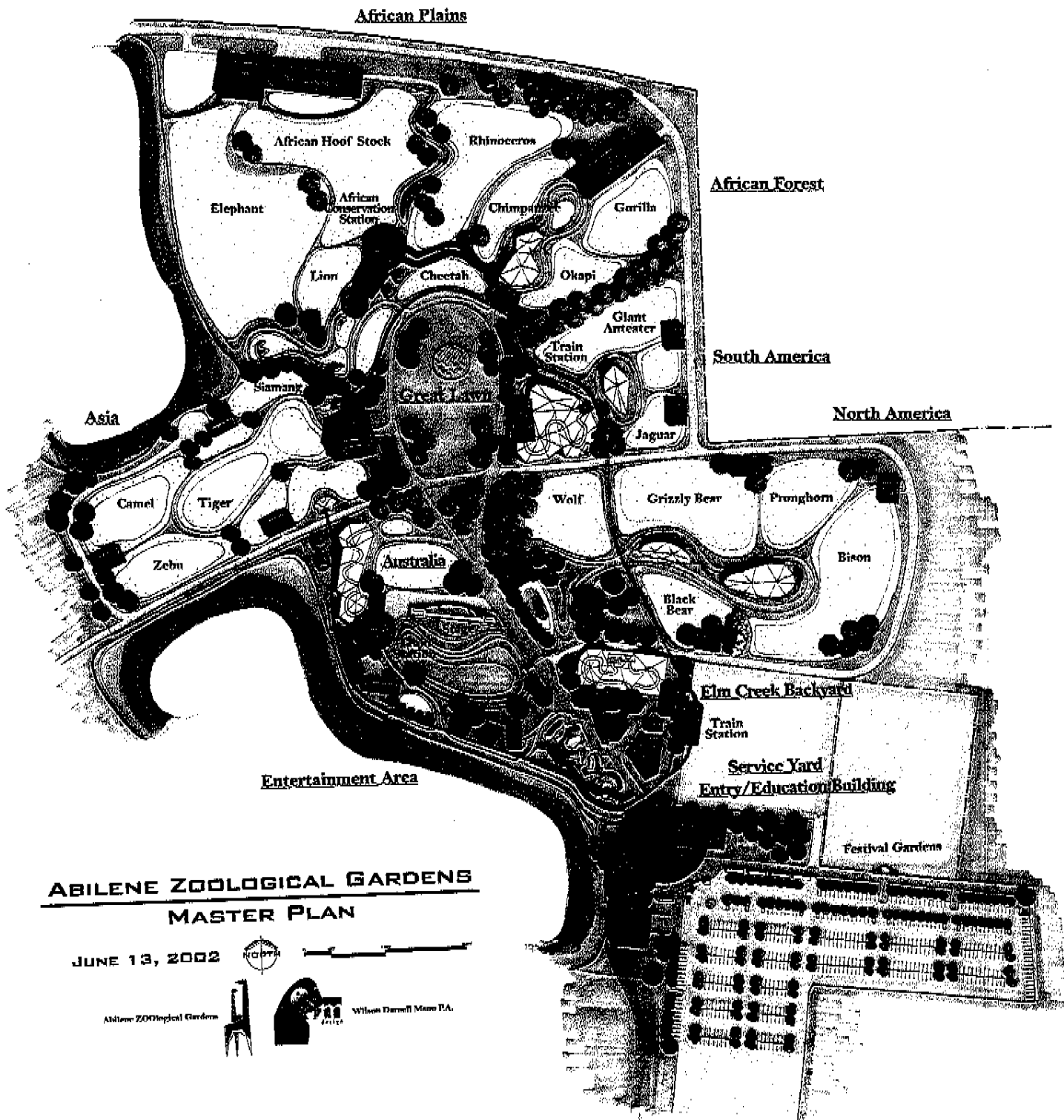
1" = 20'

Exhibit Fencing ↑ N

Front

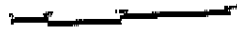


1" = 20'



**ABILENE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS
MASTER PLAN**

JUNE 13, 2002



Abilene Zoological Gardens



Wilson Darrell Mann P.A.