

**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

the
accreditation visiting committee
report



**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

**Final Report
Of The Visiting Committee
To The Accreditation Commission**

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION

BREC'S BATON ROUGE ZOO
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

UNDER REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION

Initial Date(s) Visited: December 19 & 20, 2006

Date(s) Visited: January 10, 2008

Final Review & Hearing on: March 6, 2008

ACCREDITATION COMMISSION PRIMARY REVIEWER

Ed Diebold, Director of Animal Collections, Riverbanks Zoo & Garden, Columbia, SC

VISITING COMMITTEE INSPECTOR

signature on file

TEAM CHAIR

Operations Inspector: Hayes Caldwell, Executive Director, Caldwell Zoo, Tyler, TX

NOTE: This is an official document of the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and becomes an intrinsic part of the institution's accreditation processing. The accreditation program is conducted in confidence; only the Accreditation Commission, related AZA staff, Director/CEO of the applicant institution, and Chair of the institution's governing authority shall be provided copies by AZA.

BREC'S BATON ROUGE ZOO
ACCREDITATION FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION NARRATIVE REPORT
January 10, 2008

On January 10, 2008 I made a one-day visit to the BREC's Baton Rouge Zoo to perform a follow-up inspection. The Zoo has made significant progress since the Commission Meeting of March 25-27, 2007. The following are observations made during that visit regarding the issues that were of concern to the Commission:

- 1). Salaries of both the Director and the Assistant Director have increased since the previous inspection. Their salaries are reaching the top of the ranges for each position due to longevity and recent pay, and cost of living increases. While their salaries may be comparable to some similar sized zoos in the region, the salary ranges for both positions remain low.
- 2). Elephant program non-compliant issues regarding policies, procedures, and documentation were reviewed and have been addressed. Records are duplicated and are available at computers located in the barn and the elephant manager's office. Jerry Hendry has been designated as elephant manager and has attended AZA's elephant management training course. Another elephant staff member, Jennifer Fortune, is scheduled to attend the training course in 2008. Elephant safety audits and TB testing have been performed and documented. Elephant enrichment logs have been utilized providing documentation of these activities.

The elephant policy has been revised and includes individual animal profiles. Aggressive behavior was documented with the profiles ("Bozie" has a tendency to not cooperate with new keepers; the most recent elephant incident report of aggressive behavior had not been noted in the profile). As the Zoo continues to plan its new expanded elephant facility, management has determined that protected contact will be incorporated in their elephant management system. With the transition of staff experienced in free contact the analysis of the management system and the timing of the conversion to protected contact becomes an important consideration.

- 3). Substandard facilities of the Zoo are being addressed. There are four bear grottos that were deemed outdated during the last inspection. The brown bear exhibit is now empty and the zoo has built a privacy fence to block the view until it can be renovated. Two other grottos now have been renovated to house jaguars and spectacled bears. The jaguar habitat is an enclosed habitat with wire and lush plantings. The spectacled bears have an open grotto with some of the concrete being replaced by turf and other plantings as well as logs and other furniture. The black bear exhibit still contains quite a bit of concrete but exhibit "furniture" and enrichment items have been added.

During my visit the big cat exhibits were empty and signage was in place stating that these facilities were going to be renovated. The staff told me that bids were to let the following week for the Realm of the Tiger renovation and expansion.

Four new restroom facilities are under construction. Also included in this project are the renovated entry and a new conservation plaza, which will feature conservation related graphics, SSP banners of species exhibited at the zoo and a granite globe.

List of Continuing Concerns/Achievements

PART I:

Items of Concern Noted by Visiting Committee

INSTITUTION DIRECTOR: •IMPORTANT• The items listed below were noted as being of concern during the follow-up inspection. These items may include concerns that appeared on the original list and continue to be of concern, or they may be new concerns that the follow-up team has identified. Be prepared to verbally update the Commission regarding how any new concerns listed below are being addressed. Please provide timelines for expected completion and a copy of any bids, contracts, plans, or other documentation supporting intent.

In addition to this list of concerns the Commission will receive a narrative report generated by the follow-up team (you will receive a copy of that report after the hearing). It is possible that, after reviewing this information, and the written update you have prepared based on the original list of concerns, the Commission may have issues or concerns *that are not included below*. If so, these will be discussed at the hearing.

MAJOR CONCERNS REMAINING

1. Current salaries for upper management have improved due to 5% wage increases given to all employees annually plus an additional 5% cost of living increase that has been given the past couple of years. However, the salary ranges for these positions remain low for similar sized institutions in the region.

MAJOR CONCERNS NEW

LESSER CONCERNS REMAINING

LESSER CONCERNS NEW

1). The previous elephant program concerns have been addressed. As the Zoo continues to plan its new expanded elephant facility, management has determined that protected contact will be incorporated in their elephant management system. With the transition of staff experienced in free contact, the analysis of the management system and the timing of the conversion to protected contact becomes an important consideration.

PART II:

Points of Particular Achievement Noted by Visiting Committee

INSTITUTION DIRECTOR: During the inspection the Visiting Committee was particularly impressed with the items listed below.

1). The amount of new construction going on at the zoo is impressive and is addressing the areas of concern noted during the previous inspection in regard to substandard facilities. The newly renovated flamingo cove and Giants of the Islands (Galapagos and Aldabra tortoises) exhibits are esthetically pleasing and add to the quality of the exhibits at the Baton Rouge Zoo.

Association of Zoos & Aquariums
Executive Office
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3314
(301) 562-0777; fax (301) 562-0888