The mission of the Oregon Zoo Foundation is to foster community pride and involvement in the Oregon Zoo and to secure financial support for the zoo’s conservation, education and animal welfare programs.

Welcome home.

Polar bear Nora settles into a world-class habitat.

Today, in the heart of your zoo, the construction fencing is gone. Excavators and bulldozers have moved on. In their place, Douglas firs, forsythia and Western sword ferns are taking root along pathways that wind from one breathtaking view to another. Polar Passage is ready, and we are thrilled to welcome Nora home — she lived here as a young cub and won everyone’s hearts with her playful antics.

Now, Nora can lounge on hilltops with views of her condor, chimpanzee, and elephant neighbors. Or frolic in mounds of snow-like flakes and move freely between two deep saltwater pools that nourish her skin and fur.

Decades of polar bear care informed the design of Polar Passage. “We looked at what we learned working with Conrad, Tasul and Nora, and we drew on the experience of other leading zoos and aquariums around the world,” said Amy Cutting, who oversees the North America and marine mammal areas at the zoo.

Gone are the old concrete surfaces, remnants of a bygone era when zoos around the world painted polar bear areas white to look like snow and ice.

At Polar Passage, bears will live in a setting more akin to the Arctic tundra, with logs and rocks to climb, and digging pits to explore. Soft, natural substrates are everywhere in a space four times the size of the zoo’s former polar bear habitat.

The pack impact.

Our generous pack of donors is giving $1.9 million to support these enriching features in Polar Passage:

• A cooling cave and a nose-to-nose viewing area for guests
• A “smell port” where bears can get within sniffing distance of visitors (and their snacks!)
• Educational displays to connect guests to zoo bears and their wild counterparts
• Demonstration areas that let guests see animal-care staff training bears
• Guest seating with awe-inspiring views of polar bears as they dive and swim

Welcome home.

Nora makes a splash!
Welcome home. (Cont.)

Demonstration areas allow care staff to conduct training sessions in public, bringing what was once a behind-the-scenes activity out for all to see. Guests will witness everything from snack-time interactions to training that lets the bears participate in their own health care, making exams less stressful. (The Oregon Zoo was the first zoo in the world to train polar bears to voluntarily allow blood draws!)

A swim flume, designed to help scientists understand the caloric requirements of wild polar bears, will also help Nora stay limber as she matures. The flume and the care staff’s expertise make the Oregon Zoo an ideal home for Nora. She had metabolic bone disease as a cub and has permanent skeletal structural issues that give her an unusual gait and will require special management throughout her lifetime.

A female companion is expected to join Nora in the fall. In the meantime, we’ll all have time to get reacquainted with Portland’s favorite playful polar bear — welcome home, Nora!

“We looked at what we learned working with Conrad, Tasul and Nora, and we drew on the experience of other leading zoos and aquariums around the world.”

Amy Cutting, Curator

Polar bears like it cool, elephants like it warm.

In a large field across from the shiny, new polar bear habitat, Asian elephant Samudra forages, much as a wild elephant would. Through the earth beneath his feet runs 160,000 feet of coiled pipe. This oversized “Slinky” is part of an elaborate underground geothermal loop that helps keep the elephant family warm and the polar bears cool.

“This system works the same way as your household refrigerator,” said Jim Mitchell, zoo construction manager. “The condenser that cools the coils in your refrigerator produces heat, which is expelled away from the coils with a fan. Our system has just added another step: capturing that heat for use elsewhere rather than blowing it all away.”

“Gradually, we may eliminate the need for fossil fuels at the majority of buildings and habitats here,” Mitchell added. From this “Slinky” heating and cooling system to bird-friendly glass, sustainable innovations abound in your zoo.

OREGON ZOO FOUNDATION
WINE CLUB

Save the date!

Join us for an Oregon Zoo Foundation Wine Club virtual wine event, featuring legendary chef Leif Benson and the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 8 and visit ozfwineclub.com to learn more.
On a crisp, bright day in February, Chloe walked her blanket over to a grassy spot in the sun and lay down for a nap. Leah lounged on a platform 20 feet above, while Delilah foraged for snacks in the day room. The zoo’s family of chimpanzees moved in to Primate Forest last fall and have been making themselves at home in their new digs ever since.

“Leah was the first one into the new space,” said keeper Colleen Reed. “She went straight to the top of one of the climbing structures. Everyone seemed very confident and relaxed. We heard lots of happy vocalizations, and they appeared to feel right at home.”

For the zoo’s primate care team, the most important priority was creating a complex space that gives the chimpanzees options about where to spend their time and with whom.

“I think we really did a good job with that,” senior keeper Asaba Mukobi said. “If they want to go hang inside, where it’s warm or air-conditioned, they have that choice.”

The day room features a 6-foot-deep, composting bio-floor that brings a piece of the forest indoors, plus a pair of 26-foot-tall, floor-to-ceiling climbing structures. A simulated termite mound encourages natural foraging behavior, and five roof hatches allow keepers to scatter food from above. Many of the features at Primate Forest — such as a stream, waterfall, large boulders, logs and climbing structures — were made possible through gifts to the Oregon Zoo Foundation’s Heart of the Oregon Zoo campaign.

To Mukobi, Primate Forest represents an incredible community coming together for the animals.

“Not only was it the knowledge of the keepers and zoo management, but it’s our donors and the people who love and care for primates, who wanted to do something unique and amazing for the animals,” he said. “I’m so, so grateful for their support and dedication to the primates.”

To learn how your donations are making an impact, email foundation@oregonzoo.org or call 503-220-2493.
In 2006, the Oregon Zoo, Metro and the Oregon Zoo Foundation envisioned a new zoo – with sustainable infrastructure, improved animal welfare and increased access to conservation education. The foundation got to work, garnering support for a $125 million bond measure that would ultimately transform 40% of the zoo’s 64-acre campus and build new education and veterinary medical centers alongside thrilling new habitats for Asian elephants, California condors, primates, polar bears and black rhinos.

Foundation board members, volunteers and zoo staff conducted surveys and focus groups to tap into what mattered most to people about their zoo. They made phone calls, wrote letters and gathered with business leaders, parent-teacher committees, cities and citizens from across the Metro region. They hosted talks and shared bumper stickers, pins and pamphlets about the zoo, its animals, conservation efforts and future. It was a monumental effort that will serve this community for generations to come.

In 2008, the zoo bond measure passed, and each subsequent year moved us closer to a zoo transformed.

“The beauty and power of the Oregon Zoo is reflected in the commitment of the hundreds of community volunteers who show up with pride to work at the zoo, serve on the board of trustees and help others forge deep connections with animals and the natural world,” said Sharla Settlemier, long-time zoo supporter and current board president.

Today, as we celebrate these extraordinary new habitats at your zoo, we’re also celebrating the visionary work of all who made a new zoo possible – volunteers, members, donors, board members, Metro Councilors and staff from the zoo and foundation – thank you all for being the heart of the Oregon Zoo!

Preserve what you love.

A gift for those who follow.
Liz and David Woodson care deeply for wildlife and wild places. The Oregon Zoo’s conservation efforts – advocacy for healthy waterways and work to save animals like California condors from extinction – inspired them to leave a gift in their will, directed to the Oregon Zoo Foundation’s Conservation Endowment Fund.

“We’ve seen so much change in our lifetimes and worry that future generations won’t experience a world with butterflies or remarkable sea creatures,” they explained. “This gift was a concrete step we could take right now to preserve what we can for those who follow.”

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Endowment funds are instrumental to the zoo’s financial sustainability; they help create a reliable stream of income to sustain vital conservation efforts. To learn how you can create a legacy by making a gift in your will or through a beneficiary designation to the Oregon Zoo Foundation, email susan.daigle@oregonzoo.org or call 503-914-6029.
Getting back to going out.

A recent survey from Banfield Pet Hospital found 32% of pet owners have asked their veterinarian about how to make a return to the workplace easier on their pets. As life starts to gravitate toward some new version of normal, animal-care experts suggest working with your pets now, to prepare for when you start venturing into the world without them.

Whenever Oregon Zoo care staff anticipate a change — like a new animal arriving or an upcoming trip to the Veterinary Medical Center — they get to work helping the animal acquire the skills to stay comfortable and relaxed.

“I begin by looking at the space,” said Julie Christie, a senior keeper in the zoo’s Africa section. “Gauge their comfort level and make it a positive area.”

For example, if crate training a puppy, Christie would add toys, treats and comfy bedding to the crate, and start with very small increments of time, which she would gradually increase while adding steps, like opening and closing the crate door.

“Make them feel safe,” she adds. “It’s a very positive thing for them — you go into the crate and very good things happen.”

While every pet’s needs might be different, here are some of Christie’s recommendations:

• Know what motivates your pet: for some animals, food might motivate, while others might rather have a favorite toy.
• Start with short training sessions and work up to the desired skill.
• Make the area feel secure, safe and homey. Know the animal’s natural behavior and give them what they need, like a hiding place or somewhere quiet.

Banfield Pet Hospital also recommends making sure your pet continues to get plenty of exercise, and focusing on positive reinforcement. Visit banfield.com for more tips to help set owners and pets up for success.

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This publication is produced on environmentally friendly paper with 30% post consumer waste fibers.

In 1982, only 22 California condors remained in the wild, and by 1987, the last of them were brought into human care in an attempt to save the species from extinction. Fast forward to the present: the California Condor Recovery Program — including efforts at the Oregon Zoo’s Jonsson Center for Wildlife Conservation — has boosted the population to around 500 birds, most of which are flying free. More than 70 chicks have hatched at the Jonsson Center since 2003, and more than 50 Oregon Zoo-reared birds have gone out to field pens for release.

To aid in the zoo’s recovery efforts, visible security cameras manufactured by Oregon-based FLIR Systems are providing 24/7 observation of the condors, which is especially important during breeding season. With the cameras offering a watchful eye around the clock, keepers can monitor condor behavior from a safe distance so as not to disrupt nature’s work. Minimizing the condors’ exposure to people increases their chances of surviving, and breeding, in the wild.

The Heart of the Oregon Zoo campaign includes a $2 million investment for the conservation of native species like California condors. To learn how you can support this important work, email foundation@oregonzoo.org or call 503-220-2493.
Heart of the Oregon Zoo campaign.

Help us reach the finish line!
With generous support from our pack of donors, we have helped create wild and engaging habitats while investing in the zoo’s conservation, education and animal welfare programs.

To learn more about supporting these habitats and programs, email foundation@oregonzoo.org or call 503-220-2493.

It takes a herd to build a home, and we can’t do this work without you.

Proud to have you in our pack.

For the animals.

Pride. It’s what we feel every day.

Pride in inspiring hope and action for wildlife. Pride in our shared commitment to animal welfare. Pride in a community eager to further the zoo’s mission. We are louder and stronger together.

The Oregon Zoo provides comprehensive care for its animals. The Oregon Zoo Foundation elevates that care through the contributions of countless individuals and organizations.

We ensure the zoo’s veterinarians, keepers, wildlife experts and management have the resources they need where they’re needed most.

We are dedicated to animal welfare at the zoo and to wildlife around the world. Our work is ongoing, and we do it for the animals.

Donations don’t just feed the animals. They raise the bar for animal care and welfare. They represent the zoo’s global impact. And they are a connection to you.

We are the Oregon Zoo Foundation.

Thanks to our signature partners: