

ZB9.1.7

World Society for the Protection of Animals



Monday, November 21st, 2011

To the Mayor and Council and members of Toronto Zoo Board of Management
c/o City Clerk's Office Secretariat
Toronto City Hall
2nd, 100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N2

Dear Sir or Madam,

Last April, I wrote to Toronto Zoo's Board of Management on behalf of the *World Society for the Protection of Animals* (WSPA) concerning Toronto Zoo's elephants. A Canadian registered charity, WSPA is one of the world's foremost animal protection organizations, with Special Consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Council of Europe, active animal welfare projects in more than 50 countries and more than 1000 partner organizations in more than 100 countries.

We applaud and support Council's recent decision to retire these elephants to the Performing Animal Welfare Society's California-based sanctuary just as we are grateful that the Board of Management first recognized the pressing need to retire and relocate the zoo's remaining elephants, as being in the best interests of the animals' health and well-being.

It is disappointing to learn that the Board of Management may now be considering a motion to ignore Council's decision, on the sole basis that the sanctuary has not been accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA).

As part our efforts to end the abuse of captive bears, WSPA has during the past few decades been pleased to establish, partner with and fund quite a number of sanctuaries the world over. Under their auspices, many animals, including bears, orangutans, *bonobos* and others, have been either rehabilitated and released or, in cases where their former captivity made them poor candidates for release, provided them with permanent homes. None of these sanctuaries was or is accredited by any zoo association for the simple reason that they are not zoos: they are sanctuaries.

At the Performing Animal Welfare Society sanctuary in California, the elephants would receive a level of care that easily exceeds the standards of care laid out by the AZA. The PAWS sanctuary is 80 acres, and features a 20,000 square foot state-of-the-art elephant barn. The elephants would receive 24-hour care from a team of more than 30 well-trained and compassionate keepers, wildlife specialists, and veterinarians, ensuring optimal animal health maintenance, disease prevention, behavioural enrichment and constant monitoring for all animals.

1/...2

90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 960, Toronto, ON M4P 2Y3
(416) 369-0044 or Toll-Free 1-800-363-9772
wspa@wspa.ca • www.wspa.ca

Canadian Charitable Registration # 12971 9076 RR0001



Page 2 of 2

Both PAWS and founder Pat Derby have been the recipients of numerous awards, including this year's Elaine La Russa Founders' Award, presented by the Animal Rescue Foundation and In Defense of Animals' Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.

We can't think of a better home for these elephants. We respectfully urge that Council's decision to send the elephants to the PAWS sanctuary be upheld. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Tohill
Senior Manager, Legislative and Public Affairs, WSPA Canada