

Conservation Science Plan 2021

Date: March 24, 2022

To: Toronto Zoo Board of Management

From: Director, Conservation Science

Wards: All

SUMMARY

Conservation Science at your Toronto Zoo is changing. We are aligning independent science initiatives and developing a multi-disciplinary technology-based approach that will help us broaden our understanding of the health and welfare needs of wildlife. We are launching this in support of your zoo's strategic, welfare and animal lives with purpose plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Conservation Science recommends that:

1. The Board of Management approves the Conservation Science Plan 2021 as shown in Attachment 1.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

There is no prior decision history available for this item.

COMMENTS

In late 2021, we formalized our interests and goals into the Conservation Science Plan - developing a roadmap that will allow us to redefine ourselves as we shift from

independent science initiatives to multi-disciplinary technology-based approaches that will help us broaden our understanding of the health and welfare needs of wildlife species particularly as they face ever-changing environments. Under the three pillars of Healthy Systems, Changing Environments and Sustainable Future, we will align our science initiatives to our zoo's Strategic, Technology, Welfare and Animal Lives with Purpose Plans. With our key academic and governmental partners, we aim to establish a data-driven future within the science units and across the zoo that will enhance our stewardship of wild species and spaces as well as support our varied communities: guests, public, donors, and more.

Your Toronto Zoo has made a commitment to fighting extinction. Conservation science is one of the essential foundations for ensuring that we can continue to serve the animals in our care as well as support their counterparts in the wild. The zoo has a long legacy of leadership in science and research as highlighted recently in Senator Klyne's speech in support of the Jane Goodall Act. In the first half-century of the zoo, we established world-renowned programs in reproductive, veterinary, and nutrition sciences, to which we have added welfare and species restoration sciences. As we reach the turning point of our 50th birthday, we have embarked on a journey towards inclusive conservation, technology-based monitoring and story-telling, and local and national partnerships for biodiversity science and biobanking centres of excellence.

The Conservation Science team has grown to include a diverse group of specialists ranging from biologists to technicians to graduate students. Along with the on-going financial support from the City of Toronto and the Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy, the science team members generate upwards of \$500,000 of grant funding each year. On top of our funding achievements, our success is measured in many ways, from the release of native species such as Blanding's turtles into Rouge National Urban park to the publication of original research content in scientific journals to the training of the next generation of conservationists.

CONTACT

Dr. Gabriela Mastromonaco
Director, Conservation Science
(416) 392-5980
gmastromonaco@torontozoo.ca

SIGNATURE

Dr. Gabriela Mastromonaco
Director, Conservation Science

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Conservation Science Plan 2021