

Wild Animal Orphanage

News Release

September 17, 2010

□

It was with a heavy but hopeful heart that the current Wild Animal Orphanage (WAO) Board of Directors unanimously voted on August 31, 2010, to dissolve the exotic animal sanctuary located in northwest San Antonio.

Due to over-population, under-funding and inadequate housing for the animals, the Board of Directors and Animal Caretakers must say good-bye to our long-time residents. But knowing that they will have larger environments to roam freely, along with a steady, nutritional diet is an exciting new chapter of their life to look forward to.

The WAO consist of two parcels, a 7-acre lot on Leslie Road and a 102-acre property on Talley Road. The current total of exotic residents is exactly 297, ranging from tigers, bears, lions, cougars, and wolves, and includes many primates such as chimpanzees, capuchins, and

baboons - amongst others.

Just this morning, our three lemurs are being transported to a new sanctuary in Mississippi. Last week, 22 bears were successfully introduced to their huge new habitat in Colorado. Wonderful new homes are lined up for approximately one-third of our remaining animals over the upcoming weeks, but that leaves almost 200 animals without a future plan.

Working together with the USDA, the Texas State Attorney General's Office Charitable Trust Division, and IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare), the WAO Board has signed a resolution to dissolve the sanctuary within sixty (60) days by relocating the animal collection to other facilities, realizing that it will take additional time to place some of these animals. Animals not healthy enough to withstand the rigors of transportation would receive veterinary care to prepare them for transport, and if deemed medically necessary by a veterinarian, the remainder would be euthanized.

However, without immediate donations, WAO risks violating the Animal Welfare Act. If the animals are not properly fed and cared for, the USDA will take enforcement actions, and WAO will be forced to surrender the animals. If this happens, and no immediate homes are found, measures up to and including euthanasia may ensue.

We are literally in a "do or die" situation.

Typically WAO's carnivores consume up to 500 pounds of meat per day... we need the community's help to feed these beautiful animals

and to keep the lights on... Our situation is so critical, that the Animal Caretakers' paychecks have bounced several times. We risk losing these valued and experienced employees. Thankfully, they have continued to show up for work every day to feed their beloved animals.

The priorities are feeding and caring for the animals, keeping the electricity turned on, and making all the necessary transportation and relocation arrangements - which include veterinary health certifications, fuel, and drivers.

We are reaching out to the community one last time for financial help to take care of these incredible animals. If they could talk, they would ask for more than what we are able to provide at this facility. It's our responsibility to make sure they have the best quality of life possible.

*We need **emergency bridge funding** to continue feeding and caring for these 297 animals, until they are on the road to another sanctuary.*

Please make an emergency donation through our website today. We have some tremendous challenges ahead, but with your support, we are confident that we can meet the goals we have set and avoid euthanizing a single animal.

Be assured that every dollar we spend is being closely monitored by the aforementioned agencies, and the current WAO board is committed and accountable to adhering to the fiduciary responsibilities required to feed and care for the animals.

Thank you so very much for your attention to this most urgent request!

Wild Animal Orphanage

Board of Directors

Suzanne L. Straw

Michelle Anthony Cryer

Chris Smith

□

*For press inquires, please contact WAO Board of Directors Secretary
Suzanne Straw at slstraw@yahoo.com*