



STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030





Land Acknowledgement

These are the lands of the Tribal signatories of the Treaty of Point Elliott (1855), whose stewardship for the waters, plants, land, and animal relatives in the Northwest has continued since time immemorial.

Woodland Park Zoo acknowledges this stewardship, the sovereign rights of the Tribal signatories, and our responsibility to join with these Tribes to inspire and advance the restoration of relationships between humans and the living world around us.

Lushootseed Language

g'əł dibəł, ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix', tiʔə? dəx'xubətəb ʔə ti tud'ix'qscəł ti tliiti ʔal bəkəltiu (1855). sg'aʔčəł swatix'łədčəł. ləcutix'dub ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' tul'ʔal tudi? tud'ix' pədtəb ti swatix'łəd ʔi ti swətix'łəd, ti q'ʊ? ʔi ti x'əlč, ti tətəčulbix' ʔi ti titčulbix'. sux'təb ʔə ti Woodland Park Zoo tiʔə? cədił ləcustix'dx' ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' ʔi ti sg'aʔs šəłxəčəbs dx'ʔal cl'əqid. huy, ʔuyayus ti Woodland Park Zoo ʔəsč'ʊ? ʔə ti d'ix' ʔaciłtalbix' dx'ʔal k'i ɬubəshəliʔtx's ti swatix'łəd ʔi ti bək' ʔucəłdalb ʔal ti swatix'łəd, ʔal ti q'ʊ? ʔi ti x'əlč, ʔal ti šqulg'əd. ti Woodland Park Zoo g'əl ʔabyid ti tətəčulbix' ʔi ti titčulbix' ʔə k'i shəliʔ. ʔəsxaʔtub ʔə ti Woodland Park Zoo g'əpaʔcutəs k'i bək' g'at dx'ʔal k'i sk'ax'ads tiʔə? qič syayus.

All Wildlife and Wild Places are Now in Human Care.

Our impact on this planet is profound and pervasive, affecting all life, lands, waters, and air, near and far. Consider then how we can use this influence for good, to power positive and collective change that lasts.

Our work is urgent. Trends in species extinctions, habitat degradation and climate change are alarming and require creative and effective solutions. We are at a critical point in the conservation of global ecosystems that requires massive participation to drive and sustain the pace and scale of needed change.

A world where everyone lives sustainably alongside wildlife and our shared habitats must be built equitably, with people of all backgrounds, abilities, means, and motivations welcomed to

and equipped for the cause. Our commitment is clear: we are in a unique position to propel a broad social commitment for wildlife conservation that redefines the relationships between people, our planet and all its creatures.

We call this *participatory conservation*, and this form of people-powered conservation is at the heart of our mission to save wildlife and inspire everyone to make conservation a priority in their lives. Woodland Park Zoo is uniquely positioned as an agent of environmental change. As a conservation organization, we build upon our proud history of innovation and leadership. We are committed to doing more to save wildlife and their habitats, by bringing sustainable solutions to wildlife and habitats in the Pacific Northwest and around the world

through field conservation programs and activating people to take positive actions on behalf of wildlife.

As we finished our previous 2018-2025 Strategic Plan, we look back at extraordinary times. The COVID pandemic, while hugely disruptive, also reaffirmed our zoo as a destination that is inclusive and accessible to all, where people can connect with animals and with each other. It reinforced the value of the zoo as a science-based community resource, a safe and beautiful place that is a beacon of hope and respite. Our 92-acre urban oasis annually engages 1.3 million visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to provide deeply memorable experiences with over 300 species of animals. Our online visitors through social media and our website vastly exceed our annual on-site attendance. Our



membership base is among the largest of any cultural institution in the region. These unique assets attract and engage a diverse audience that allows us to achieve a far broader and essential mission.



In recent years, our country has engaged in a sustained and wide social discussion about race, inclusion, accessibility, and equity. Wide economic disruptions continue to shake our ability to deliver on our mission. Furthermore, climate change continues to intensify, as we experience more frequent zoo closures due to forest fire smoke, as well as increasingly frequent extremes in temperatures and storm intensity.

During this last strategic plan, we were also able to rebuild significant parts of our zoo, and we celebrated our 125-year anniversary. Furthermore, we completed the successful Forests for All Comprehensive Campaign, the largest in our history, by raising nearly \$120 million from over 100,000 community donors and conservation advocates. We renegotiated our 20-year Operational Management Agreement with the City of Seattle, and expanded mission programs,

such as our signature initiative *Advancing Conservation through Empathy for Wildlife*, as well as our commitment to conserving species and habitats in our signature programs in the Pacific Northwest, Papua New Guinea and others around the world.

Given these successes, we reaffirm our core commitment to define Woodland Park Zoo as a conservation organization. Furthermore, we define our core Strategic Pillars to achieve success by:

- Providing the highest levels of animal care and wellbeing, while increasing transparency about zoo animals under our care.
- Reversing negative trends in the conservation of species and habitats at our core conservation priority areas.
- Providing extraordinary experiences that engage and activate our audiences to participate in conservation action, whether at the zoo, in the field, or online.

- Informing, amplifying, and propelling a broad and inclusive social movement for wildlife conservation.

This new Strategic Plan builds upon a solid framework of excellence and innovation. It advances our transformation as a conservation organization. Despite the upheavals of the pandemic and economic instability, we have made a definitive transition to become a learning organization, unified around a set of institutional Strategic Pillars and outcomes with accompanying metrics that measure our progress toward achieving our mission. This new Strategic Plan will also guide an exciting revision of our Long-Range Facilities Plan, which was last reviewed 20 years ago, and needs significant updating.

This Strategic Plan also highlights the importance of long-term investments to retain and sustain the zoo's highly skilled and passionate professional workforce, to reinforce our commitment to species conservation and fighting climate change, to transition to more sustainable operations, and to

continue to provide opportunities for education, engagement, and environmental action.

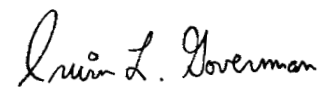
Woodland Park Zoo is part of a global network of progressive zoos and aquariums that are dedicated to conservation, animal wellbeing and social change toward environmental stewardship. Our drive for innovation has influenced zoos and aquariums across the globe, from the concept of immersive zoo habitats in the 1980s, to the creation of dedicated field conservation programs in the 1990s, to the recent creation of a network of zoos and aquariums dedicated to fostering empathy for wildlife and accelerating a social movement for conservation. We commit to this leadership role in pushing the boundaries of innovation and creativity to achieve our broad and essential mission.

All these achievements and aspirations would not be possible without the support and commitment of millions of visitors and followers at the zoo and the digital world, as well as

our supporters and donors. These include thousands of community partners, supporters, donors, and of course, the people of Seattle and King County, who generously provide public support.

This new Strategic Plan carries forward and strengthens our ambition to rethink and redefine Woodland Park Zoo and all zoos to do no less than to inspire, educate, innovate, and act to create a broad social movement for wildlife conservation. This plan is also an open invitation to our community, our partners, our members and visitors, and our talented staff and volunteers, to believe in and act with us.

Sincerely,



Irwin Gorman
Chair, Board of Directors



Alejandro Grajal
President and CEO



Our Vision, Our Mission, Our Impact

OUR VISION

Woodland Park Zoo envisions a world where everyone lives sustainably with wildlife and their habitats.

OUR MISSION

Woodland Park Zoo saves wildlife and inspires everyone to make conservation a priority in their lives.

OUR IMPACT

The impact of our mission will be felt by the animals, communities and causes we serve in our commitment to CARE, INSPIRE and ACT.

CARE

The zoo will be a model of sustainable ecosystems and an exemplar of animal care, wellness, and scientific research for the benefit of each individual animal and every generation of wildlife in zoo care

INSPIRE

The zoo will broaden access and welcome all to experience nature, creating unforgettable moments with emotional and social bonds that build life-long empathy for wildlife, motivating environmental values and conservation connections that can power lasting change

ACT

The zoo will help to reverse species and habitat loss, invest in climate mitigation and resiliency, and create lasting conservation solutions in the Pacific Northwest and around the world, while collaborating with and equipping individuals, communities and policy makers with the tools and capacity to boost this impact locally and globally



Our Values

In all our work, we are driven by core values that describe both our institutional character and our aspirations for the ways in which visitors and all members of our community will experience Woodland Park Zoo.

TRUST

We commit in all our actions to scientific principles, transparency, honesty, and sound financial stewardship.

INCLUSION

We value and welcome visitors, partners, staff and volunteers from all backgrounds, cultures, abilities, and perspectives. We commit to identify, embrace, listen to and collaborate with diverse voices, individuals, and communities.

RESPECT

We treat each other, all members of our community, our employees, volunteers, and all animals in our care with the highest level of compassion and respect.

TRANSFORMATION

We are a learning organization driven toward creative approaches, innovative thinking, and transformative solutions.

COLLABORATION

We expect cooperation, teamwork, and partnership, recognizing both individual and collective contributions to wildlife conservation.

HOPE

We approach complex problems with a spirit of hope and possibility, and we share that spirit with our visitors and community members.



Core Strategic Pillars

Our Strategic Plan and actions are driven by five core Strategic Pillars:

- Animal Wellbeing and Population Sustainability
- Wildlife Conservation and Conservation Action
- Participant Engagement
- Financial Stewardship, Philanthropy, Operational Excellence and Leadership; and
- Thriving and Inclusive Culture.

These Strategic Pillars are supported by measurable outcomes that allow us to rigorously measure and evaluate our work. To measure and report on our progress, we made a significant investment in creating an organizational culture of Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation. We now have created a highly capable

Evaluation & Impact team. We use these outcomes as indicators of success, to inform our multi-year operational plans, as well as our annual goals and budgets. We are committed to using these Strategic Pillars and measurable outcomes to guide our management decisions and to inform ourselves and our partners about our institutional performance. Using and sharing measurements of our impact is essential to advance this Strategic Plan to propel a social movement for wildlife conservation.

Animal Wellbeing and Population Sustainability

All animals and habitats are inextricably influenced by human decisions and actions and the resulting impacts on the environment. At the same time, our employees, volunteers, and audiences care deeply about the wellbeing of animals, including those in the care of Woodland Park Zoo. We embrace animal wellbeing and lead with the highest level of outcome-based professional animal care. We also aim to build additional public trust by being transparent and forthcoming about the animals in our care. We work with our accredited zoo partners and governmental agencies to maintain genetic variability and demographic viability for animals in our care. We will take a “*One Plan*” approach to our zoo populations by explicitly managing animal species to support global conservation goals,

emphasizing the conservation value of these species at the zoo while enhancing global plans for rewilding and repopulating endangered species. By explicitly addressing animal wellbeing and population sustainability we further our conservation mission, demonstrating our values in action while promoting empathy for animals, compassion, and a sense of responsibility to all animals on our planet. Our measurable outcomes are:

- Enhanced wellbeing for animals in our care.
- Long term viability of the zoo’s animal populations.
- Increased transparency about animals in our care.
- Improved perceptions of animal wellbeing among our audiences.





Wildlife Conservation and Conservation Action

Because all wildlife and habitats are in the care of humans, we must confront one of the most profound ethical questions of our time: whether humans will be able to live sustainably on our planet with all of Earth's creatures. Collectively, accredited zoos and aquariums already contribute one of the largest shares of financial support to wildlife conservation and species survival around the world. By leveraging powerful emotional and educational experiences with animals, combined with our field conservation projects, and community partnerships in the Pacific Northwest and around the world, Woodland Park Zoo will coordinate its conservation actions with global efforts with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), our partners with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the World Association of Zoos and

Aquariums (WAZA) to build and sustain a widespread commitment to wildlife conservation, inspiring and empowering people to take significant and measurable action. We believe in genuine and sincere dialog with community partners to take conservation actions. As such, our measurable outcomes should be aimed at:

- Improved conservation trends or reduced threats for priority species and landscapes.
- Enhanced efforts to understand and reduce the impacts of climate change on priority species and landscapes.
- Increased sense of inclusion and participation, especially among audiences who have experienced geographic, economic, cultural, or ability barriers.
- Increased intentions by audiences to take pro-environmental action.

Audience Engagement

Zoos inspire wonder, curiosity, and a sense of possibility in people of every age and from every background. We believe that each interaction whether at the zoo, with external programs or online engagements, is a chance to inspire a deeper connection with wildlife and nature, curiosity about animals and ecosystems, and a commitment to act on behalf of wildlife and the natural world that sustains us all. We provide deep social, emotional, educational, and environmental learning experiences at the zoo and increasingly to a growing online audience. Powerful immersive animal experiences can inspire empathy for animals, which in turn inspire and motivate people to care and to act on behalf of wildlife conservation. In particular, the power of immersive

animal experiences should be leveraged to engage our audiences in climate change mitigation and species conservation actions. Our measurable outcomes are:

- Improved experiences among external zoo audiences.
- Improved perceptions of animal wellbeing among our audiences.
- Increased intentions by audiences to take pro-environmental action.
- Increased sense of inclusion and participation, especially among audiences who have experienced geographic, economic, cultural, or ability barriers.





Financial Stewardship, Philanthropy, Operational Excellence and Leadership

Woodland Park Zoo has both the opportunity and the responsibility to propel zoos and aquariums to be global agents of change for wildlife conservation. We commit to the efforts and investments necessary to collaborate with zoos and aquariums and conservation organizations. We believe that a wise and focused use of scientific innovation and technology will enhance our activities and connect people more deeply and effectively to wildlife conservation, wondrous experiences, and animal care. Despite the economic upheavals of the last few years, Woodland Park Zoo charted a robust financial path. This has been the result of generous philanthropic support from our partners, both private and public, as well as steady and responsible management of our financial assets. We must prioritize financial sustainability across our diverse portfolio of earned

revenue, philanthropy, and public support, and increase enterprise opportunities that expand our relevance and accessibility to the community. Our workforce is our most precious resource, and we continue to invest in supporting the creativity, passion, and innovation of our staff to find new ways to save species and build connections between people, animals, and our shared habitats. Our measurable outcomes are:

- Improved financial and operational sustainability.
- Improvements in measures of Woodland Park Zoo as an employer of choice.
- Increased measures of operational environmental sustainability and reduction of ecological impacts.
- Improvements in measures of operational excellence and professional leadership.

Thriving and Inclusive Culture

We reaffirm our commitment to being an inclusive organization that welcomes all. This commitment comes from our belief that including diverse ideas, perspectives, and voices in every aspect of our work, including our staff, board of directors, volunteers, visitors, and partners, is essential for realizing our mission and vision. Woodland Park Zoo aims to create an equitable and inclusive internal culture where all staff members thrive, feel seen, represented and valued for their identities and lived experiences. Our work is grounded in building a culture of continuous learning and improvement toward a vision of equity and belonging for all staff, volunteers, and audiences.

All people should have safe access to the zoo and while experiencing responsive interactions with our staff, programs, and curriculum. Our journey in these areas is guided by an action plan that defines measurable outcomes as:

- Increase sense of inclusion and participation, especially those from historically over excluded groups and those experiencing geographic, economic, cultural, or ability barriers.
- Improvements in measures of Woodland Park Zoo as an employer of choice.
- Ensure initiatives remain effective and relevant to support ongoing growth and adaptation.



Implementing our 2025–2030 Strategic Plan

As a nonprofit conservation organization stewarding an extraordinary community oasis that welcomes all to connect with animals and each other, Woodland Park Zoo is uniquely positioned to catalyze a movement for change that reaches individuals, communities, and policy makers, locally and globally. The success of our approach to social change is not defined solely by our outputs and efforts, but by the measure of our impact and our ability to adapt and respond as a learning organization. In this way, Woodland Park Zoo is a leader among zoos and aquariums with a bold declaration for transparency and accountability as the foundations of public trust in our call for greater collective action and impact.

By 2030, that collective action and impact across our Strategic Pillars will encompass:

- A 40% increase in the species under human care at Woodland Park Zoo, with enriched habitats and multi-species communities that better reflect and support the local and global biodiversity protected through our people-powered conservation efforts
- A network of protected areas in development across the Huon Peninsula of Papua New Guinea, modeled on our Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program's success with community-based conservation, connecting the living landscape of animals, people and forests that acts as one of Earth's best nature-based solutions to climate change
- A generation of young zoo audiences, student interns and teen volunteers feeling welcomed and included as they practice hands-on care experiences at various newly reimagined zoo spaces where they can develop empathy for wildlife that motivate them to become inspirational conservation leaders at home, in school or through their future careers
- Tripling the zoo's on-site renewable energy capacity, 30% reduction in domestic water usage and 30% diversion of landfill waste toward our sustainability goals to reduce the zoo's impact on resources and embed green practices into all new construction and operations, engaging zoo audiences in and modeling sustainable, everyday habits



We believe that the zoo's greatest strength is in leveraging our Strategic Pillars together, as no strategy can be advanced in isolation. Looking ahead, the launch of this Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030 is designed to coincide with the start of the zoo's Long-Range Facilities Planning effort for even greater unity of vision.

The upcoming Long-Range Facilities Plan will create a flexible framework for the next 20 years of physical development at the zoo to meet the current and anticipated future needs of our animals, people, environment, and mission. These complementary planning efforts will ensure that the zoo's strategic programming and operational ambitions outlined in this document can be served and advanced by our physical campus now and into the future. In the zoo's 126-year history, there has never been an opportunity like this one to align our Strategic Plan and a Long-Range Facilities Plan under the common cause of catalyzing conservation action.

As a roadmap for that cause, the Strategic Plan also serves as an invitation to you—our community of audiences, members, staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters—to CARE, INSPIRE and ACT with us. Together we will ignite a conservation movement that is inclusive, hopeful and lasting for the generations of animals and people counting on us.



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