

Progress Report – Legacy Amendment Funding January 15, 2011

Support from the Minnesota State Legislature's Legacy Amendment Arts and Culture Heritage Fund has helped the Lake Superior Zoological Society accomplish numerous projects that will have a long-lasting effect on the quality of life in our region. Founded in 1923, the Lake Superior Zoo (formerly the Duluth Zoo) has been an important cultural attraction and educational resource for the City of Duluth and Northeastern Minnesota. Having served three generations, the zoo has welcomed millions of area residents and tourists to the area through its doors.

The Lake Superior Zoo has an 88-year tradition of providing children and families a natural place to explore and meet animals. Located in West Duluth at the base of Spirit Mountain, the zoo is situated on 16 acres in a beautiful park setting. The zoo's park setting is enhanced by Kingsbury Creek (a designated trout stream with a beautiful waterfall) that runs down Spirit Mountain, through the zoo and out to the St. Louis River estuary. It is also graced with mature trees and foliage, and vintage WPA bridges, buildings and animal habitats that make it a very special place. All this is surrounded by walking trails through wooded areas and the quiet Norton Park neighborhood.

The zoo has seen times of great community interest and support, and it weathered the Depression years and periods of neglect. The most serious time for the zoo came with the City's funding crisis and the zoo's subsequent loss of accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in 2007. In 2009, the City agreed to transfer operation of the zoo to the Lake Superior Zoological Society, a 501 (c) 3 organization, in an attempt to revitalize and preserve the zoo for future generations. The Lake Superior Zoo continues to be owned by the City of Duluth, but is now operated under a successful public-private partnership between the City and the Zoological Society.

Funding from the Legacy Amendment has helped this partnership significantly. The first year's funding, in the amount of \$111,375, helped the Zoological Society achieve the following strategic initiatives to:

1. Develop a new Master Plan for the Lake Superior Zoo
2. Renovate an ineffective, empty exhibit for a gray wolves, native species exhibit
3. Develop and implement a pilot program called Zoo Science Experience program for local and regional third grade students
4. Research and document the history of the Lake Superior Zoo

The first project that was completed with this funding was the new Master Plan for the zoo. The master planning process was a critical component to developing a clear, compelling and practical vision for the future of the zoo. The new Master Plan outlines a strategy for the 20-year development of the facility and programs to be completed in phases. The first phase includes all of the necessary facility improvements that will be required to be completed before application for AZA accreditation can be made. The total cost to produce the Master Plan was about \$90,000. Legacy Amendment Funding provided \$60,400 toward this project, which was completed in February 2010. An Executive Summary of the 2009 Master Plan is included with this report.

The second project to be completed with this funding began in May 2010, with the transformation of the old deer yard into a new gray wolf exhibit. The goal was to have the new exhibit open for the 2010 summer season. However, progress was hindered by the summer's rainy weather, and delays with contractors and equipment. However, we are pleased to report that the exhibit is now complete. The official grand opening was held on December 31, 2010. Three bachelor wolves were acquired from the Minnesota Science Center through an education collaborative. The total cost of the exhibit restoration is

near \$100,000; Legacy Amendment Funding contributed \$15,000 to this project, which helped to promote and develop the exhibit. Marketing materials were created to introduce the new gray wolf exhibit to the public, including a new TV commercial, print ads, zoo signage and t-shirts. Examples are included with this report.

The third project accomplished with this funding is a pilot educational program called *Zoo Science Experience*, a program targeted at local and regional school groups. This program provides free zoo admission for area third grade classrooms, a 30-minute educational program titled, *Zoo ABC's (Animals, Biodiversity & Conservation)* and a memento water bottle with a conservation message for the students to take home. The program was marketed in December 2009, and again in September 2010, through a colorful flyer mailed to area teachers, on the zoo's website <http://www.lszoo.org/edu.htm>, and through email communications. To date, this program has served 59 classrooms and 1,239 third grade students. The program will continue into 2011 until all grant monies are used. Continued program funding will be sought from local businesses and foundations. Many letters of appreciation have been received from teachers and students. Several letters are included with this report.

The fourth project completed with Legacy Amendment Funding was the research and documentation of the history of the Lake Superior Zoo. Contract workers were hired to take on the research and documentation component of the project. Their work began in June 2010, and was completed in September 2010. This research will lay the groundwork for a zoo history exhibit that is proposed for 2011. The contract workers researched historical information through the Northeast MN Historical Center and the Duluth Public Library. Articles published in local newspapers, and photographs and artifacts from community members have been cataloged, copied and cross-referenced for preservation and future use. These items are both stored in binders and in electronic format. They have also provided a historical summary and PowerPoint presentation for future use. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is included with this report.

The second year's funding, in the amount of \$111,375, is designated for the development of a Zoo History & Heritage Center on the zoo grounds. The new Master Plan recommends developing a WPA Pavilion for educational and historical purposes, and therefore has cited this structure as the best location for the Zoo History & Heritage Center. Development of the WPA Pavilion for this purpose also with help fulfill several requirements for AZA accreditation.

This past year, the Zoological Society has been focusing on its foremost goal of completing the long list of deferred maintenance projects that stemmed from the zoo's loss of AZA accreditation in 2007. That long list is very close to being completed. The Zoological Society is also preparing its application for AZA accreditation, which will be submitted mid-February, 2011. Therefore, development of the Zoo History & Heritage Center has been slightly delayed. We anticipate that the project will begin this spring. A revised project narrative and budget will be submitted for review and approval in the near future.

The Lake Superior Zoological Society extends its sincere appreciation to the Minnesota State Legislature for including the Lake Superior Zoo as a recipient of the Minnesota State Legislature's Legacy Amendment Arts and Culture Heritage Fund. This funding has already made a difference in the development and preservation of the Lake Superior Zoo so it remains available and accessible to the residents of Northern Minnesota.



Lake Superior Zoo

Gateway to the Wild

2009 MASTER PLAN

Executive Summary

STUDIO HANSON/ROBERTS WITH MAIN STREET DESIGN
AND SCHULTZ & WILLIAMS

February 2010

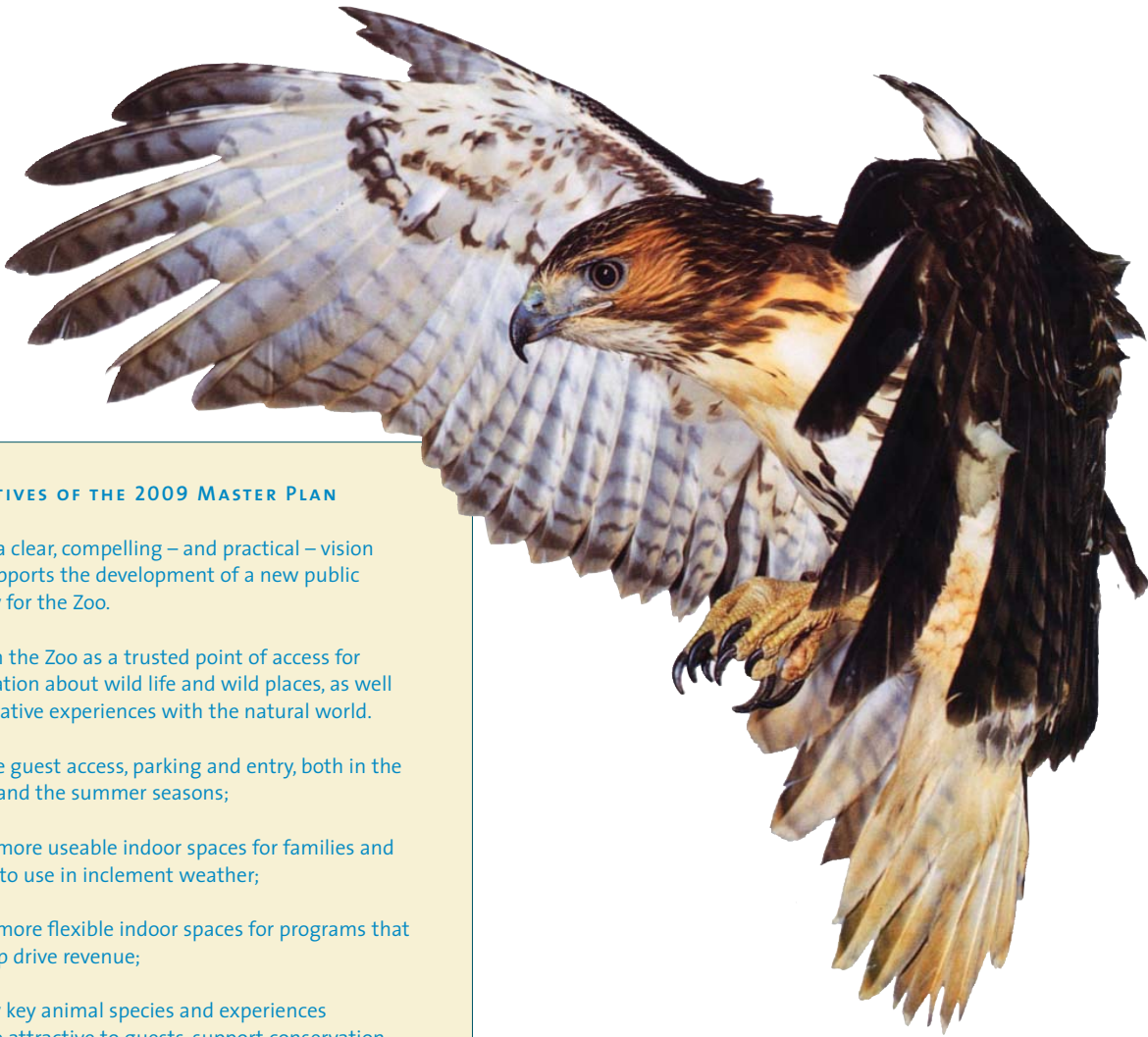


PURPOSE OF THE 2009 MASTER PLAN

The Lake Superior Zoo has an 86-year tradition of providing children and families a natural place to explore and meet animals. It has seen times of great community interest and support, and it has weathered the Depression years as well as periods of neglect. In the midst of the most recent City funding crisis and subsequent to the Zoo losing its accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the City of Duluth agreed to transfer operation of the Zoo to the Lake Superior Zoological Society. This was undertaken so that the Society could take the necessary actions to insure that the Zoo’s animals continued to be well cared for and the Zoo could be preserved and developed for future generations under new non-profit management.

This Master Plan was initiated by the Society to provide them with a clear and achievable vision for its future, as well as a 20-year plan for initiating upgrades, creating interim improvements and developing new capital facilities. It is, in truth however, a Master Plan Update insofar as it seeks to build upon the best of past master plans and leverage its current assets and strengths.

The goal of this Plan is to solidify a comprehensive, achievable vision for the Lake Superior Zoo that will enable it to initiate immediate improvements with a clear understanding of how they fit into the long-term picture.



OBJECTIVES OF THE 2009 MASTER PLAN

- Create a clear, compelling – and practical – vision that supports the development of a new public identity for the Zoo.
- Position the Zoo as a trusted point of access for information about wild life and wild places, as well as formative experiences with the natural world.
- Improve guest access, parking and entry, both in the winter and the summer seasons;
- Create more useable indoor spaces for families and groups to use in inclement weather;
- Create more flexible indoor spaces for programs that can help drive revenue;
- Identify key animal species and experiences that are attractive to guests, support conservation awareness and can be sustainably managed;
- Maintain the focus on cold-adapted species, as well as a flexible collection of more temperate and tropical species that are easy to keep indoors in the winter;
- Make full use of the available site in a way that can be sustainably managed;
- Minimize development within the 150-ft. riparian setback from Kingsbury Creek;
- Expand the ability of the Zoo to increase its earned revenue;
- Create bite-sized pieces that can be expanded over time.



INTRODUCTION

The Lake Superior Zoo, lying astride the waterfalls and riffles of Kingsbury Creek as it spills down the basalt hills that line the northern edge of the St. Louis River, occupies one of the most dramatic sites of any zoo in North America. The developed areas of the lower Zoo merge into the densely forested slopes of the upper Zoo and no area is ever far from the sounds of the tumbling water. Although it is not a large site (the existing developed portion is only 16 acres), once guests find their way to the pathways adjacent to the Creek or start winding their way through the forest, it’s easy to forget that they are actually in a developed park adjacent to a busy highway. It is a magical place that is full of promise.

However the Zoo is also an institution that has seen its share of ups and downs, with grand aspirations attempting to justify themselves against the realities of a relatively small market and an economic situation that has cycled through booms and busts. Through it all, both the City and the Zoo have persevered by coming to understand the challenges – and the opportunities – that lie in *being yourself* and living within your means. To that end, the Lake Superior Zoo aspires to take its place among the great small community zoos, displaying a vibrant animal and plant collection that are well-suited to both its setting and its means, conducting energetic education and conservation programs, and benefiting from the excitement generated by extensive community support.

To accomplish this goal will require that we not only adhere to our mission of *connecting, inspiring* and *caring*, but also continue a practical approach to the renaissance of a unique Duluthian institution. By recapturing the Zoo’s legacy of pride and civic enterprise, underscored by our passion and our commitment, we have the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of Duluth families, as well as playing a role in protecting the future for wild life and wild places.

This Master Plan Update is a key step in that renaissance...it will ensure the wise stewardship our two most precious assets, the collection and the Zoo grounds themselves, and will provide a renewed vision for how the Zoo fits into the lives of the community that supports it.

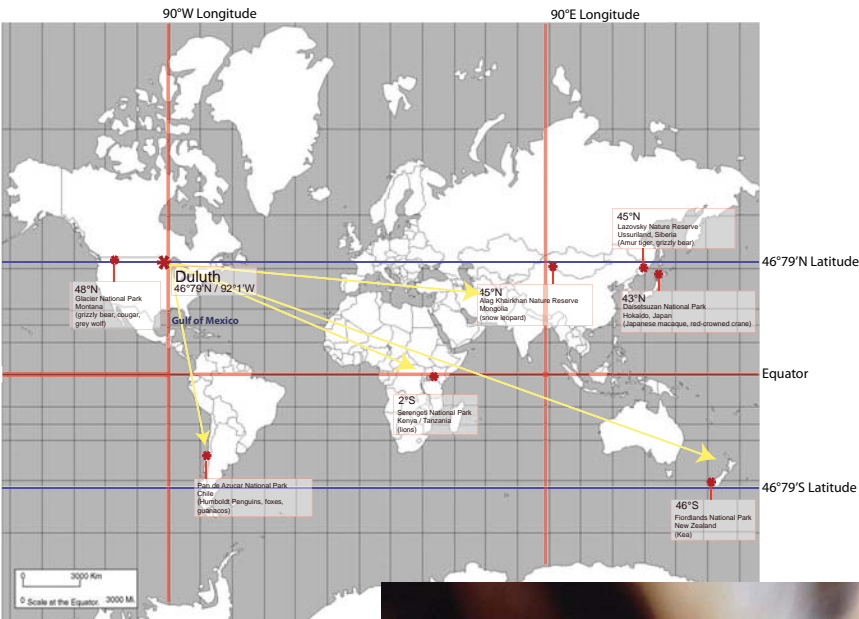


The **VISION**

The Zoo’s renewed vision has emerged out of a highly collaborative planning process involving key Zoo and City staff, Board members and interested stakeholders. Many aspects of this plan will be familiar to those who have been involved with past master planning efforts since there has been much good work that needs to be carried forward. However, given the imperative of developing an achievable business plan to support future development, many aspects have been scaled back or even recommended for deletion in the long term. This is not to say that the Lake Superior Zoo of the future will be mediocre in any way, and the Report has been laid out to reaffirm that excellent and meaningful outcomes can be achieved on a “beer budget” as long as the investments are strategic.

The 2009 Master Plan Update report recommends that the Zoo adopt an over-riding thematic approach that would allow it to reposition itself in concert with ongoing marketing strategies within the surrounding region that seek to “brand” Duluth as a gateway to the North Shore, the North Woods and to the natural areas that surround the City. Thus, as the Lake Superior Zoo continues to provide a portal that enables guests to come into contact with not only cold-adapted species from both near and far, but also with select smaller species from around the world, the community can begin to envision the “new Zoo” as a *Gateway to the Wild*, particularly as the interpretation of the collection continues to contribute to both broad understanding of the animals’ natural habitats, as well as the wild lands and national parks that are treasured and protected by people around the world.

As the Master Plan’s core concepts have evolved, it has become increasingly clear that the key strategy for the Zoo will be to significantly upgrade the focus, quality and variety of its guest experiences over the short- and medium-term even as it pursues larger, long-term capital improvements. This is as true for the Zoo’s interpretive, informational and educational aspects as it is for animal exhibits and site infrastructure. Both the Business Plan and the Phasing Plan indicate the incremental steps that can be taken that will begin to rebuild the reputation of the Zoo, as well as the visitation levels and the supporting revenue stream.





Conceptual Plan of Proposed 20 Year Improvements

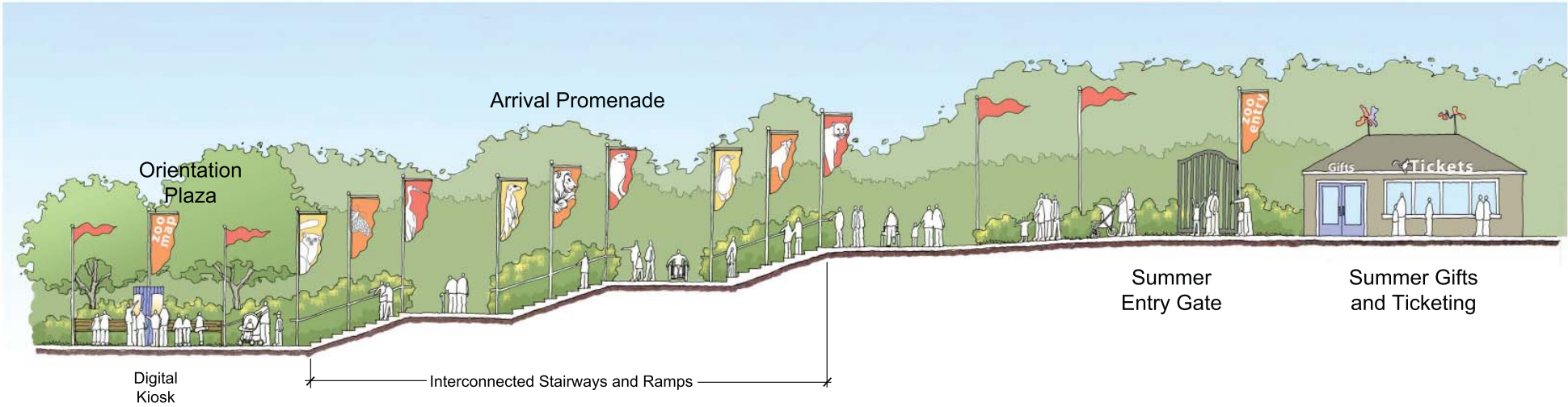


FEATURES OF THE 2009 MASTER PLAN

- Develop a **collaborative approach** with the Parks Department, the Spirit Valley Neighborhood Development Association, the St. Louis River Corridor and Spirit Mountain to implement improved infrastructure, esthetics, access and parking from Grand Avenue.
- Construct a **continuous perimeter barrier** around the Zoo, including across the Creek, in order to comply with USDA regulations and accreditation criteria, and to provide a secure setting for the Zoo’s collection and programs.
- Move the entry for high-season visitation outside of the constraints of the existing Main Building by creating a seasonal **summer-season entry** directly into the Zoo that includes:
 - Festive ticketing and gift shop marquee with secure cash-handling
 - Graded, accessible ramp/stairway
 - Orientation plaza
 - Butterfly garden
 - Moveable refreshment kiosk
 - Waterplay feature
 - New river otter exhibit

In the future, this might be converted to a year-round entry – as several of the past Master Plans have suggested – however there is no need to spend scarce funds on a permanent structure until the rest of the Zoo’s many features and attributes have been thoroughly renovated and re-energized.

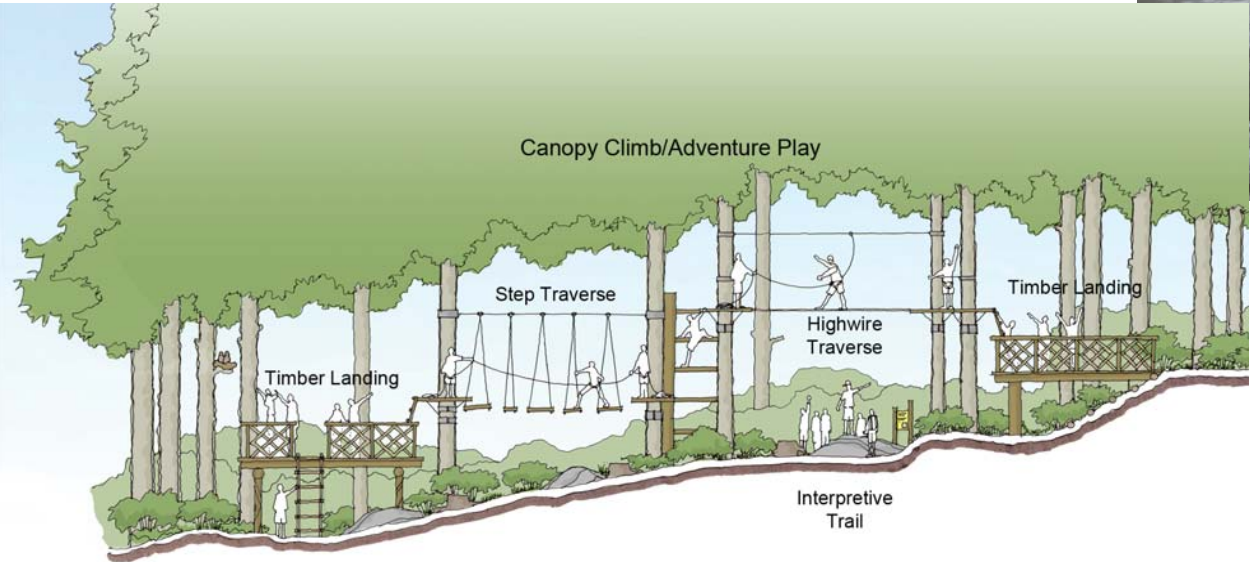
- Renovate and incorporate the existing **heritage Pavilion** into the Zoo grounds as a special venue for programs, special events and after-hours rentals. Surround it with both native and ornamental gardens so that it can act as an outdoor setting for events, a destination for botanical enthusiasts and a teaching facility that supports the mission of the Zoo. Such a garden area might also incorporate a seasonal butterfly exhibit that could grow into a year-round facility in the future.
- Renovate the **Main Building** to provide better staff spaces as well as to act as a hub of activity, particularly during the winter season. This would include more multi-purpose rooms, children’s play and reading areas, small animal display spaces and “Nature Exchange” – a program area developed by Science North that integrates observation, categorization, collection, creation and communication to bring a fascination with nature into families’ everyday lives.





- Work with the Department of Natural Resources to restore the **riparian corridor** of Kingsbury Creek as it passes through the Zoo, reconstructing the banks, controlling erosion, planting native habitat gardens and opening up the natural flow to the St. Louis River so that native fish can develop self-sustaining populations.
- Upgrade the **pathway surfaces, gradients and drainage**, and create an accessible loop that enables guest to explore the entire Zoo without having to back track. This would include completing the loop through the forested hillside that leads to the Waterfall Bridge on Kingsbury Creek.
- Disperse **play, program and gathering areas** throughout the Zoo so that guests can feel comfortable about finding a place for rest and refreshment that is most comfortable for them.
- Create an **Events Lawn / Amphitheater** on the hillslope below the Munger Animal Care Center.
- Create a low-impact **“Forest Adventure”** area on the forested hillside that would accommodate special groups, classes and summer camps.
- Develop new exhibits that would bring in new, cold-hardy animals and renovate existing exhibits to provide better homes for the Zoo’s existing collection of cold-hardy species, including:

- A new **gray wolf** habitat
- Expanded **cougar** habitat
- Expanded **snow leopard** habitats with relocated goral as a backdrop
- Expanded and relocated **grizzly** and **Amur tiger** exhibits
- New **snow monkey** and **red panda** habitats

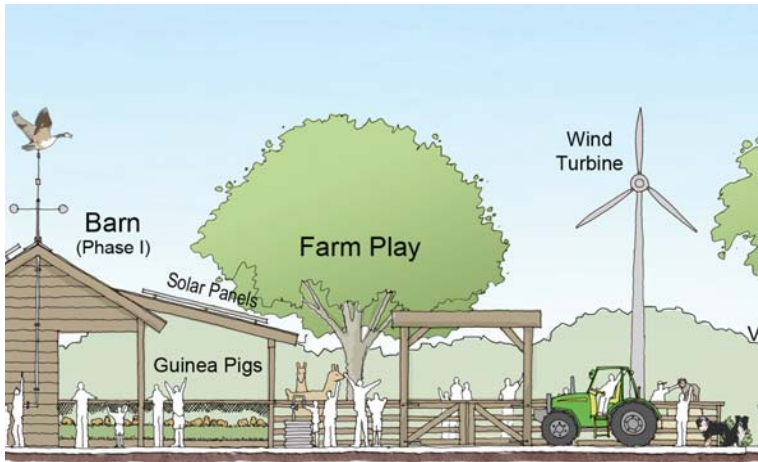




- Expand the **lion exhibit** to provide more space and a better solar orientation so that they can make better year-round use of their habitat.
- Redevelop the Polar Shore exhibits as a **walk-through Humboldt penguin** habitat that would provide free-access for the birds to both indoor and extensive exterior spaces.
- Create new **seasonal walk-through exhibits** of lorikeets and squirrel monkeys that can be easily moved indoors in the winter.
- Continue to build an intriguing collection of small, fascinating animals that can be easily housed inside for most of the year, and which can be used as program animals as part of a series of dispersed “**Animal Discovery Centers**” that are attractive to families in both inclement weather as well as during the prime summer season.
- Relocate and expand the **Farm /Contact Area** to provide a more diverse group of animals and more interesting ways in which to encounter them.
- Institute a **Canine Geese-Herding Corps** that can move the Canada geese out of the exhibits, off of the pathways and lawns and back to their natural habitat, and, with their handlers, act as canine ambassadors during the fulfillment of their duties.



Emmen Zoo's walk-through Humboldt penguin habitat



IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

The goal of the Implementation Plan is one of constant incremental improvement that starts with bite-sized pieces that can realistically be funded and which enable the Zoo to build expectations for success and larger projects down the line. Thus a sequence of projects has been established with budgets ranging from from \$100,000 initially to \$2 to \$3 million eventually, and an approach that will enable the Zoo to change significantly over the next 5 years with the whole facility being renewed after 20 years. The goal of the whole process is to build a great community zoo that can act as a trusted resource and live up to the expectations of the community that supports it while living within its means.

BUILDING A GREAT COMMUNITY ZOO

Two-Year Horizon

As theme parks have taught us, **visitor comfort** is key to the long-term financial success of any visitor-based institution. Improvements for Years One & Two focus on making the Zoo **look and act the part** of the valued community resource that it aspires to remain.

Keeping our visitors **close to the animals** is also a key for long-term success with our visitors. Initial development projects will focus on smaller, engaging animal species, whose **return on investment** will help fund the more ambitious projects that follow. A new **Gray Wolf** exhibit will introduce the summer 2010 season. The 2011 season will bring **Nature Exchange** and the interactive **Guinea Pig Exhibit**. Developing a robust volunteer corps will help us to connect our animals with our visitor and create a sense of a truly personal experience and affinity for the Zoo.

And of course, the foundation of our visitor’s experience is **excellence in animal care**. By giving our Zoo staff the tools to provide state of the art animal care and enrichment, we will also have accomplished the repairs and improvements needed to regain **accreditation from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums**.

Ten-Year Horizon

The on-going smaller scale improvements in animal care and visitor services of the first two years will continue, as will the Zoo’s focus on smaller, intimate and engaging animal species. However, the Ten-Year Horizon will also introduce several larger exhibits: an active **River Otter** exhibit at the new Summer Entry, the **Tiger Forest Exhibit** set in the native forest along the stream valley, and the **Free-range Squirrel Monkey** exhibit. The opportunity to walk into a forest glade, surrounded by these tiny monkeys will be a big hit with visitors and provide a high return on the Zoo’s investment.

Twenty-Year Horizon

The Twenty-Year Horizon has been selected as the generic "life span" of a zoo exhibit. At twenty years of age, an excellent exhibit can provide the foundation for a simple update. However, we often find that over a twenty-year life span, standards of animal care and visitor expectations have changed enough to make major renovation or replacement of the exhibit more appropriate.

The Twenty-Year Horizon will develop key visitor services for **Ticketing, Entry, and the Pavilion Gardens and Conservatory**, and three new **Restroom** locations. Many exciting new exhibits will draw visitors: a sample includes **Snow Monkey, Humboldt Penguin, and Red Panda**.

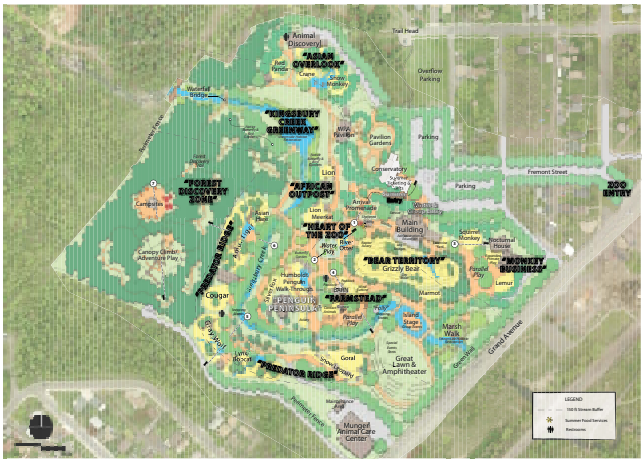
While the final sequence may vary according to the ability to raise funds or the necessity of taking advantage of an envisioned opportunity, nevertheless the focus will remain on strategically building competence and capability, and exceeding the expectations of both visitors and funders.



Lake Superior Zoo Two Year Horizon



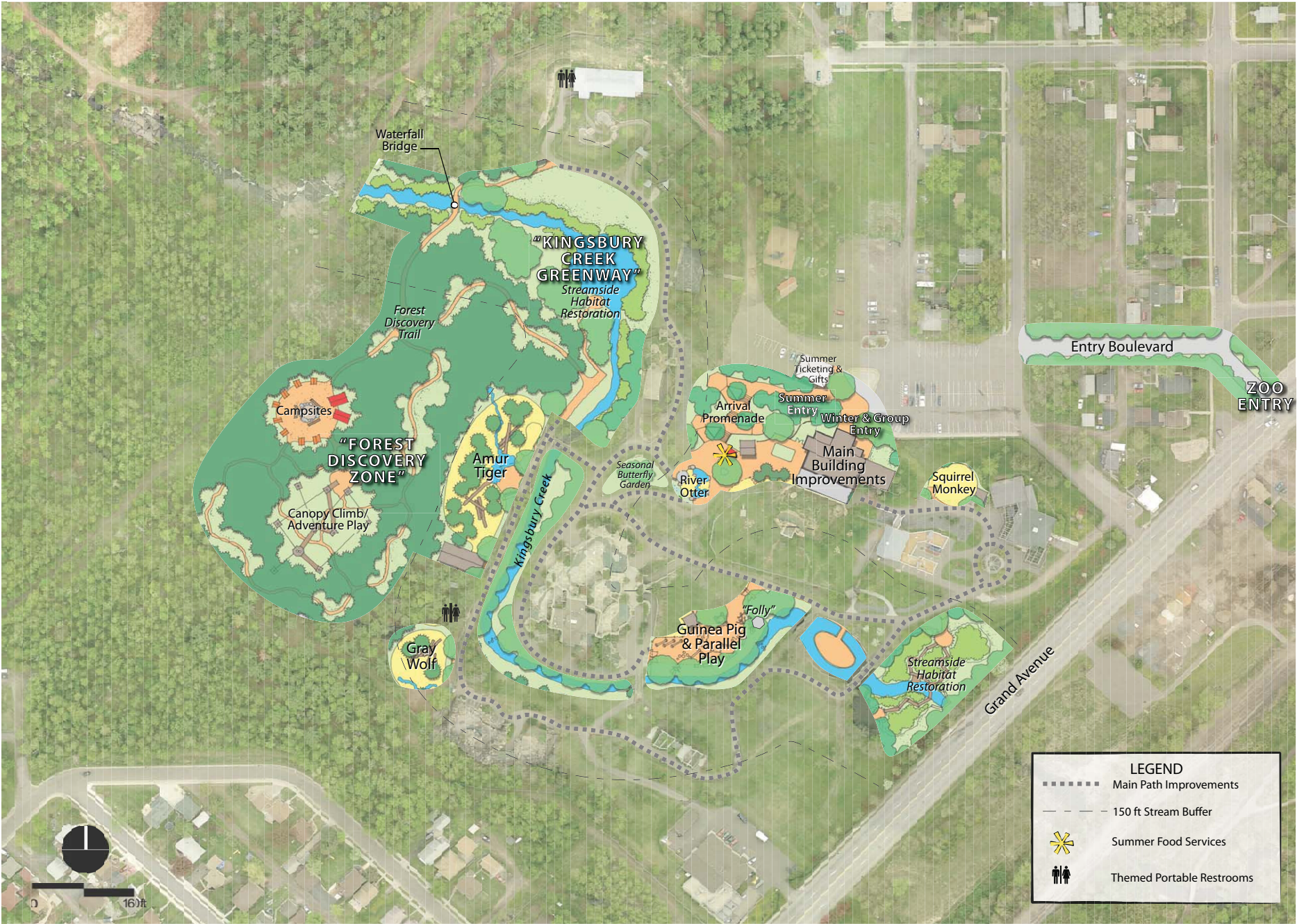
Lake Superior Zoo Ten Year Horizon



Lake Superior Zoo Twenty Year Horizon



Conceptual Plan of Proposed 1-2 Year Improvements



Conceptual Plan of Proposed 3-10 Year Improvements



LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO

Your Gateway to the Wild




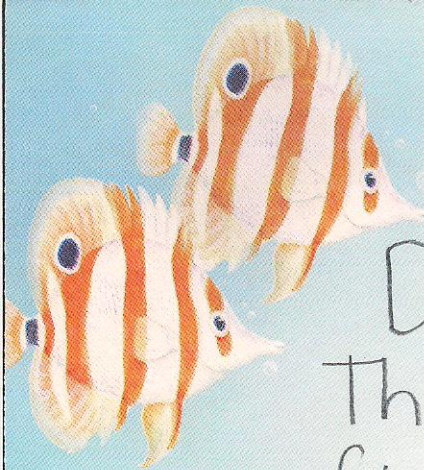
Open Year Round - Seven Days a Week
71st Ave. W. & Grand - Duluth

Zoo
Membership
is your...

Gateway to the Wild


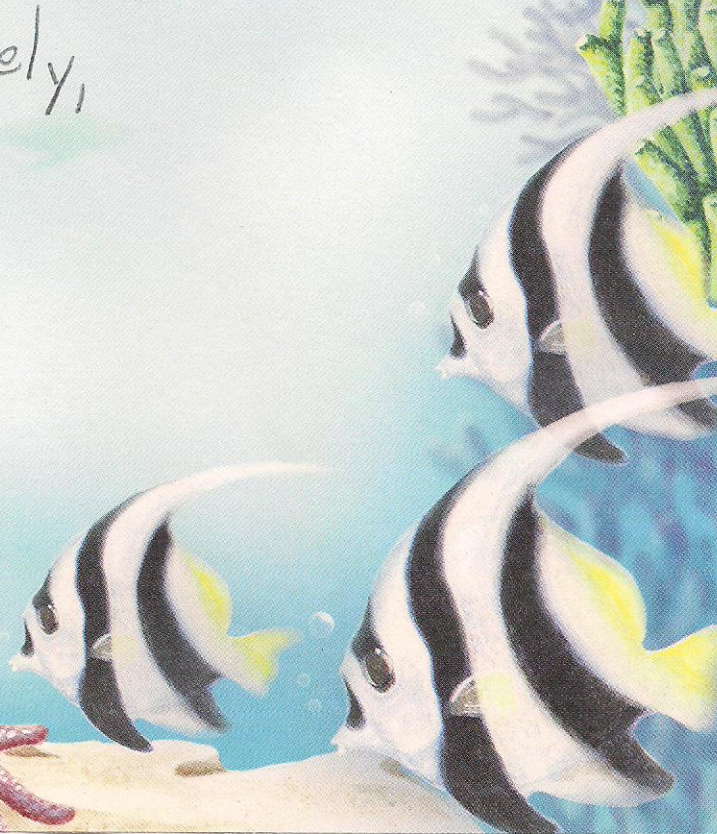
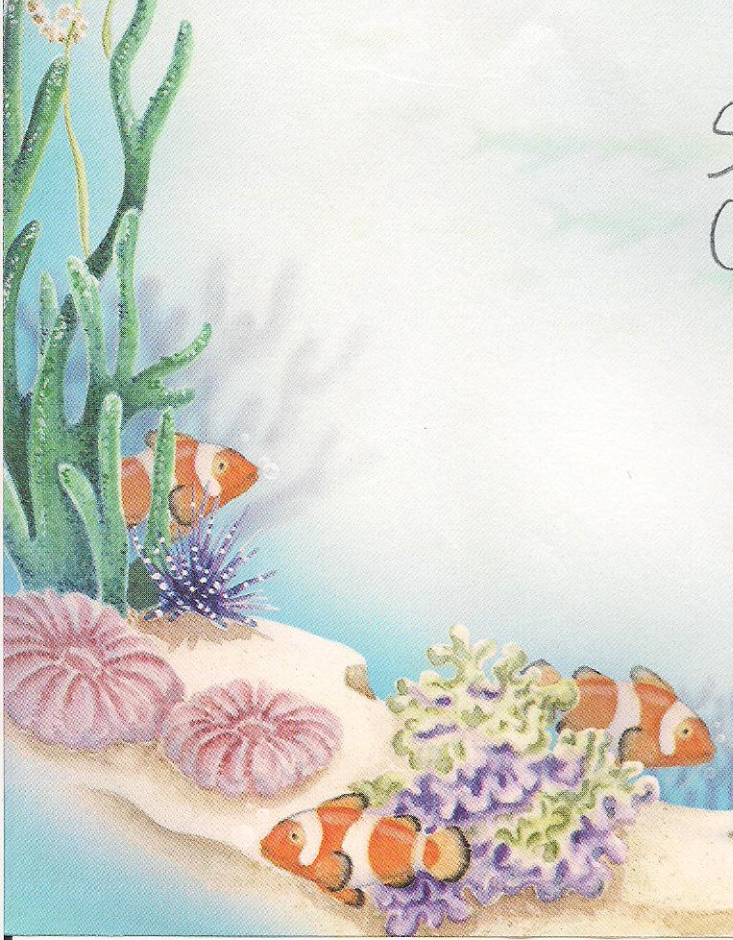

www.LSZOO.org

LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO



Dear Duluth Zoo,
Thank you for paying for this
field trip. I think it's
amazing that when there was
only ~~8~~ left, the black-footed ferret
is not extinct. I also think that
because of humans, lots of animals
are endangered, critical, or extinct. I
hope you do, too. Do you like the
ecosystem on this page? I do.

Sincerely,
Greta



From: Siiri

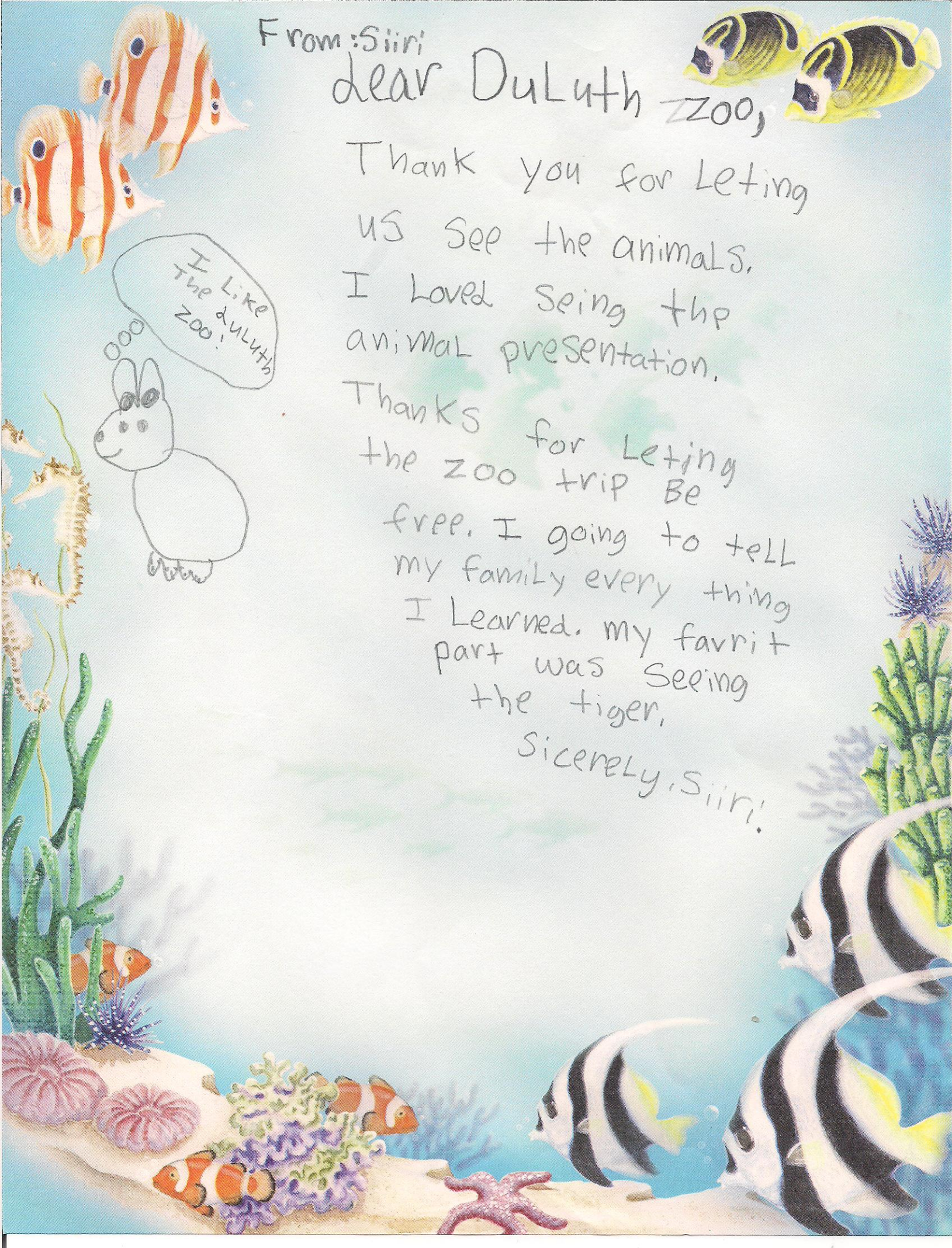
Dear DuLuth Zoo,



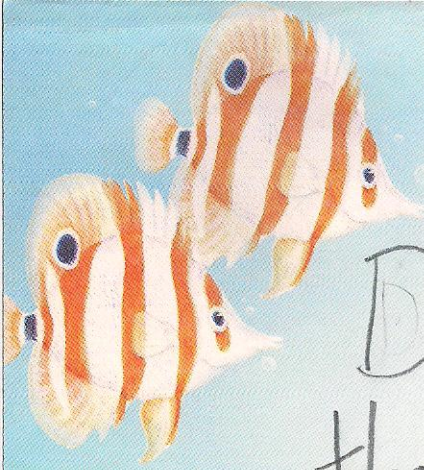
Thank you for Leting
us See the animals.
I Loved Seing the
animal presentation.

Thanks for Leting
the zoo trip Be
free. I going to tell
my family every thing
I Learned. my favrit
part was Seeing
the tiger.

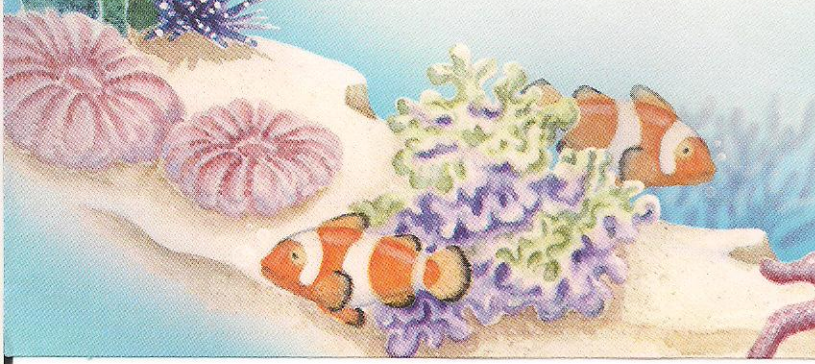
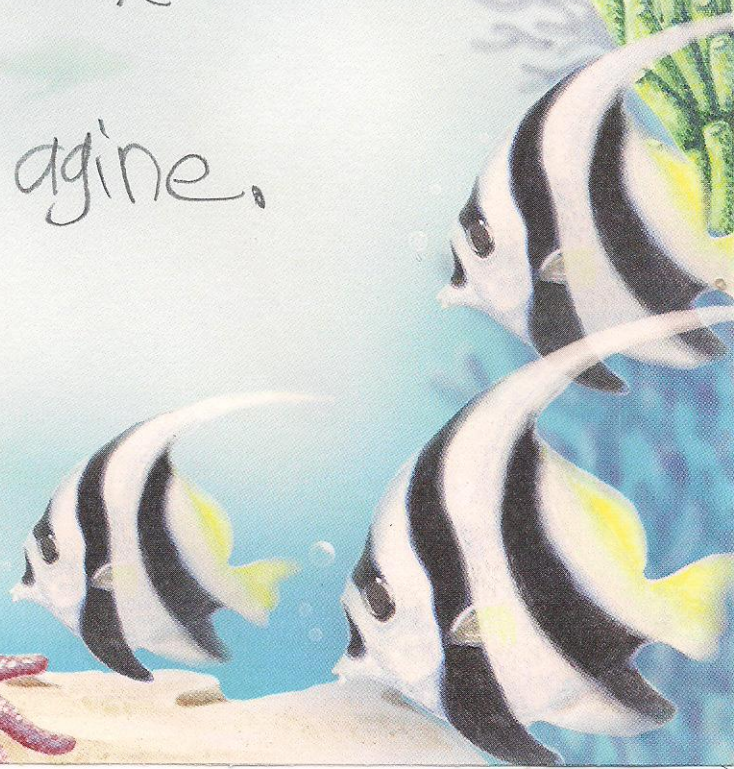


SicereLy, Siiri!

I Like
The DuLuth
Zoo!





Dear Duluth Zoo
Thank You For
Giveing us a great
oppertunetey to come
and see you Cool
Furry and heathey
animals. I really enjoyed
see'ing them. I hope
my Dad Will come
and let my visit
your Cool zoo agine.
Sincerely Taylor.



History of the Lake Superior Zoological Gardens



1/14/2011



Bert Onsgard and Billy the deer, the first animal in the zoo collection



Original deer yard

2/3/2011

The Heart of the Zoo



Zoo main building shown after the completion of the second story

2/3/2011



View of the original second story, now home to the café, gift shop, and main offices



2/3/2011



Lower Level of the Main Building




The lower level housed large carnivores, hoof stock, and primates throughout the early years of the zoo

Aerial view of the zoo grounds featuring the elephant barn and hoof stock yards



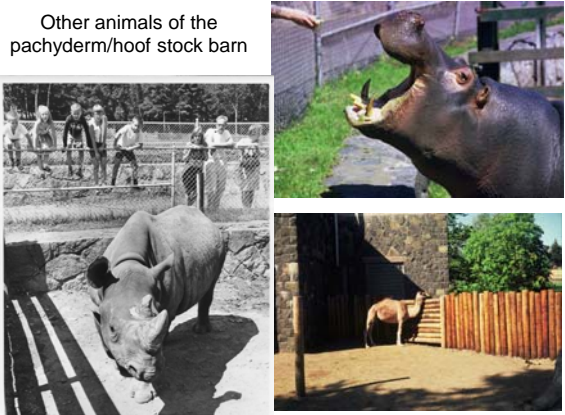
2/3/2011

Bessie, the elephant, inhabited what is now Polar Shores. The original barn structure remains standing today




2/3/2011

Other animals of the pachyderm/hooft stock barn

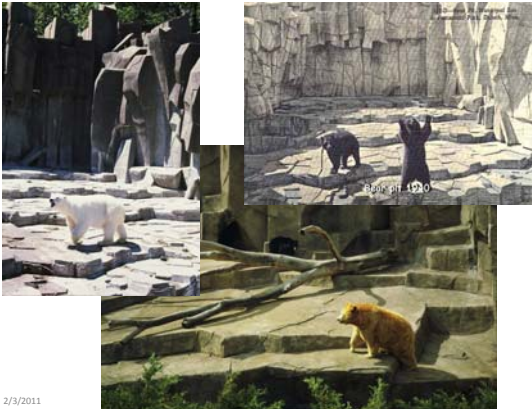


Original Bear Dens



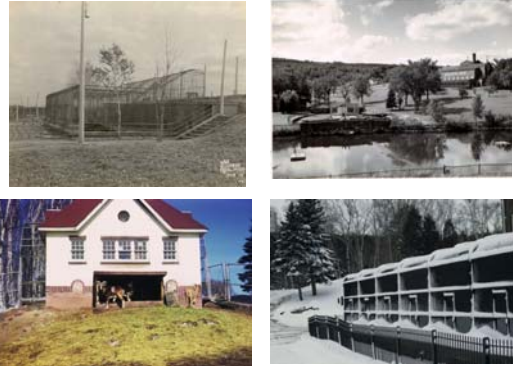
The bear exhibit was one of many WPA projects initiated on zoo grounds

2/3/2011




2/3/2011

Old Exhibits



Animal Stories



Well-known zoo inhabitants throughout the years...

2/3/2011

Mr. Magoo, the nationally known mongoose



Nemo



This male lion was adopted out of the back of a VW bus in the zoo parking lot

2/3/2011

Sheba and Sultan
Bengal Tigers



Peggy the hippo



2/3/2011

Mother polar bear and cub born at LS Zoo



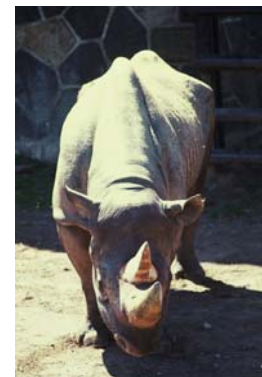
Lake Superior Zoo was one of the first facilities to successfully breed polar bears in captivity



2/3/2011


Faru and Faru II were black rhinos housed in what is now polar shores.

Black rhinos are currently listed as critically endangered, with just over 4000 individuals left on the planet.



2/3/2011

"Valrie" Likes Her Pop---Beer Too!
Duluth Zoo Now is Home of World Famous Himalayan Bear



Valrie
 Asiatic Black Bear

The zoo became home to this bear after it achieved international fame for its participation in WWII combat flights.

2/3/2011

New Zoo Style

- Endangered Species Act
- Species Survival Plan
- Basil Norton appointed Zoo Director in 1967
- Conservation and Education: the new role of zoos

2/3/2011

"Our mission is to provide close-up animal experiences which inspire connections to wildlife and action toward conservation in our region and around the world."




Construction to achieve our mission....

2/3/2011

Evolution of the Children's Zoo...

...to the Primate Conservation Center



2/3/2011



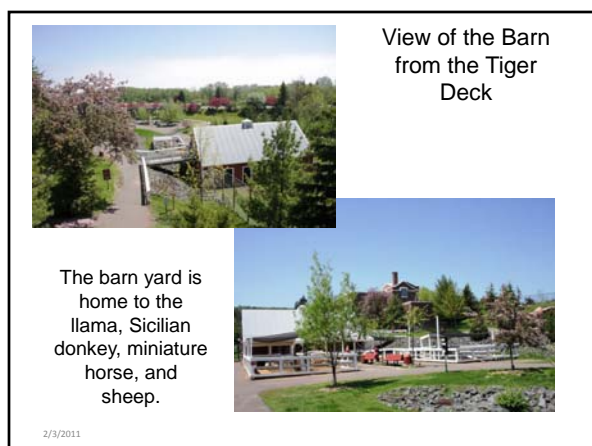
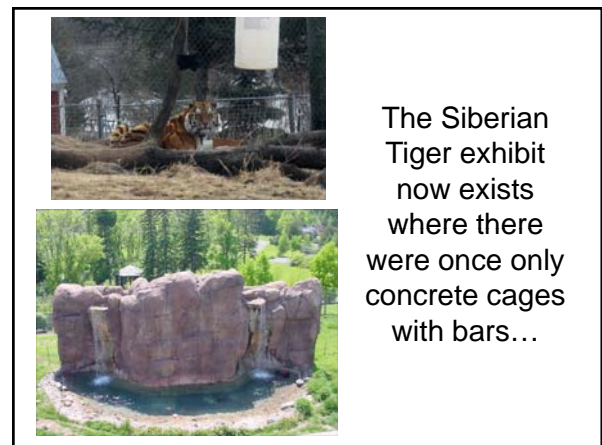
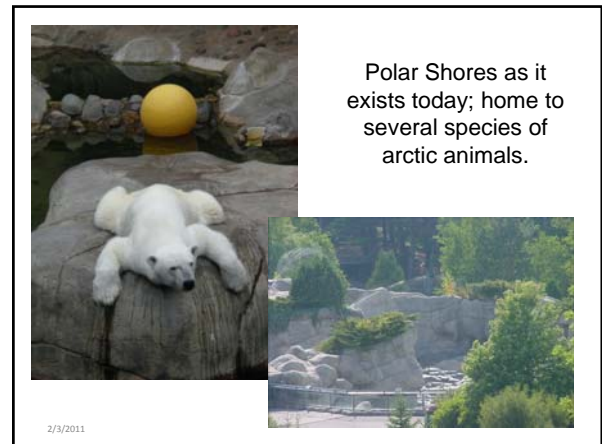
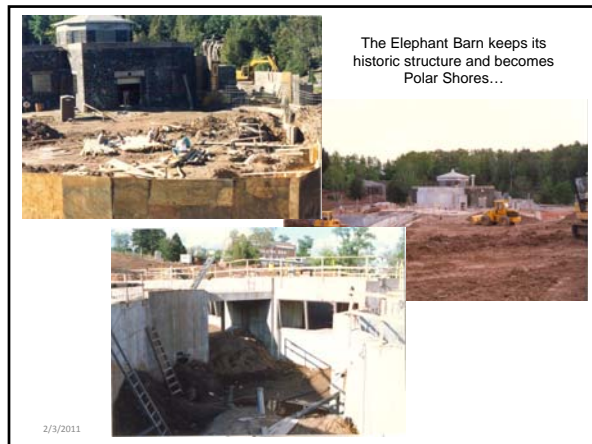
Renovation of the old bear dens

2/3/2011

Opening of the Snow Leopard Exhibit



2/3/2011



To continue our mission of conservation and education, we need your help...



2/3/2011