

**Table of Contents**  
**Minnesota Zoological Gardens**

*Agency Profile* ..... 1

Agency Expenditure Overview ..... 6

Agency Financing by Fund ..... 7

Agency Change Summary ..... 10

**Change Item(s)** ..... 12

*Deficiency Request* ..... 12

**Additional Documents** ..... 15

*Federal Funds Summary* ..... 15

[mnzoo.org](http://mnzoo.org)

### AT A GLANCE

- A world-class zoo that is home to nearly 5,000 animals —many endangered
- 485 acre campus with 121 buildings and related facilities
- 1.3 million visitors annually in FY2019
- The state’s largest environmental educator, serving nearly 400,000 participants FY2019
- \$222.7 million annual economic impact, supporting more than 2,200 jobs
- More than 90,000 free admissions to Minnesotans who qualify for assistance programs through Free to Explore in FY2019

### PURPOSE

The mission of the Minnesota Zoological Garden (Minnesota Zoo or Zoo) is to connect people, animals and the natural world to save wildlife.

Located on nearly 500 acres of pristine forested land, the Minnesota Zoo is an expansive wonder that offers its guests a window into the natural world. As the state’s largest environmental education center, the Zoo serves all Minnesotans through the facilitation of experiential learning opportunities. Home to nearly 5,000 animals, many of them endangered species from around the globe, the Zoo harnesses the power of connection and education to be a catalyst for social and environmental change and a leader in wildlife conservation.

The Minnesota Zoo first opened its doors to the public in 1978 and continues to serve nearly 1.3 million guests in a typical year through award-winning exhibits and educational and interpretive programming. Today, guests to the Zoo can be transported around the globe while visiting exhibits such as Russia’s Grizzly Coast, Discovery Bay, 3M Penguins of the African Coast, Medtronic Minnesota Trail, Tropics Trail, Northern Trail, and the Wells Fargo Family Farm. In addition, the Zoo offers many opportunities for children to engage in hands-on learning and play through amenities like Hanifl Family Wild Woods and Woodland Adventure. Each of these experiences are designed to promote experiential learning and facilitate emotional connections to the natural world in order to build awareness of global conservation issues and celebrate Minnesota’s natural history.

The Minnesota Zoo is passionately committed to saving wildlife and the habitats they depend on. While physically located in Apple Valley, MN, the Zoo is engaged with conservation efforts throughout the state and across the globe. In close collaboration with other state and federal agencies, Zoo researchers dedicate their expertise to lead projects that address a wide range of threats to endangered species. In Minnesota, efforts focus on reintroduction of the state’s most imperiled butterflies and the diminishing prairie they depend on, as well as threatened aquatic turtles and endangered freshwater mussels, and the reintroduction of wild bison herds in Minnesota State Parks. The Zoo also leads international conservation efforts through programs such as the renowned black rhino project, the reintroduction of Asian wild horses, and championing tiger conservation for decades. From programs implemented statewide to efforts across the globe, wildlife conservation remains at the heart of the Minnesota Zoo’s mission.

The Minnesota Zoo is a leading environmental education institution, serving nearly 400,000 people in a typical year through its educational and interpretive programming. These experiences are designed to educate and motivate people of all ages and backgrounds to act on behalf of wildlife. Through direct exposure to live animals,

participants learn to appreciate and develop empathy for wildlife, cultivate a profound sense of curiosity for the natural world, and feel empowered to become stewards of wild animals and wild places. The Minnesota Zoo implements a wide variety of educational programming covering topics such as Minnesota's natural heritage, current wildlife conservation issues, global sustainability, and the development of math and science skills. The Zoo connects with its guests through daily onsite programming and through expertly created classes designed for school groups. In a typical year, the Zoo reaches most counties across Minnesota with the traveling Zoomobile program.

The Minnesota Zoo maintains a strong commitment to welcoming people of all ages, backgrounds, and ability levels. The Free to Explore Program ensures the Zoo admission is free for Minnesotans who qualify for assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, and MinnesotaCare. The Zoo Explorers Fund provides financial assistance to under-served schools throughout the state so that all students can experience the awe of a close encounter with a wild animal.

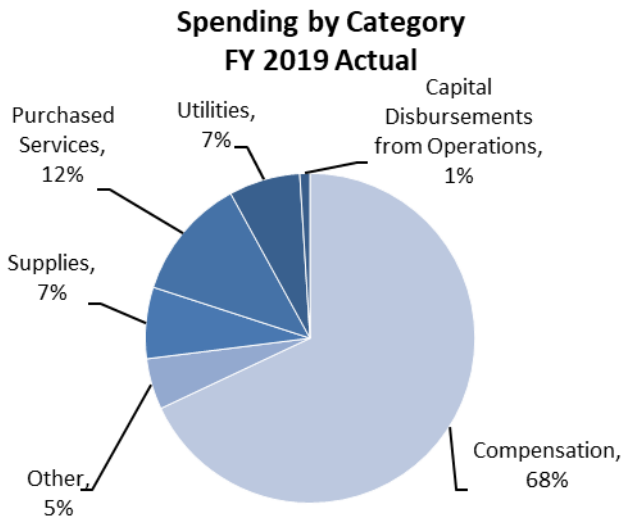
Further, the Zoo offers programs targeted to serve communities with special needs with various programs. Recent examples include autism camps, MNZoo4All autism app, American Sign Language (ASL) days at the Zoo, Dream Night for children with chronic healthcare needs, and early access to special events for those requiring a less crowded and stimulating environment. The Zoo bridges additional access barriers by providing maps of the campus in ten foreign languages, ASL interpreters, sighted guides, and tactile tours. The Minnesota Zoo implements these programs and many others so that a zoo experience is never limited to someone based on economic, cultural, physical, geographic, or other factors.

## **BUDGET**

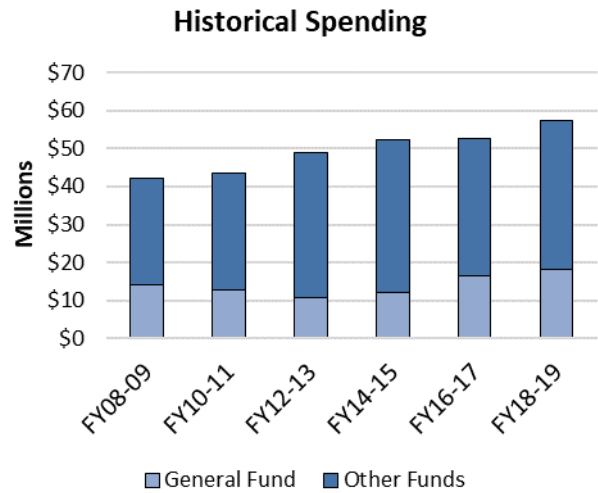
We are committed to using our resources efficiently and effectively. In addition to the State's investment, we have a diverse mix of earned revenue, private investment and corporate support through charitable contributions and volunteer services. In a typical year, more than 1,100 volunteers collectively donate more than 105,053 hours of time each year, serving an essential role in the Zoo's daily operations.

The Zoo's primary source of revenue is earned income from admissions, memberships, food and gift concessions, programs and events and facility rentals. In a typical year, the State's investment in our operating budget through the General Fund represents approximately one-third of the Zoo's total revenue. In FY2021, the state also appropriated \$6 million to the Zoo related to COVID-19 pandemic. The Zoo also receives additional funding from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund. Charitable contributions to our nonprofit partner, the Minnesota Zoo Foundation, also contribute to the support of our mission.

The State's investment is key to maintaining the sustainability of our business model, which relies on a healthy mix of earned and contributed income and state support. Investment from the General Fund ensures our ability to withstand the unanticipated expenses inherent in running a large campus with many outdoor areas, such as extreme weather events or fluctuations in the economy that can negatively affect our attendance.



Source: Statewide Integrated Financial Tools System (SWIFT)



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

Because the Zoo cares for nearly 5,000 animals and a 485-acre campus regardless of whether the Zoo is open for admission, it has significant fixed operating costs. In a typical year, 68 percent of the Zoo’s budget is allocated to personnel compensation and related expenses. Another five percent (approximately \$1.85 million) covers fixed utility costs. As state personnel costs and utility expenses continue to rise, the Zoo’s fixed costs increase correspondingly.

## STRATEGIES

In 2016, we revised our strategic plan to solidify our critical role in helping Minnesotans connect with nature and increasing the value they attach to the natural world. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has required us to push pause on our revised strategies and pivot to a new set of strategies, as we navigate a long-term recovery phase for the Minnesota Zoo. Over the course of the next three years, the Minnesota Zoo will:

1. Safely care for our staff, volunteers, animals, facilities, operations and guests
2. Build three core experiences that we can pivot between as required during the pandemic:
  - a. ‘Socially Distanced’ Zoo – onsite animal viewing with strong social distancing and safety protocols
  - b. Year-round Virtual Zoo – uniquely zoo distance learning and digital engagement opportunities
  - c. Drive thru Zoo – animal viewing and engagement from the comfort of one’s own vehicle
3. Engage mission-motivated audiences
4. Position the Zoo as a trusted conservation organization that saves wildlife.
5. Responsibly plan and mitigate financial risk in partnership with Minnesota Management and Budget, state leaders and stakeholders
6. Proactively and transparently communicate with stakeholders

## RESULTS

<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Name of Measure</i>	<i>Previous</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Zoo Strategy Alignment</i>
Quantitative	Zoo attendance	1.302 million	1.313 million	FY18/ FY19	1, 2, 3
Quantitative	Free to Explore	89,314 free admissions	92,215 free admissions	FY18/ FY19	2,3
Qualitative	Geographic impact	Program reach directly impacting 84 counties <i>(i.e. Free to Explore, membership, school group visits, Zoomobile)</i>	Program reach directly impacting 87 counties <i>(i.e. Free to Explore, membership, school group visits, Zoomobile)</i>	FY17/ FY19	2,3
Quantitative	Economic impact 2012 and 2017 studies	\$146 million	\$222.7 million	2012/ 2017	4, 5
Qualitative	Association of Zoos and Aquariums accreditation	Accredited	Accredited	2012/ 2017	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Qualitative and Quantitative	Conservation impact	Dakota skipper butterflies reintroduced; 237 Ulysses S. Seal grants since 2002; 500 students involved in the <i>Show Us Your Mussels</i> campaign	Dakota skipper and Poweshiek skipperling butterflies reintroduced; endangered freshwater mussels reintroduced; threatened freshwater turtles reared and released into the wild; over 800 students participated in the Show Us Your Mussels campaign.	2018/ 2019	6

### Performance Measure Notes:

**Attendance:** Attendance is directly related to our long-term financial sustainability and ability to deliver our conservation message. Attendance numbers are captured daily. Many factors affect our attendance, including weather, marketing, price and general economic conditions. And, most recently, COVID-19. While we cannot control many of these elements, we remain responsible for creating the best experience for our guests. Guest satisfaction with their Zoo experience is directly related to future attendance. In turn, attendance has a demonstrable impact on the economy of the region.

**Economic Impact:** The University of Minnesota completed studies of the Zoo's economic impact in the 7-county metropolitan area in 2007, 2010, 2012 and 2017. Each study has shown an increase in the Zoo's impact in the area. These studies do not reflect any impact from construction projects at the Zoo, which would further increase the impact of the Zoo on the local economy.

**Conservation:** The conservation impacts include increased numbers and healthy populations of endangered species in the Zoo's care; increased rearing and reintroductions of endangered butterflies; a new rearing and release program for state-threatened freshwater turtles; increased engagement with partners in the field (in situ initiatives) and recognition of the Zoo's work by professional partners, peers and other stakeholders. Outreach programs like *Show Us Your Mussels* get local students involved in the Zoo's conservation work and generate new educational materials.

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See Minnesota Statutes Chapter 85A <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=85A> for an overview of the Minnesota Zoo's purpose, organization and authority.

# Zoological Gardens

# Agency Expenditure Overview

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Actual FY20	Estimate FY21	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY22	FY23	FY22	FY23
<b><u>Expenditures by Fund</u></b>								
1000 - General	9,067	9,163	9,665	11,404	9,809	9,809	15,749	13,769
1251 - COVID-19 Minnesota				6,000				
2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue	15,820	16,534	14,056	6,773	9,582	13,540	9,582	13,540
2050 - Environment & Natural Resources	344	620	476	722				
2110 - Zoos Lottery In Lieu	160	160	190	190	190	190	190	190
2301 - Arts & Cultural Heritage	1,347	1,533	2,490	1,610	245		245	
2403 - Gift	1,542	1,031	3,971	1,077	2,500	1,550	2,500	1,550
3000 - Federal	78	64	101	75	56	39	56	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,358</b>	<b>29,106</b>	<b>30,950</b>	<b>27,851</b>	<b>22,382</b>	<b>25,128</b>	<b>28,322</b>	<b>29,088</b>
Biennial Change				1,337		(11,291)		(1,391)
Biennial % Change				2		(19)		(2)
Governor's Change from Base								9,900
Governor's % Change from Base								21

## **Expenditures by Program**

Minnesota Zoo	28,358	29,106	30,950	27,851	22,382	25,128	28,322	29,088
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,358</b>	<b>29,106</b>	<b>30,950</b>	<b>27,851</b>	<b>22,382</b>	<b>25,128</b>	<b>28,322</b>	<b>29,088</b>

## **Expenditures by Category**

Compensation	18,306	19,271	19,402	17,702	13,587	16,452	18,345	19,887
Operating Expenses	9,694	9,475	11,278	9,989	7,685	8,516	8,867	9,041
Grants, Aids and Subsidies	2	5	131					
Capital Outlay-Real Property	260	233	76		950		950	
Other Financial Transaction	95	122	62	160	160	160	160	160
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,358</b>	<b>29,106</b>	<b>30,950</b>	<b>27,851</b>	<b>22,382</b>	<b>25,128</b>	<b>28,322</b>	<b>29,088</b>

Total Agency Expenditures	28,358	29,106	30,950	27,851	22,382	25,128	28,322	29,088
Internal Billing Expenditures	362	368	322	78	70	70	70	70
<b>Expenditures Less Internal Billing</b>	<b>27,996</b>	<b>28,738</b>	<b>30,627</b>	<b>27,773</b>	<b>22,312</b>	<b>25,058</b>	<b>28,252</b>	<b>29,018</b>

## **Full-Time Equivalent**

	<b>237.61</b>	<b>243.49</b>	<b>235.31</b>	<b>193.65</b>	<b>154.68</b>	<b>188.46</b>	<b>207.68</b>	<b>221.46</b>
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# Zoological Gardens

# Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Actual FY20	Estimate FY21	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY22	FY23	FY22	FY23
<b>1000 - General</b>								
Direct Appropriation	9,067	9,163	9,665	11,404	9,809	9,809	15,749	13,769
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>9,067</b>	<b>9,163</b>	<b>9,665</b>	<b>11,404</b>	<b>9,809</b>	<b>9,809</b>	<b>15,749</b>	<b>13,769</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				2,839		(1,451)		8,449
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				16		(7)		40
Governor's Change from Base								9,900
Governor's % Change from Base								50
Full-Time Equivalents	103.61	108.92	109.07	102.60	110.93	112.46	163.93	145.46

## 1251 - COVID-19 Minnesota

Direct Appropriation				6,000	0	0	0	0
<b>Expenditures</b>				<b>6,000</b>				
Biennial Change in Expenditures				6,000		(6,000)		(6,000)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures								
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								
Full-Time Equivalents				71.00				

## 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue

Balance Forward In	4,510	4,182	4,035	1,151				
Receipts	15,438	16,140	11,172	5,622	9,582	13,540	9,582	13,540
Internal Billing Receipts	362	368	322	70	70	70	70	70
Transfers In	5	25	35					
Transfers Out	23	25	35					
Balance Forward Out	4,110	3,788	1,151					
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>15,820</b>	<b>16,534</b>	<b>14,056</b>	<b>6,773</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>13,540</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>13,540</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				(11,525)		2,293		2,293
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				(36)		11		11
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	107.80	109.34	93.55		34.32	64.31	34.32	64.31

## 2050 - Environment & Natural Resources

Balance Forward In	508	1,000	368	722				
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# Zoological Gardens

# Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Estimate	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY22	FY23
Direct Appropriation	891		829					
Cancellations	55	11						
Balance Forward Out	1,000	368	721					
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>722</b>				
Biennial Change in Expenditures				234		(1,198)		(1,198)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				24		(100)		(100)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								
Full-Time Equivalents	3.20	4.33	3.22	2.84				

## 2110 - Zoos Lottery In Lieu

Direct Appropriation	160	160	190	190	190	190	190	190
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				60		0		0
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				19		0		0
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents			1.99	1.93	1.90	1.87	1.90	1.87

## 2301 - Arts & Cultural Heritage

Balance Forward In	212	421	845	105	245		245	
Direct Appropriation	1,550	1,950	1,750	1,750	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	53				245		245	
Transfers Out	53				245		245	
Cancellations		148	0					
Balance Forward Out	415	690	105	245				
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>1,533</b>	<b>2,490</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>245</b>		<b>245</b>	
Biennial Change in Expenditures				1,220		(3,855)		(3,855)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				42		(94)		(94)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								
Full-Time Equivalents	14.60	14.87	15.61	11.41	2.85		2.85	

# Zoological Gardens

# Agency Financing by Fund

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Actual FY20	Estimate FY21	Forecast Base		Governor's Recommendation	
					FY22	FY23	FY22	FY23
<b>2403 - Gift</b>								
Balance Forward In	1,011	1,350	1,519	1,706	950		950	
Receipts	1,833	1,133	4,158	321	1,550	1,550	1,550	1,550
Balance Forward Out	1,302	1,451	1,707	950				
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>3,971</b>	<b>1,077</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>1,550</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				2,475		(998)		(998)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				96		(20)		(20)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	7.82	5.17	11.13	3.34	4.05	9.27	4.05	9.27

## 3000 - Federal

Balance Forward In	6							
Receipts	73	64	101	75	56	39	56	39
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>39</b>
Biennial Change in Expenditures				34		(81)		(81)
Biennial % Change in Expenditures				24		(46)		(46)
Governor's Change from Base								0
Governor's % Change from Base								0
Full-Time Equivalents	0.58	0.86	0.74	0.53	0.63	0.55	0.63	0.55

# Zoological Gardens

# Agency Change Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY21	FY22	FY23	Biennium 2022-23
<b>Direct</b>				
<b>Fund: 1000 - General</b>				
FY2021 Appropriations	9,809	9,809	9,809	19,618
Forecast Base	9,809	9,809	9,809	19,618
Change Items				
Deficiency Request	1,595	5,940	3,960	9,900
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>11,404</b>	<b>15,749</b>	<b>13,769</b>	<b>29,518</b>
<b>Fund: 1251 - COVID-19 Minnesota</b>				
FY2021 Appropriations	6,000	6,000	6,000	12,000
Base Adjustments				
All Other One-Time Appropriations		(6,000)	(6,000)	(12,000)
Forecast Base	6,000	0	0	0
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fund: 2110 - Zoos Lottery In Lieu</b>				
FY2021 Appropriations	190	190	190	380
Forecast Base	190	190	190	380
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>380</b>
<b>Fund: 2301 - Arts &amp; Cultural Heritage</b>				
FY2021 Appropriations	1,750	1,750	1,750	3,500
Base Adjustments				
One-Time Legacy Fund Appropriations		(1,750)	(1,750)	(3,500)
Forecast Base	1,750	0	0	0
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Dedicated</b>				
<b>Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue</b>				
Planned Spending	6,773	9,582	13,540	23,122
Forecast Base	6,773	9,582	13,540	23,122
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>6,773</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>13,540</b>	<b>23,122</b>
<b>Fund: 2403 - Gift</b>				
Planned Spending	1,077	2,500	1,550	4,050
Forecast Base	1,077	2,500	1,550	4,050
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>1,077</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>4,050</b>
<b>Fund: 3000 - Federal</b>				

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY21	FY22	FY23	Biennium 2022-23
Planned Spending	75	56	39	95
Forecast Base	75	56	39	95
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>95</b>
 <b>Revenue Change Summary</b>				
<b>Dedicated</b>				
<b>Fund: 2000 - Restrict Misc Special Revenue</b>				
Forecast Revenues	5,622	9,582	13,540	23,122
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>5,622</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>13,540</b>	<b>23,122</b>
 <b>Fund: 2403 - Gift</b>				
Forecast Revenues	321	1,550	1,550	3,100
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>3,100</b>
 <b>Fund: 3000 - Federal</b>				
Forecast Revenues	75	56	39	95
<b>Total Governor's Recommendations</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>95</b>

# Minnesota Zoo

## FY 2022-23 Biennial Budget Change Item

### Change Item Title: Restarting the Zoo's Economic Engine

Fiscal Impact (\$000s)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
General Fund					
Expenditures	1,595	5,940	3,960	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0	0
Other Funds					
Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	1,595	5,940	3,960	0	0
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Recommendation:

The Governor recommends \$1.595 million in FY 2021, \$5.94 million in FY 2022 and \$3.96 million in FY 2023 to restart the Zoo's economic engine as it recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Multiple Zoo-wide closures, dramatically reduced capacity, and other pandemic-related effects have reduced earned revenue required for the Zoo's annual operating budget by a projected \$30 million in FY 2020-23. Capacity restrictions are anticipated to continue through at least the end of FY 2021. The requested funds will be used to sustain the Zoo until a vaccine is widely distributed, capacity restrictions are eased and the public perceive visits to shared public spaces as safe, then to rebuild the Zoo's most beloved experiences so that the Zoo can return to generating two-thirds of its annual operating budget.

### Rationale/Background:

To help limit the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state, the Minnesota Zoo closed its doors to the public for four months in the spring and summer 2020, then for another four weeks beginning in November. Both of these closures were during significant periods of revenue generation (impacting gate admissions and membership). The Zoo is projected to lose more than \$30 million in earned revenue during FY 2020-23 because of closures, reduced capacity, loss of member households and other impacts of the pandemic. Due to the significant reduction in revenue, the Zoo took immediate and drastic measures to reduce expenses, including:

- laid off 48 staff members and impacted 125 positions in total by eliminating or reducing hours for many intermittent and seasonal positions;
- canceled or delayed major projects and significantly cut back on infrastructure investments, repairs, and maintenance; and
- reduced hours of operation, eliminated shows and animal encounters, and canceled all summer camps and educational programming including the popular Zoomobile program.

While these measures have helped reduce costs by nearly \$8 million in FY 2020-21, concern remains over the ability to perform routine care for the animals and Zoo facilities. The Minnesota Zoo is home to nearly 5,000 animals, many of them endangered species, that require daily care and veterinary services. In addition, the Zoo is located on 485 acres of land and operates similar to a small city with its own heat plant and miles of roads and trails. Staff must care for Zoo grounds and facilities, in addition to the unique needs of each animal, in order to ensure this beloved state asset remains safe, accessible, and enjoyable to its many guests.

Additional funds will be needed to sustain the Zoo until a vaccine is widely available and to reinstate public programming and engagement efforts. Without additional support, the Zoo is unable to restore the educational programs that Minnesotans across the state have come to expect and cherish, such as the traveling Zoomobile.

program, onsite animal encounters, World of Birds Show, and educational programming for students. Lastly, the Zoo remains committed to fiscal responsibility, and requested funds will help return the Zoo's ability to generate two-thirds of its annual operating budget by the FY 2024-25 biennium and serve as an economic engine for the state. According to a 2018 study conducted by economist Daniel L. Erkkila, Ph.D., in a typical year, the Minnesota Zoo generates \$222.7 million of economic impact each year. Additionally, impacts stemming from proposed Zoo construction projects include \$69.5 million in gross output. Further, local job impacts from the construction include approximately 375 across the span of years required for completion. Restarting the Zoo's economic engine has great benefit for not only the Minnesota Zoo, but for the state as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Proposal:**

This proposal will restart the Zoo's economic engine generating nearly \$40 million in revenue to the Zoo and an estimated \$450 million in economic impact to the state over the course of a typical biennium. This proposal allows the Zoo to once again fully open its doors to Minnesotans and provide the public programming, educational experiences, and conservation efforts that guests have come to expect and cherish from the Minnesota Zoo.

Specifically the funds will:

- Ensure the continuation of a world-class zoo in Minnesota and protect the state's 42-year investment in the Zoo.
- Provide excellent animal welfare/care and facility maintenance through the pandemic.
- Safely reinstate onsite experiences such as the World of Birds Show and onsite animal encounters so that the Zoo can once again facilitate impactful interactions between guests and animals.
- Restore the Zoo's diverse educational programming, which historically reaches hundreds of thousands of students and members of the general public every year.
- Support wildlife conservation programs that work to save at-risk wildlife species and restore and protect valuable natural resources, as well as educate the public about these important efforts.

The Zoo's operating costs are largely fixed. A world-class zoo requires staff expertise to provide exceptional animal care. The Zoo laid off 48 people at the beginning of the pandemic. Even with this proposal the Zoo will not begin to approach pre-pandemic staffing levels, which were already lean, until FY 2023.

Sustaining the Zoo through this pandemic will also help maintain the many conservation efforts of the Minnesota Zoo. Conservation is at the heart of everything the Zoo does. While physically located in Apple Valley, MN, the Zoo is engaged with conservation programs throughout the state and across the globe. The Zoo leads international conservation efforts through programs such as the renowned black rhino project, the reintroduction of Asian wild horses, and championing tiger conservation for decades. In Minnesota, efforts focus on reintroduction of the state's most imperiled butterflies and the diminishing prairie they depend on, as well as threatened aquatic turtles and endangered freshwater mussels, and the reintroduction of wild bison herds in Minnesota State Parks. These programs are not only crucial to the survival of the species themselves, they improve and protect Minnesota's natural resources and help ensure that the beauty and wonder of our state can be enjoyed by all for many future generations to come.

### **Impact on Children and Families:**

The Minnesota Zoo is a leading environmental education institution, serving nearly 400,000 people in a typical year through its educational and interpretive programming. Through direct exposure to live animals, participants learn to appreciate and develop empathy for wildlife, cultivate a profound sense of curiosity for the natural world, and feel empowered to become stewards of wild animals and wild places. The Minnesota Zoo implements a wide variety of educational programming covering topics such as Minnesota's natural heritage, current wildlife conservation issues, global sustainability, and the development of math and science skills.

The Zoo connects with its guests through daily onsite programming and through expertly created classes designed for school groups. In a typical biennium, the Zoo reaches most counties across Minnesota with the traveling Zoomobile program. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting revenue loss, the Zoo has ceased all public programming and halted the Zoomobile program. With support, the Minnesota Zoo can once again provide the engaging and educational opportunities that have previously touched and impacted countless families and individuals across the state.

Connections with the natural world continue to provide an opportunity for people to decrease stress, improve physical and mental health, and spend quality time with loved ones. Throughout the past several months, and into the coming years, these connections have been and will be needed deeply, perhaps more than ever before. The Minnesota Zoo has helped facilitate these connections and served as a portal into the natural world for decades, and with support, will play a vital role as Minnesotans continue to heal and recover from these challenging times.

### **Equity and Inclusion:**

The Minnesota Zoo maintains a strong commitment to welcoming people of all ages, backgrounds, and ability levels. The Free to Explore Program ensures Zoo admission is free for Minnesotans who qualify for assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, and MinnesotaCare. The Zoo Explorers Fund provides financial assistance to under-served schools throughout the state so that all students can experience the awe of a close encounter with a wild animal.

Further, the Zoo has offered a variety of programs targeted to serve communities with special and differing needs. Recent past examples include: American Sign Language (ASL) days at the Zoo; autism camps; Dream Night for children with chronic healthcare needs; early access to special events for those requiring a less crowded and stimulating environment; and the 2018 launch of MNZoo4All, an app to help people with autism and sensory-processing disorders navigate the Zoo in ways that best meet their needs. The Zoo bridges additional access barriers by providing maps of the campus in ten foreign languages, ASL interpreters, sighted guides, and tactile tours. Due to pandemic-related closures, capacity restrictions, and safety measures, many of these programs have halted entirely or are limited in their reach. Additional funding is requested to ensure that these programs and many others can return to operating at full capacity so that a zoo experience is never limited to someone based on economic, cultural, physical, geographic, or other factors.

# Minnesota Zoological Garden

# Federal Funds Summary

(Dollars in Thousands)

Federal Agency and CFDA #	Federal Award Name and Brief Purpose	New Grant	FY 2020 Actuals	FY 2021 Budget	FY 2022 Base	FY 2023 Base	Required State Match or MOE?	FTEs
Interior/US Fish & Wildlife Service CFDA 15.662	<b>Great Lakes Restoration Initiative #3 (0080)</b> <i>Poweshiek Skipperling Husbandry, Head Starting, and Risk Analysis</i> Provides equipment and staff to improve <i>ex situ</i> conservation practices for prairie butterflies.		\$ 91	\$ 16	\$ -	\$ -	No	
Interior/US Fish & Wildlife Service CFDA 15.662	<b>Great Lakes Restoration Initiative #3 (0014)</b> <i>Poweshiek Skipperling Husbandry, Head Starting, and Risk Analysis</i> Provides supplies, staff, and sample analysis for <i>ex situ</i> prairie butterfly conservation. The project involves rearing and releasing Poweshiek skipperling butterflies and examining the impact of pesticides on prairie butterfly populations.		\$ 11	\$ 45	\$ 35	\$ -	No	0.38
Interior/US Fish & Wildlife Service CFDA 15.662	<b>Great Lakes Restoration Initiative #4 (0083)</b> <i>Poweshiek Skipperling Husbandry, Head Starting, and Risk Analysis</i> Provides supplies, staff, and sample analysis for <i>ex situ</i> prairie butterfly conservation. The project involves rearing and releasing Poweshiek skipperling butterflies and examining the impact of pesticides on prairie butterfly populations.		\$ -	\$ 14	\$ 22	\$ 39	No	0.25
<b>Federal Fund – Agency Total</b>			<b>\$ 101</b>	<b>\$ 75</b>	<b>\$ 56</b>	<b>\$ 39</b>		<b>0.63</b>

## Narrative

Federal funding to the Minnesota Zoo provides additional resources to advance its mission of connecting people, animals and the natural world to save wildlife. The Minnesota Zoo’s Conservation department receives and spends federal funds from competitive grants and cooperative agreements. Federal grants generally allow the Minnesota Zoo to hire staff and purchase equipment that it would not otherwise be able to within existing resources. Federal funds represent less than one percent of the Minnesota Zoo’s budget for the FY 2020-21 biennium. The Minnesota Zoo will continue seeking out federal funding resources when they are in line with the Zoo’s mission and strategic plan. Estimates provided here reflect awarded grants that continue current work.