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\$1.1 million exhibit *Red Wolf Woods* opens at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium
Exhibit celebrates the species' 40-year journey back from the brink of extinction



Tacoma, Wash. – In the 1970s, only 14 red wolves roamed the planet, and today there are approximately 300, with a large portion reintroduced into the wild. This Labor Day Weekend, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium will open its newest exhibit, Red Wolf Woods, in honor of this 40-year recovery program and the zoo's leadership role in it.

“The red wolf program is one of the zoo's greatest accomplishments,” said zoo deputy director John Houck. “Reproduction specialists, genetic management experts, world-class veterinarians and top-notch animal care staff have joined together in

Pierce County to keep this critically endangered species from going extinct. Red Wolf Woods tells this inspiring story of the one of the most successful conservation programs in North America.”

The new exhibit honors this four-decade journey with beautiful habitats for the wolves, expansive viewing platforms for visitors and educational messages about the nationwide endeavor to save this species.

With a forest of hardwood trees, low grasses and shrubs, a stream and natal dens, the new exhibit is designed to mimic the red wolves' native territory and give visitors dramatic, unobstructed views of the animals. The exhibit's educational Conservation Center aims to inspire visitors to get involved in protecting endangered species locally, nationally and around the world.

The total cost of the new exhibit will be \$1.1 million, with all design and construction costs funded through private grants and donations. More than 240 companies, foundations, and

individuals have contributed to the new exhibit through The Zoo Society's Vision for the Future capital campaign. Vision for the Future Campaign Co-Chair Tina De Falco noted the Society is approaching 90 percent of the campaign goal, the largest private campaign in the zoo's history.

"With support from the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Gary E. Milgard Family Foundation, The Boeing Company and hundreds of others – including 100 percent of zoo and Zoo Society staff, we have been able to give this species the honor it deserves," she said.

Puyallup Tribe of Indians Council Member Sylvia Miller said, "The Puyallup Tribe recognizes the incredible work Point Defiance Zoo has put into saving this endangered species, and we're proud to help share this powerful story with our community."

Red Wolf Woods officially opens on Saturday, Sept. 4, and the zoo plans to pack the entire Labor Day Weekend with fun and activities celebrating the return of this majestic, endangered animal. Festivities will include educational activities for kids, enrichment treats for the wolves and special keeper talks by the people who care for the wolves on a daily basis.

For more information on Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, visit www.pdza.org or call 253-591-5337.

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Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only Zoo & Aquarium, is located in Tacoma's beautiful Point Defiance Park, 5400 North Pearl Street. Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The Zoo, a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).