Zoo/Trek Authority

2011 Report to the Community

What is the Zoo/Trek Authority (ZTA)?

The Zoo/Trek Authority was established in 2001 to oversee disbursement of sales tax revenue to Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. In 2000, Pierce County voters approved a one-tenth-of-a-cent increase in the local sales tax rate to support the Zoo, Northwest Trek and parks. One-half of this new revenue goes to Point Defiance Zoo and Northwest Trek. The other half is divided among park systems throughout Pierce County.

2011 Highlights

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium

- **Welcomed over 695,000 visitors,** the highest annual attendance in its 106-year history.
- **Opened the new Cats of the Canopy exhibit.** The $1 million exhibit, funded by The Zoo Society, allows visitors to see clouded leopards up close and represents a significant commitment to helping in the survival and conservation of this endangered species.
- **Celebrated the birth of endangered clouded leopard cubs** Taji and Sumalee. Point Defiance Zoo is one of only three zoos in the country breeding clouded leopards.
- **Developed a long-term strategic plan,** with community input, that includes a capital facilities master plan to address aging and deteriorating Zoo facilities. The master plan includes recommendations for the nearly 50-year-old North Pacific Aquarium and the 30-year-old Rocky Shores/Arctic Tundra exhibit.
- **Successfully completed the $7.15 million capital campaign** (including $2.0 million in 2005 bond funds), the largest in Zoo history. The capital campaign, led by The Zoo Society, funded the Animal Avenue, Red Wolf Woods and Cats of the Canopy exhibits and created a permanent endowment fund.
- **Offered Zoo field trip scholarship opportunities** (covering buses and admission) to all Tacoma public elementary schools in which 60 percent or more of students participate in the National Lunch Program and to all Head Start/ECEAP low-income preschool programs within Tacoma School District boundaries.

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

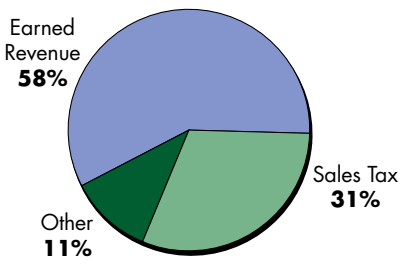
- **Earned re-accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA),** a rating considered the gold standard in the Zoo industry. The park underwent a rigorous investigation to ensure it meets the highest standards in animal care, conservation, education and safety. Fewer than 10 percent of the 2,400 animal exhibitors licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are accredited by AZA.
- **Released six young trumpeter swans into the wild** in Washington, marking the culmination of 18 years of swan conservation efforts by Northwest Trek and the Washington Swan Stewards.
- **Reared and released more than 220 state-endangered Oregon spotted frogs** on protected land at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The project is a collaborative effort with JBLM, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and 10 other partners to return the frogs to a portion of their historic habitat in Washington.
- **Celebrated the 40th anniversary of the gift of land** by Dr. David and Connie Hellyer to Metro Parks Tacoma. The Hellyers' orginal land gift has expanded to 725 acres to create one of the most unique wildlife parks in the nation.
- **Opened a renovated nature trail system,** after many years of planning and hard work by staff and volunteers. Park visitors can now hike more than five miles of well-marked and maintained trails around the perimeter of the park on the edge of the Ohop Valley.
- **Partnered with The Boeing Company** to further development of a wetland restoration demonstration site to train and support community conservation and stewardship projects in Pierce County.

Finances

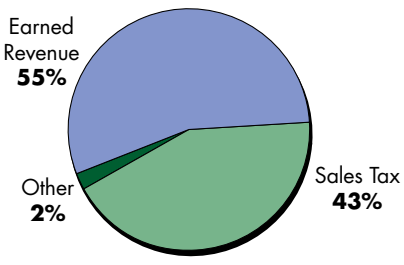
Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park are owned by Metro Parks Tacoma. Since January 2001, both parks have been funded entirely by a combination of earned revenue (e.g. admission fees, food and gift shop sales) and dedicated sales tax revenue. The Zoo and Northwest Trek receive no direct funding from Metro Parks Tacoma.

Gifts and grants from the private, non-profit Zoo Society provide additional funding for the Zoo. Gifts and grants from the Northwest Trek Foundation provide additional funding for Northwest Trek.

2011 Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium
Revenue Sources
$12.5 million



2011 Northwest Trek Wildlife Park
Revenue Sources
$4.4 million



2011 Attendance & Revenue

- 695,813 people visited the Zoo.
- 175,821 people visited Northwest Trek Wildlife Park.
- 38,527 students, teachers and chaperones visited the Zoo on organized field trips.
- 12,255 students, teachers and chaperones visited Northwest Trek on organized field trips.

The ZTA is composed of seven elected officials appointed by city and county councils as follows:

- Pierce County Council: 3 members
- Tacoma City Council: 2 members
- Other Pierce County cities/towns: 2 members

The ZTA is charged with approving the biennial operating budgets for Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park prior to final adoption by the Metro Parks Tacoma Board of Commissioners.

2011 ZTA Members

Spiro Manthou
Chair, ZTA
Tacoma City Council

Bobbi Allison
Eatonville Town Council

Roger Bush
Pierce County Council

Stan Flemming
Pierce County Council

Jeff Hogan
Mayor of Edgewood

Joe Lonergan
Tacoma City Council

Dick Muri
Pierce County Council

2011 Metro Parks Tacoma Board of Park Commissioners

Larry Dahl
President

Erik Hanberg

Krystal Kyer

Aaron Pointer

Tim Reid

NW Zoo & Aquarium Alliance
PROMOTING REGIONAL CONSERVATION

The NW Zoo & Aquarium Alliance is a consortium of seven zoos and aquariums from Washington, Oregon and Idaho, dedicated to promoting conservation in the Pacific Northwest ecoregion. Gary Geddes, director of the Zoological & Environmental Education Department at Metro Parks Tacoma, serves as chairman of the NWZAA.

NWZAA Members
Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, Oregon Coast Aquarium, Oregon Zoo, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Seattle Aquarium, Woodland Park Zoo and Zoo Boise.

Partners
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, High Desert Museum

Questions or comments?
Please contact Whitney DalBalcon at (253) 404-3637 or Whitney.DalBalcon@pdza.org

Metro Parks Tacoma — metroparkstacoma.org
Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, Metro Parks Tacoma — pdza.org
Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, Metro Parks Tacoma — nwtrek.org