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**TACOMA TRUCKING COMPANY HONORED WITH SECOND ANNUAL PAW OF APPROVAL AWARD
FROM POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM AND THE ARCTIC ACTION TEAMS**

*Interstate Distributor recognized during Metro Parks Tacoma Board of Commissioners meeting
for its innovative work in reducing carbon dioxide emissions through fleet management*

TACOMA, Wash. – Interstate Distributor, a Tacoma-based trucking company with worldwide clients, is the winner of the second annual Polar Bear Paw of Approval Award presented by Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Sustainable Tacoma Commission and the Arctic Action Teams.

The company was honored Monday night during a meeting of the Metro Parks Tacoma Board of Commissioners.



The annual award recognizes outstanding achievement by a Pierce County business in reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Carolyn Buchanan, a co-founder of the Arctic Action Teams, presented the award.

The Paw of Approval spotlights work being done to combat climate change, a key to maintaining habitat for polar bears and other Arctic animals.

“The companies nominated for this award inspire us,” Buchanan said Monday

afternoon during a tour of the Arctic Tundra exhibit, home to polar bears Boris, Blizzard and Glacier. “It’s very difficult to create a new way of doing business.”

Striving to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere while at the same time running a successful business shows others that it’s possible to do both, Buchanan said. She believes other businesses and community members will take notice.

A judging panel selected the Tacoma trucking company for the honor from a very impressive field of nominees, said John Garner, the zoo’s education curator.

“Interstate Distributor firmly demonstrated their commitment to improve fuel efficiency and environmental performance, including reduction of both greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.” Garner said.

Interstate, one of the largest truckload carriers serving the lower 48 states, decreased carbon emissions per mile by more than 7 percent through retrofits and upgrades to trucks during the period from 2010 through 2012, according to its nomination for the Paw of Approval Award.

The company also has upgraded its long-haul tractor fleet with low-emission engines and is retrofitting its trailers with aerodynamic technology and automated tire-inflation systems. The fleet rides on low rolling resistance tires, which increase fuel efficiency

Interstate Distributor has been a member of the Environmental Protection Agency's Smart Way program since its launch in 2004. The company also is active in the Seattle Climate partnership.

Pacific Lutheran University and GeoEngineers also were nominated for the 2014 Paw of Approval, and Garner congratulated both for their sustained efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and its partners are proud to recognize crucial work being done by local companies in this urgent battle against climate change," Garner said.

Polar bears are a threatened species, and sea ice is crucial to their existence. It's the platform from which they hunt the seals that sustain their lives. Unchecked destruction of their hunting grounds due to climate change could bring about the extinction of these largest of land carnivores.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium long has aided polar bear research and conservation efforts. The zoo parking lots and drives are "idle free" zones, in which motorists are asked to turn their engines off while they're waiting for someone, thus reducing tailpipe emissions.

The Arctic Action Teams, founded by Buchanan and her husband, Robert, inspires actions that lead to a sustainable future for people and wildlife.

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Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo and aquarium, promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The zoo, a division of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).