

TASK FORCE ON THE WOODLAND PARK ZOO ELEPHANT EXHIBIT & PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to the
Woodland Park Zoo Board of Directors

October 22, 2013

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Copies of this report and related resources are available at:

<http://www.elephanttaskforce.org>

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TASK FORCE ON THE WOODLAND PARK ZOO ELEPHANT EXHIBIT & PROGRAM

October 22, 2013

Nancy Pellegrino
Chair, Woodland Park Zoo Board of Directors
601 N. 59th Street
Seattle, WA 98103

Subject: Task Force on the Woodland Park Zoo Elephant Exhibit & Program Final Report

Dear Chairperson Pellegrino,

On behalf of all the members of the Task Force on the Woodland Park Zoo (WPZ) Elephant Exhibit & Program, we are pleased to submit this final report on our evaluation of the WPZ elephants' health and care, and the value of the elephant program and exhibit to the zoo's education and conservation objectives.

Before describing the Task Force's work, we want to say a few words about elephants.

The Task Force has learned that elephants are truly remarkable in many ways. Obviously, they are large – the world's largest living land mammal, with male, African elephants weighing up to 15,000 lbs. An elephant's trunk is amazing in its strength, dexterity and uses. Elephants are also remarkably intelligent. They are inquisitive and curious. Individual elephants have unique personalities.

They are very social, living in the wild in close social groups called herds. Three or four generations of cows and calves spend their entire lives together with the exception of males, who leave the group at puberty. The matriarch remembers where and how to find water and food, how to avoid predators, the best places for shelter and teaches the younger elephants about how to behave in elephant society.

Elephants and humans have a complex relationship. Elephants have amazed, inspired and frightened humans both in the wild and in captivity for centuries.

Elephants in the wild are in a perilous decline. Current estimates place approximately 500,000 African elephants in the wild and approximately 50,000 Asians. Due to the accelerating threats of habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and illegal wildlife trade, Asian and African elephants are of increasing conservation concern. Some conservationists believe that unless action is taken now, virtually all wild elephants will be gone before the end of the century.

As humans have gained a greater understanding of elephants, our views have evolved regarding the appropriateness of keeping elephants in captivity. Some believe, quite strongly, that zoos are inappropriate for elephants – they believe that elephants suffer more than other species in captivity, again due to their intelligence, their social nature and their migratory lifestyle in the wild. Some advocates are now urging that the WPZ's three elephants be moved to a sanctuary and that the elephant exhibit be closed.

Others believe that elephants do not suffer in a high quality zoo, provided their care is excellent and that the facility be of adequate size and complexity with high quality enrichment programs. They believe that zoos provide the only chance to view live elephants for most of the human population and that zoos provide unrivaled opportunities for educating zoo visitors and fostering of elephant conservation.

The Task Force has listened to these different perspectives and has observed that everyone in this debate is fueled by a common love for elephants and an equal dedication to protect, conserve and restore them. Elephants simply must be saved and brought to stable populations in the wild.

Over the past seven months, our Task Force of citizen volunteers dedicated a tremendous amount of time and attention to this effort. The work was challenging and sometimes led to divergent perspectives. It is clear that people are passionate about the zoo's elephants. It is also clear that the zoo's staff have great expertise, skill and affection for the elephants. They provide first-rate care and do their best to provide a high-quality experience for the three elephants in their care.

That said, the key area of common ground for all Task Force members is that although the elephants are healthy and staff provide good care, continuing the exhibit and program as it currently functions is not viable for the long term and changes are needed to advance the WPZ's mission.

A complete set of our findings, two viable management options and recommendations are outlined in this report. We believe our work provides a credible, collaborative and objective report for the WPZ Board to consider as you evaluate next steps for the elephant exhibit and program.

Thank you for this opportunity. This tremendous learning experience has left us with profound appreciation and respect for these magnificent animals.

Sincerely,



Jan Hendrickson, Co-Chair



Jay Manning, Co-Chair

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Task Force on the Woodland Park Zoo Elephant Program and Exhibit (Task Force) was created by the Woodland Park Zoo Board of Directors (WPZ Board) and charged with conducting an objective and transparent review of the Woodland Park Zoo elephants' health and care, and the value of the elephant program and exhibit to the zoo's education and conservation objectives (Appendix A: Task Force Charge). This Executive Summary describes the formation of the Task Force and the process it followed, the findings of the Task Force regarding health and management, education and conservation, and provides long-term options and recommendations for further consideration by the WPZ Board.

The "findings" represents common agreement of Task Force members. Differing views of Task Force members are also noted in the Executive Summary. Finally a more descriptive report of key minority opinions are also included the body of the report.

TASK FORCE FORMATION AND PROCESS

Jan Hendrickson, co-founder of Denny Hill Capital and a former WPZ Board chair, and Jay Manning, an environmental attorney and chief of staff to former Gov. Christine Gregoire, co-chaired the Task Force. They directed the recruitment of twelve additional Task Force members, including four members of the current WPZ Board (Appendix E: Task Force Biographies).

The Task Force convened an Expert Review Panel (ERP) to evaluate the health and care of the Woodland Park Zoo elephants. The ERP members are scientific and medical experts widely regarded as leaders in their field in such areas as elephant reproduction, animal behavior, veterinary medicine and elephant and rare species conservation (Appendix F: ERP Biographies). The ERP examined the WPZ elephants and the WPZ elephant facilities, reviewed medical records and other health data, and interviewed WPZ staff.

The ERP addressed three issues:

- Health status of the elephants at WPZ
- Social wellbeing of the elephants at WPZ
- The elephant breeding program at WPZ

The ERP prepared its own detailed report (Appendix G: ERP Report), and in this report, the Task Force adopts the ERP's findings. The ERP also provided an extensive oral presentation to the Task Force describing its process and its findings, followed by an opportunity for questions and answers.

Task Force members also visited the WPZ elephant exhibit and reviewed an extensive collection of materials including articles by scholars in the fields of animal behavior, elephant conservation and education, and zoo elephant exhibits. The Task Force also reviewed materials submitted by critics of the WPZ elephant program.

Task Force meetings included detailed presentations on a wide range of issues related to elephants in the wild and in captivity, elephant conservation and education programs, the role of zoos, the role of elephant sanctuaries, the design of exhibits, and related issues. Presentations were made by WPZ staff and other experts. Veterinarians, animal rights activists, animal behaviorists, elephant sanctuary personnel, and academic researchers shared their perspectives. In addition, the Task Force heard from directors of other zoos nationally recognized for their elephant exhibits and from directors of zoos that no longer hold elephants in their animal collections (Appendix C: Meeting Agenda Summary and Appendix D: Interviews & Outreach).

The Task Force held three- to four-hour-long public meetings monthly from April through August in order to complete its data-gathering phase. The Task Force then spent the month of September and a portion of October discussing and preparing the findings and recommendations summarized below.

FINDINGS

HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT

- The overall health of the elephants at WPZ is good. None of the elephants have significant medical conditions.
- The Expert Review Panel (ERP) found all three elephants are bright, alert and active.
- The WPZ staff is well trained and provides excellent care to the three elephants.
- The elephant Bamboo is isolated from Watoto. The social wellbeing of the current herd may be improved if the two elephants can be safely integrated.
- There are moderate occurrences of repetitive behaviors by Chai and mild occurrences by Watoto and Bamboo. The ERP determined that none of the elephants exhibit signs of distress, frustration, or pathology, but nevertheless, suggested that the social and behavioral wellbeing of the WPZ elephants should be improved. Improving the elephant facility, the enrichment program, and creating a multi-generational herd are three options that might address this concern. Continued monitoring, including evening monitoring, could improve understanding and help inform management practices.
- Watoto and Bamboo are of post-breeding age. Should the WPZ decide to continue breeding Chai to provide a multi-generational herd experience, the highest probability of having a calf is through natural breeding.
- Elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus (EEHV) has not been diagnosed in Watoto, Bamboo, or Chai, but asymptomatic EEHV carrier status cannot be ruled out.

EDUCATION

- The Task Force believes that zoos and elephants play a critical role in educating visitors, and the larger community, about animals, conservation and science.
- Informal education can contribute to a broad range of cognitive, emotional and practical outcomes. These outcomes are supported when experiences are linked to participants' prior experiences and given immediate and future opportunities to act. Task Force members believe that visiting the WPZ's elephant exhibit is, for many visitors, a powerful informal education experience with great potential to bring about behaviors that support elephant conservation. However, the initial impact of visiting elephants can dissipate without intentional follow-up and immediate

opportunities to link the WPZ elephant experience with actions that contribute to elephant conservation.

- The Task Force believes that the public's perception of the health and wellbeing of the elephants is important to WPZ's ability to fulfill its conservation education mission. The Task Force believes the higher the quality of WPZ's elephant exhibit and program, the stronger the educational experience, and the greater the connection made between seeing and learning about the elephants at WPZ, and caring and acting to conserve elephants in the wild.

CONSERVATION

- The Task Force believes that elephants are endangered in the wild and immediate actions to protect them are needed. There is also a very real threat of extinction in the wild, especially of Asian elephants, in our lifetime, if current trends are not reversed.
- WPZ contributes to the elephant conservation ecosystem in two ways. The first is by educating zoo visitors and prompting greater concern about the plight of elephants in the wild thus increasing the likelihood that zoo visitors will take action to support elephant conservation. The second is by direct financial and technical support of conservation programs in elephant range countries.
- The Task Force believes the primary purpose for having an elephant program and exhibit is to provide an engaging experience that will inspire WPZ members and guests to learn, care and act to help conserve elephants and their habitats in the wild.
- The Task Force believes that conservation education and the opportunity for zoo visitors to take actions that contribute to elephant conservation is a vitally important function of the WPZ.
- The Task Force also believes that the WPZ's support of elephant conservation through direct investment in conservation efforts in elephant range countries, as well as leadership and advocacy on a broader national level is important, should continue and be increased.
- Members of the Task Force also believe WPZ direct financial support of conservation programs in elephant range programs should be increased.
- A minority of the Task Force believes there is insufficient evidence to support the claim that visiting elephants at zoos causes visitors to support elephant conservation.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force recognizes that decisions regarding the elephant program at WPZ are the prerogative of the WPZ Board and staff. The Task Force provides the following options and recommendations regarding the care of the elephants currently at WPZ and the future of the WPZ elephant program.

LONG-TERM OPTIONS

Option 1: Create a multi-generational herd with an effective breeding program.

- Implement expeditious strategies to build a multi-generational herd, including the natural breeding of Chai. In addition to, or instead of breeding Chai, consider bringing in additional cows and perhaps a bull to create a multi-generational herd.
- Begin the exhibit and program planning and investments necessary to support a growing multi-generational herd, including the building of a state-of-the-art elephant facility. The Task Force recognizes that the creation of a multi-generational herd and facility will take a number of years.
- Develop world-class educational programming designed to instill concern and empathy for elephants and other threatened or endangered species and to prompt conservation advocacy and action in zoo visitors and on a broader national level.

The majority of the Task Force recommends this option.

Option 2: Improve the existing exhibit but allow current elephants to age out or retire at the appropriate time.

- Do not breed Chai and do not bring additional elephants to WPZ.
- Improve the exhibit and enrichment program for the existing elephant herd and allow them to age at the WPZ until they pass or they are moved.
- Develop world-class educational programming designed to instill concern and empathy for elephants and other threatened or endangered species and to prompt conservation advocacy and action in zoo visitors and on a broader national level.
- Use the three elephants as representatives of the threatened elephants in the wild while significantly enhancing conservation efforts (field and public policy) and sharpening the focus of the education program and creating pathways to save elephants in the wild.
- When the three current elephants are deceased or moved, WPZ would discontinue its elephant program.

A minority of the Task Force members recommend this option.

IMPLICATIONS

Both options identified by the Task Force would require WPZ Board- and management-directed improvements to the WPZ Elephant Exhibit & Program. Although the Task Force commends the WPZ for operating a high-quality program and exhibit, with well-trained staff, the Task Force is unanimous in its view that maintaining the status quo for the indefinite future is not a viable long-term option.

The Task Force recognizes that Option One would take a number of years to plan, fund and

implement. Option Two also involves significant improvements to the elephant exhibit and program. Implied by both alternatives, if neither are considered viable or if neither can be successfully implemented, is closure of the elephant exhibit. No Task Force member prefers this as their first option. However, if neither option are implemented, the Task Force believes that a closure plan should be seriously considered by the WPZ Board.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the primary management options described above, the Task Force recommends the following for WPZ Board consideration. They are grouped into three categories: management and care, educational opportunities and conservation enrichments.

MANAGEMENT AND CARE

- If it can be done safely, reintegrate Bamboo and Watoto to reduce isolation and improve the social welfare of the herd.
 - If reintegration cannot be done safely, WPZ should consider transferring one elephant to another AZA-accredited facility that will provide a healthy and high quality environment.
 - Leaving WPZ with only one or two elephants for the long term should be avoided, as it would work against the broader social welfare goal.
- Improve the elephant facilities to enhance the health and social wellbeing of the elephants, including:
 - Diminishing choke points and providing more than one entrance/exit in the barn.
 - Adding supplemental wind/rain shelters and outdoor heating in order to allow the elephants more flexibility to choose where, how and with whom to spend their time.
 - Improving substrate diversity in barn and yard.
 - Expanding activities and enrichment practices to improve behavioral health and support continued good medical health.
 - Increasing the size and complexity of the yard to provide additional behavioral and physical diversity for the elephants as well as to improve the perception of visitors.
 - Upgrading cameras in the barn to allow 24-hour monitoring and data collection of the elephants.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Design elephant exhibit learning experiences that build upon the ideas and experiences of zoo visitors, connect visitors to relevant

learning resources within and beyond WPZ and illustrate immediate ways to act to effectuate elephant conservation and conservation generally.

- Expand educational programs related to elephants to create stronger awareness of the plight of elephants and other threatened or endangered species.
- Strengthen and deepen education program partners including higher education and non-profit partners with relevant expertise in informal education.
- Partner with representatives from communities who underutilize the WPZ's resources with the goal of developing programs that are accessible to and of interest to these communities.
- Consider regular and intentional educational interactions with returning visitors to increase the likelihood of increasing conservation actions

CONSERVATION ENRICHMENTS

- Increase focus and resources devoted to improving federal and global policies that will enhance elephant conservation practices in African and Asian countries.
- Significantly increase the WPZ's contribution to in situ conservation programs, particularly in Asia.
- Consistent with the education recommendations set forth above, link WPZ educational programs and zoo visits generally with immediate conservation action opportunities, i.e., make it easy for zoo visitors to take immediate action to contribute to the conservation of elephants.
- Work with the AZA, and elephant experts from other zoos and organizations, to more effectively connect the WPZ's elephant program to national efforts to protect elephants in the wild.

FINAL REPORT

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force, created by the Woodland Park Zoo Board of Directors (WPZ Board), conducted an objective and transparent review of the Woodland Park Zoo elephants’ health and care, and the value of the elephant program and exhibit to the zoo’s education and conservation objectives.

A diverse group of community leaders representing a broad range of backgrounds, including four members who serve on the WPZ Board, were selected to serve on the Task Force (Appendix E: Task Force Biographies). Task Force members have expertise in biology, veterinary medicine, the environment and environmental law, education, public policy, non-profit operations and management, and a history of community service. They were instructed to be open, objective and thoughtful in their evaluation of the elephant exhibit and to approach their work without preconceived outcomes or positions.

| TASK FORCE ON THE WOODLAND PARK ZOO ELEPHANT EXHIBIT & PROGRAM | |
|--|-----------------|
| Jan Hendrickson & Jay Manning, Co-Chairs | |
| Marianne Bichsel | Grant Degginger |
| Gene Duvernoy | Annette Laico |
| Jeffrey Leppo | Rob Liddell |
| Jeannie Nordstrom | Bryce Seidl |
| Andrew Shouse | Bryan Slinker |
| Lyn Tangen | Suzanne Walsh |

The following guiding principles were adopted by the Task Force (Appendix B: Guiding Principles):

- Focus on reviewing the Woodland Park Zoo’s elephants’ health and care, and the value of the elephant program to the zoo’s conservation objectives.
- Collaborative, fair and impartial in our work. As individuals, we may represent specific constituencies, but we will work collaboratively and consider additional perspectives.
- Objective and evidence-driven, relying on the best available data and knowledge.
- Transparent in our process and outcomes, fostering an environment of open communication and honesty.
- Respectful of our colleagues, presenters and the public.
- Timely and efficient in our work.
- Forthcoming about agreements and disagreements, silence will be taken as agreement. Minority opinions will be considered.

TASK FORCE CHARGE

The WPZ Board charged the Task Force with conducting a data-driven, objective review of the zoo’s elephant program, exhibit and current elephant welfare and to produce a report to the board (Appendix A: Task Force Charge).

Over the course of nearly seven months the Task Force considered the status of elephants in the world, the threats to their survival and the options for care of managed elephants at the Woodland Park Zoo.

The Task Force was not charged with studying broader issues regarding zoos or elephants, nor was it charged with conducting public forums on whether elephants should be part of the wildlife collection at the zoo. The mission of the zoo was not part of the Task Force’s scope. The WPZ Board asked the Task Force to produce a report that included an analysis of their work, an overview of the issues discussed by the Task Force and findings, which may include suggestions for further consideration by the WPZ Board.

PROCESS

The Task Force met once a month between April and August in public meetings (Appendix C: Meeting Agenda Summary). These meetings were between three and four hours long, open to the public and videotaped. Task Force members also visited the WPZ elephant exhibit and held study sessions to review and discuss specific issues in depth. In September and October, the Task Force conducted two, four-hour work sessions and collaborated by phone and email to develop this report. The report was released at a public meeting on October 22nd.

The Task Force followed a three-step process in its review of the WPZ elephant exhibit:

1. Information gathering on status of elephants, WPZ exhibit and best practices
2. Evaluation of health and care of WPZ elephants
3. Development of recommendations

The Task Force's kick-off meeting in April focused on establishing ground rules and operating procedures to guide their work. The Expert Review Panel (ERP) was also commissioned at this meeting along with an in-depth briefing on elephants both in the wild and at zoos.

Members visited the elephant exhibit, reviewed materials, and received a series of presentations about elephant conservation and education programs by zoo staff and by outside experts representing different perspectives. Task Force public meetings focused on presentation from panelists and discussions among members. Task Force members also participated in conference calls with other zoos; briefings conducted by the ERP; and held several work sessions in September.

At their May meeting, the Task Force heard presentations from experts on the Association of Zoos & Aquariums and the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries' accreditation standards and policies. The Task Force also participated in a panel discussion with leading experts from elephant sanctuaries around the country to learn first-hand about the state of sanctuaries and their role in animal conservation and heard a presentation from a representative of In Defense of Animals.

The Expert Review Panel initiated their investigation of the WPZ elephants' health and

social wellbeing in late spring. An update was provided at the Task Force's June meeting. The Task Force also received a briefing on the WPZ elephant program from zoo staff followed by an in depth presentation on best practices for elephant enrichment at other zoos around the country led by leaders from the Oakland and Denver zoos.

The role of zoos in education and conservation was the key focus for the Task Force's July meeting. Members heard presentations on the role of zoos with regard to out-of-school learning from a leading expert followed by a presentation and discussion of the WPZ's ongoing education and conservation programs. The Task Force also discussed best practices at other zoos.

The findings of the Expert Review Panel were the focus for the Task Force's August meeting, with presentation by panel members both in person and connected via video conference. The ERP findings provided key information to inform the Task Force's recommendations. The meeting also included a briefing on the WPZ's existing plans for the elephant exhibit.

During September the Task Force received the ERP's final report (Appendix G: Expert Review Panel Report) and public comments were received. Two study sessions were also held to begin the process of developing final recommendations.

By design, the Task Force undertook an iterative process that allowed it to build a common and consistent level of information and insights by all members over the seven-month process. Each meeting built on the growing body of information and understanding of the status of the WPZ's elephant exhibit and its role in conservation and education. This final report is a consolidation of all the Task Force's work and information reviewed.

PERSPECTIVES

During their review, the Task Force consulted a wide range of national experts including in-person presentations at meetings. Following is a list of those who appeared before, spoke with or shared information with the Task Force:

- Andrew Baker, PhD, Chief Operating Officer, Philadelphia Zoo
- Robyn Barbiers, DVM, President, Anti-Cruelty Society, Chicago, IL
- Kevin Bell, President & CEO, Lincoln Park Zoo
- Jackie Bennett, Deputy Director, Great Apes and Regional Accreditation, Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries
- Scott Blais, Co-Founder, former Director of Operations, The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee (correspondence)
- Bruce Bohmke, Chief Operations Officer, Woodland Park Zoo
- Janine Brown, PhD, Reproductive Physiologist, Department of Reproductive Sciences, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Center for Species Survival, National Zoological Park
- Jamie Creola, Vice President of Education, Woodland Park Zoo
- John Falk, Director, Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning, Sea Grant Professor of Free-Choice Learning, Oregon State University
- Alyne Fortgang, Friends of the Woodland Park Zoo Elephants
- Nancy Hawkes, PhD, General Curator, Woodland Park Zoo
- Gregg Hudson, Executive Director & CEO, Dallas Zoological Society
- Deborah Jensen, PhD, President & CEO, Woodland Park Zoo
- Lisa Kane, JD, author of *An Optimal Future for Woodland Park Zoo Elephants*
- Fred Koontz, PhD, Vice President of Field Conservation, Woodland Park Zoo
- John Lehnhardt, Executive Director, The National Elephant Center
- John Lewis, President & CEO, Los Angeles Zoo
- Guy Lichty, Mammal Curator, North Carolina Zoo
- Nicole Meyer, In Defense of Animals
- Michele Ann Miller, DVM, PhD, MPH, Conservation Veterinarian, Rare Species Conservatory Foundation
- Joel Parrott, DVM, President & CEO Oakland Zoo
- Ed Pajor, PhD, Professor of Animal Welfare and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Production Animal Health, University of Calgary
- Craig Piper, Former President & CEO, Denver Zoo
- Heidi Riddle, Co-founder and Director of Operations, Riddle Animal Sanctuary
- Kim Smith, President & CEO, Oregon Zoo
- Angela Spivey, Communications Manager, The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee (submitted a presentation)
- Ed Stewart, President & Co-founder, PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society) (correspondence)
- Kristin L. Vehrs, JD, Executive Director, Association of Zoos and Aquariums
- Jeff Wyatt, DVM, MPH Director of Animal Health and Conservation, Seneca Park Zoo; Professor and Chair, Department of Comparative Medicine, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry

Task Force members were also provided a large number of documents, ranging from scientific articles and reports to WPZ specific documents. All documents provided to Task Force members and videotape recordings of the public meetings are available for public review on the Task Force website: www.elephanttaskforce.org/materials. A bibliography is also provided (Appendix I: Bibliography).

The public was also encouraged to submit written comments at Task Force meetings and on the website. Comments were analyzed and presented at every meeting. They were also posted on the website twice a month. Between April 1 and October 15, 156 comments were received in writing (email, comment cards, letters) from 82 individuals (Appendix H: Public Comments).

EXPERT REVIEW PANEL

The Task Force appointed an Expert Review Panel (ERP) to evaluate the WPZ's elephant program and exhibit, the health and care of its three elephants, and the value of the exhibit and program to the zoo's education and conservation objectives.

The ERP is comprised of highly respected veterinary, animal behavior, elephant breeding and animal welfare experts. Having their expertise and objective perspectives was an important step in the Task Force's overall evaluation of the zoo's elephant exhibit (Appendix F: Expert Review Panel Biographies).

The panelists examined the WPZ elephants, their facilities, reviewed records and interviewed WPZ staff. Specifically, the panel addressed three issues:

- Health status of the elephants at WPZ
- Social wellbeing of the elephants at WPZ
- The elephant breeding program at WPZ

The ERP met by conference call to review and accept the charge and to develop a work plan for site visits at the zoo. This work plan included a list of documents that staff of the WPZ agreed to provide in advance of the site visit. Due to a scheduling conflict, but made possible by the division of expertise, Dr. Brown conducted an independent two-day site visit in early June after the rest of the panel were together for a two-day site visit in late May.

Each site visit consisted of a mix of both scheduled and unscheduled meetings with appropriate zoo staff, meeting of the panel in executive session without zoo staff, both planned and unplanned tours by panel members to observe elephants in the exhibit yard and in the barn during morning examinations/baths/treatments, and a culminating exit debriefing with any Task Force

members who could attend. The purpose of the latter was two-fold: 1) because the report was not to be delivered in full until late August and the site visits were in late May and early June, the Panel felt it prudent to advise the Task Force of preliminary findings while they were fresh and, most important, 2) to hear questions the Task Force members had so the Panel could provide desired missing information as the final report was prepared.

For the late May exit debrief, Dr. Brown called in on the phone. For her site visit in early June, she met with Dr. Slinker by phone the afternoon of the second day to discuss her findings, and Dr. Slinker joined in the exit debriefing by phone. Subsequently brief synopses of these exit debriefings were presented at full TF meetings in May and June. Subsequent conference calls and email exchanges were held over the summer to discuss the development of draft report and its editing for final presentation.

Throughout this time period, the panel had free access to the records and staff of the WPZ, including ad hoc meetings and email exchanges to clarify points of information or seek new information as the report was prepared. This included additional review by Dr. Slinker of medical records from earlier years in the lives of these elephants.

The panel produced a report and presented it to the Task Force on August 28, 2013 (Appendix G: Expert Review Panel Report).

With regard to the three questions presented to the ERP, the Task Force relies on and adopts the ERP's conclusions and opinions. In some cases the Task Force is providing options that are more explicit than the ERP's considerations. This does not signify disagreement with the ERP, but reflects the Task Force's view of its broader charge.

EXPERT REVIEW PANEL (ERP)

The ERP members are all outside scientific and medical experts. Brief biographies and links to online CVs are provided in Appendix F.

- BRYAN SLINKER, DVM, PhD, Professor and Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University, Pullman, WA (Chair)
- ROBYN BARBIERS, DVM, President, Anti-Cruelty Society, Chicago, IL (14 years as Director of Veterinary Services at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo)
- JANINE BROWN, PhD, Reproductive Physiologist, Department of Reproductive Sciences, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Center for Species Survival, National Zoological Park, Washington, DC
- MICHELE ANN MILLER, DVM, PhD, MPH, Conservation Veterinarian, Rare Species Conservatory Foundation, Loxahatchee, FL
- ED PAJOR, PhD, Professor of Animal Welfare and Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Production Animal Health, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada
- JEFF WYATT, DVM, MPH, Director of Animal Health and Conservation, Seneca Park Zoo; Professor and Chair, Department of Comparative Medicine, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, Rochester, NY

ON ELEPHANTS

Before describing the Task Force's findings, it is appropriate to say a few words about elephants.

The Task Force consists primarily of lay people with little to no prior expertise regarding the Earth's largest terrestrial animal. The Task Force has learned that elephants are truly remarkable in many ways. Obviously, they are large – the world's largest living land mammal, with male, African elephants weighing up to 15,000 lbs. Of course, their shape is utterly unique as well. An elephant's trunk is amazing in its strength, dexterity and uses. A trunk, alone, weighs about 400 pounds, can hold up to 2.5 gallons of water, and is so dexterous that it can pick up a grain of rice.

Elephants are remarkably intelligent. They are inquisitive and curious. Individual elephants have unique personalities. They communicate with each other using subsonic vibrations and smell in ways that are unique to elephants. Their sense of smell is the most highly developed in the animal kingdom.

They are very social, living in the wild in close social groups called herds, usually made up of 8-15 related members, led by a dominant cow. Three or four generations of cows and calves spend their entire lives together with the exception of males, who leave the group at puberty. The matriarch remembers where and how to find water and food, how to avoid predators and the best places for shelter. She also teaches the younger elephants how to behave in elephant society. Many elephants migrate long distances in the wild. Others, especially where food is plentiful, do not.

Elephants and humans have a complex relationship. Elephants have been used as beasts of burden in Asia for centuries. They are featured in every form of art, from children's books to ancient cave drawings. Humans have been amazed, inspired and frightened by elephants both in the wild and in captivity for centuries.

Elephants in the wild are in a perilous decline. Current estimates place approximately 500,000 African elephants in the wild and approximately 50,000 Asians, and many of the few remaining Asian elephants are not truly wild. Due to the accelerating threats of habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and illegal wildlife trade, Asian and African elephants are of increasing conservation concern. If current rates of decline (especially from poaching and retaliation killing) continue, wild African elephants are in great danger of extinction within two decades across most of their range in West, Central and East Africa, as are wild Asian elephants living in Southeast Asia. Some conservationists believe that unless action is taken now, virtually all wild elephants will be gone before the end of the century.

Elephants have been kept in human care for thousands of years – for transportation, as beasts of burden, and, in relatively small numbers, for exhibition. As humans have gained a greater

understanding of elephants, views have evolved regarding keeping elephants in captivity.

Some now believe, quite strongly, that zoos are inappropriate for elephants. These elephant advocates believe that elephants suffer more than other species in captivity, due to their intelligence, their social nature and their migratory lifestyle in the wild. Some of those advocates are now urging that the WPZ's three elephants be moved to a sanctuary and that the elephant exhibit be closed.

There is another view – that elephants do not suffer in a high quality zoo, provided their care is excellent and that the facility is of adequate size and complexity with high quality enrichment programs. Many also believe that zoos provide the only chance to experience live elephants for most of the human population. They think zoos provide unrivaled opportunities for educating people about elephants and the initiation and fostering of elephant conservation, by inspiring visitors to take action to conserve elephants themselves and support larger actions by governments and non-governmental organizations.

The Task Force has listened to both sides of this controversy. The Task Force has observed that both are fueled by a common love for elephants and an equal dedication to protect, conserve and restore them.

The WPZ Board asked that the Task Force not delve into this philosophical divide. The Task Force has done its best to adhere to the board's request, but, as the reader will see from this report, the Task Force has found it challenging to completely avoid this difficult ground.

As the Task Force publishes this report, it recognizes that some will find it useful and well-reasoned, while others will disagree with the findings and recommendations. How the WPZ Board responds is their prerogative. But one certain outcome of this process is that Task Force members have themselves been transformed by this experience and will forever be advocates for elephants. Elephants simply must be saved and brought to stable populations in the wild.

KEY FINDINGS

After six months of information gathering, review and consideration, the Task Force identified key findings in the following areas:

1. Health and management
 - Health
 - Social wellbeing
 - Breeding
2. Education and conservation

This section describes the process used to develop findings, explains the findings agreed to by the Task Force and highlights resulting implications.

The “findings” represents common agreement of Task Force members. Differing views of Task Force members are described in more detail in the Minority Views section.

HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT

PROCESS

The Task Force considered information from multiple sources when identifying health and management findings. Task Force members visited the WPZ elephant exhibit and reviewed data from experts in the fields of veterinary medicine, animal welfare, comparative medicine, elephant management, reproductive physiology and captive animal management.

The Task Force charged a group of experts (ERP) with objectively evaluating the WPZ elephants’ health, welfare and social wellbeing, as well as their care and facilities. The Task Force relies on and adopts the ERP’s findings. (Appendix F: Expert Review Panel Report).

The Task Force also reviewed materials submitted by critics of the WPZ elephant program (Appendix

I: Bibliography and Appendix H: Public Comments).

The health and management of elephants was discussed at several Task Force meetings. WPZ staff, accreditation organizations (GFAS and AZA), and current and former zoo directors also delivered presentations and shared their perspectives (Appendix C: Meeting Agenda Summary and Appendix D: Interviews & Outreach).

In some cases the Task Force is providing recommendations that are more explicit than the ERP’s. This reflects the Task Force’s view of its broader charge.

FINDINGS

Health

Watoto (a female, 44-year-old African elephant), Bamboo (a female, 46-year-old Asian elephant) and Chai (a female, 34-year-old Asian elephant) are in good medical health. The WPZ elephants are “bright, alert and active.” None of the elephants has significant medical conditions and health issues are being properly managed. The Expert Review Panel shared their assessment of the medical health and care of the WPZ elephants at the August 28th Task Force meeting and in their written report. The Task Force concurs with these findings.

Each elephant has, or has had, properly managed health issues. Many of these have not been medically significant (e.g., intermittent reduced joint mobility, skin irritations and thickening, colic

and occasional foot cracks). Proper care and husbandry afforded to these animals is managing medical issues to limit their medical significance. Excellent veterinary care, animal husbandry practices and curator expertise at the WPZ elephant exhibit were noted by the ERP and in interviews and presentations provided by outside zoo and animal care experts.

A weight loss protocol was developed in consultation with a nutritionist and intersects with a management plan to use feed and browse in ways that enrich and promote more positive behaviors. The plan has progressed successfully, but more so for Chai and Watoto.

According to the ERP and WPZ records, annual testing – part of the animals’ preventive health protocol and required by the USDA – continues to show that the elephants do not have tuberculosis.

The Task Force recognizes that there is concern about EEHV with regard to the health of the elephants currently at WPZ and elephants brought

to or bred at WPZ. The Task Force reviewed numerous studies and consulted with the ERP extensively on this topic, finding that EEHV has never been diagnosed in Watoto, Bamboo or Chai, but asymptomatic EEHV carrier status cannot be ruled out.

Social Wellbeing

Overall, the behavioral health and social wellbeing of the three elephants is good. None of the elephants shows signs of significant distress, frustration, or pathology. Of some concern, however, are the social isolation of Bamboo and Watoto and moderate to mild occurrences of repetitive behaviors.

The Task Force agrees with the ERP suggestion that the social and behavioral wellbeing of the WPZ elephants should be improved. Information gathered from the Expert Review Panel and other zoos indicates that robust enrichment programs and multi-generational herd management can benefit elephants’ social wellbeing. Many of the individuals interviewed also offered to share additional information and assistance to WPZ staff and management, if desired. The ERP report also provides additional information about integrated management protocols and facility features.

The Task Force concurs with the ERP finding that the social wellbeing of the current herd may be improved if Watoto and Bamboo can be safely

integrated. (Watoto exhibits aggressive behavior toward Bamboo.) The separation of these two elephants is well-intentioned, but has created significant limitations on the use of yard and barn space. These limitations would be significantly reduced if all three elephants could be managed as a single social grouping. A healthy, integrated herd could allow more flexible use of yard and barn, which would help support good foot health, exercise, weight/body condition and provide additional social and behavioral benefits. The ERP report provides additional information and considerations about this option.

Integration will require a thorough health, safety, social and behavioral risk assessment. It will also involve improvements, including enlarging the yard and barn and changes to elephant management practices.

Although a great deal of data was reviewed by the ERP and Task Force, continued monitoring, including evening monitoring, would improve understanding and inform management practices.

Breeding

The Task Force charged the ERP with evaluating the elephant breeding program of WPZ and identifying options for the future. The ERP was asked to consider the medical and behavioral factors of the elephants and the best scientific literature and best practices at leading elephant facilities. The Task Force concurs with the ERP findings regarding breeding.

Only Chai is of breeding age and potential. At age 34, Chai is likely nearing the end of her expected breeding life.

Should the WPZ decide to continue breeding Chai to provide a multi-generational herd experience, natural breeding would have the highest probability of success. The ERP reviewed the 2009

decision tree developed by WPZ and agreed that it captured all possible options, spanning from no further breeding to attempted natural breeding. Given the lack of success with artificial insemination since 2005, the ERP concluded that natural breeding would have the highest probability of success in leading to the live birth of a calf.

In addition to concurring with the ERP findings regarding breeding, the Task Force believes that if WPZ decides to breed Chai, WPZ professional staff and scientific experts should consider the latest scientific evidence and evaluate whether it is prudent to move Watoto to reduce the risk of EEHV infection.

IMPLICATIONS

Although the Task Force agrees with the ERP's assessment of the WPZ elephants' good physical and social health, it believes that improvements should be made to the elephant exhibit and program in support of the broader goals of providing: a more highly-enriched environment, a safe environment that is highly conducive to good health (particularly as the elephants age), and enhanced choices, allowing the WPZ's elephants to choose where and with whom to spend their time.

Specific improvements such as diminishing choke points, improving substrate diversity, expanding enrichment practices, increasing the size and complexity of the yard to provide additional behavioral and physical diversity for the elephants, and upgrading barn cameras to allow for 24-hour monitoring and data collection would align with these broader goals.

More complex changes such as managing the herd as one social grouping (safely reintegrating Watoto and Bamboo) and building a multi-generational herd are two longer-term paths towards achieving these goals.

Data from the \$1.2 million study of all Asian and African elephants at AZA institutions funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) were not available at the time of Task Force deliberations. The Task Force heard from many experts who explained the study's potential to improve our understanding of the relationship between environmental variables and the physical and mental health of zoo elephants. The Task Force believes results from that study will be helpful in determining management changes to improve elephant welfare.

EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION

PROCESS

The Task Force undertook an extensive review of the role zoos and elephants play in educating the community about animals, conservation and science, including presentations from leading experts.

At the Task Force's April meeting, Nancy Hawkes, PhD, General Curator at the Woodland Park Zoo provided an introduction to elephants including information about the plight of elephants in the wild. In May, Deborah Jensen, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Woodland Park Zoo and Bruce Bohmke, Chief Operations Officer of the Woodland Park Zoo presented on Woodland Park Zoo and its elephant program. In July, John H. Falk, Director, Center for Research on Lifelong STEM Learning, Oregon State University gave a presentation on the role of zoos and out-of-school learning. The WPZ's conservation and education

programs were also presented at this meeting by Jamie Creola, Vice President of Education, Kathryn Owen, Education Research Supervisor, Woodland Park Zoo, and Fred Koontz, PhD, Vice President of Field Conservation.

A comprehensive review of information on the topic was also undertaken. Materials reviewed addressed the plight of African and Asian elephants in the wild, conservation and education programs of zoos, conservation and education programs of Woodland Park Zoo, and scholarly research pertaining to informal learning. A subgroup of the Task Force met periodically by phone to gather and review information from experts in the field (Appendix D: Interviews & Outreach).

FINDINGS

Education

The Task Force believes that zoos and elephants play a critical role in educating visitors about animals, conservation and science that is difficult to replicate outside of visiting wild elephants in their range countries. Because this opportunity is not available to the vast majority of people, visiting elephants in zoos provides the only opportunity for most people to see a live elephant.

Zoos provide a unique opportunity for the community to gain informal education that can contribute to a broad range of cognitive, emotional and practical outcomes. These outcomes are reinforced when zoo experiences are linked to previous experiences and immediate and future opportunities to take action.

Task Force members believe the WPZ's elephant exhibit provides an important educational

experience that has great potential to foster support for elephant conservation. The challenge is the initial benefits of visiting elephants can dissipate without intentional follow-up and immediate opportunities to connect the WPZ elephant experience with other actions that support elephant conservation.

The Task Force also believes that the public's perception of the health and condition of the elephants and exhibit is important for the WPZ to fulfill its conservation education mission. The Task Force believes the higher the quality of WPZ's elephant exhibit and program, the stronger the educational experience, and the greater the connection made between seeing and learning about the elephants at WPZ and acting to conserve elephants in the wild.

Conservation

African and Asian elephants are of high conservation concern. There is a very real threat of extinction in the wild, especially of Asian elephants, if current trends are not reversed. Some conservationists believe that unless action is taken now, virtually all wild elephants will be gone before the end of the century.

The Task Force believes WPZ contributes to the elephant conservation ecosystem in two ways. The first is by educating zoo visitors and prompting greater concern about the plight of elephants in the wild and increasing the likelihood that zoo visitors will take action to support elephant conservation. The second is by direct financial and technical support of conservation programs in elephant range countries.

The Task Force believes the primary purpose for having an elephant program and exhibit is to provide an engaging experience that will inspire WPZ members and guests to learn, care and act to

help conserve elephants and their habitats in the wild.

The Task Force believes that conservation education and the opportunity for zoo visitors to take actions that contribute to elephant conservation is a vitally important function of the WPZ.

The Task Force also believes that the WPZ's support of elephant conservation through direct investment in conservation efforts in elephant range countries is important, should continue and should be increased.

A minority of the Task Force believes there is insufficient evidence to support the claim that visiting WPZ elephants causes visitors to support elephant conservation. They also believe that WPZ's financial contribution to conservation efforts in Asia and Africa has not been substantial and should be increased.

IMPLICATIONS

The WPZ elephant exhibit provides a window into a world that most people will never experience in their daily lives. This experience can be transformative and can be a catalyst for zoo visitors to care more deeply about the state of

elephants in the wild, the issues they face, and the need for conservation. More importantly, these experiences, particularly when followed up with additional information and resources, can be a spark for taking action.

The challenge the WPZ faces is whether the current elephant exhibit is providing the strongest educational experience possible – one that translates into long-term support by visitors for elephant conservation. A key issue the Task Force addressed is whether the current exhibit is moving people to act or are there steps that could

be taken increase the connection between cognitive understanding and action by improving the exhibit. The majority of the Task Force believes significant improvements and a commitment to a multi-generational herd offer the best opportunity to boost the educational outcomes of the exhibit and conservation results.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Decisions regarding the elephant program at WPZ are the prerogative of the WPZ Board and staff. The Task Force provides the following options and recommendations regarding the care of the elephants currently at WPZ and the future of the WPZ elephant program for the zoo’s consideration.

LONG-TERM OPTIONS

Option 1: Create a multi-generational herd with an effective breeding program.

- Implement expeditious strategies to build a multi-generational herd, including the natural breeding of Chai. In addition to breeding Chai, consider bringing in additional cows and perhaps a bull to create a multi-generational herd.
- Begin the exhibit and program investments necessary to support growing to a multi-generational herd, including improving the existing exhibit to make it a state-of-the-art elephant facility. The Task Force recognizes that the creation of a multi-generational herd and facility will take a number of years.
- Develop world-class educational programming designed to instill elephant conservation advocacy and action in zoo visitors.

A majority of the Task Force recommends this option.

Option 2: Improve the existing exhibit but allow current elephants to age out or retire at the appropriate time.

- Do not breed Chai and do not bring additional elephants to WPZ.
- Improve the exhibit and enrichment program for the existing elephant herd and allow them to age at the WPZ until they pass or they are moved.
- Use the three elephants as representatives of the threatened elephants in the wild while significantly enhancing conservation efforts (field and public policy) and sharpening the focus of the education program and creating pathways to save elephants in the wild.
- When the three current elephants are deceased or moved, WPZ would discontinue its elephant program.

A minority of the Task Force members recommend this option.

IMPLICATIONS

The Task Force recognizes the WPZ operates a high-quality program and exhibit, with well-trained staff. Nevertheless, both options identified by the Task Force would necessitate improvements to the WPZ elephant exhibit & program. The Task Force is unanimous in its view that maintaining the status quo of the current program and exhibit is not viable for the long term

and changes are needed to advance the WPZ’s mission.

A majority of the Task Force recommends that WPZ work toward building a multi-generational herd. The Task Force recognizes that Option One would take a number of years to plan, fund and implement. Option Two also involves significant

improvements to the elephant exhibit, the acreage available, and program. Implied by both alternatives, if neither are considered viable or if neither can be successfully implemented, is closure of the elephant exhibit. No Task Force

member prefers this as their first option. However, if neither option is implemented, the Task Force believes that a closure plan should be seriously considered by the WPZ Board.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force has developed the following additional recommendations for WPZ Board consideration. They are grouped into three categories: management and care, educational opportunities and conservation enrichments.

MANAGEMENT AND CARE

- If it can be done safely, reintegrate Bamboo and Watoto to reduce isolation and improve the social welfare of the herd.
 - If reintegration cannot be done safely, WPZ should consider transferring one elephant to another AZA- accredited facility that will provide a healthy and high quality environment.
 - A minority of the task force believes the Zoo should consider transferring one or more elephants to an elephant sanctuary without the presence of active tuberculosis (TB), which may or may not be AZA accredited, as part of their deliberations.
 - Leaving WPZ with only one or two elephants for a long period of time should be avoided, as it would work against the broader social welfare goal.
- Improve the elephant facilities to enhance the health and social wellbeing of the elephants, including:
 - Diminishing choke points and providing more than one entrance/exit in the barn.
 - Adding supplemental wind/rain shelters and outdoor heating in order to allow the elephants more flexibility to choose where, how and with whom to spend their time.
 - Improving substrate diversity in barn and yard.
 - Expanding activities and enrichment practices to improve behavioral health and support continued good medical health.
 - Increasing the size and complexity of the yard to provide additional behavioral and physical diversity for the elephants as well as to improve the perception of visitors.
 - Upgrading cameras in the barn to allow 24-hour monitoring and data collection of the elephants.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Design elephant exhibit learning experiences that build upon the ideas and experiences of zoo visitors, connect visitors to relevant learning resources within and beyond WPZ and provide immediate and easy opportunities to act to effectuate elephant conservation and conservation generally.
- Expand educational programs related to elephants to create stronger awareness of the plight of elephants in the wild.
- Strengthen and deepen education program partners including higher education and non-profit partners with relevant expertise in informal education.
- Partner with representatives from communities who underutilize the WPZ's resources with the goal of developing programs that are accessible to and of interest to these communities.

CONSERVATION ENRICHMENTS

- Strengthen conservation program, by increasing focus and resources devoted to improving federal and global policies that will enhance elephant conservation practices in African and Asian countries.
- Significantly increase the WPZ's contribution to in situ conservation programs, particularly in Asia.
- Consistent with the education recommendations set forth above, link WPZ educational programs and zoo visits generally with immediate conservation action opportunities, i.e., make it easy for zoo visitors to take immediate action to contribute to the conservation of elephants.
- Work with the AZA, and elephant experts from other zoos, to more effectively connect the WPZ's elephant program to national efforts to protect elephants in the wild.

MINORITY VIEWS

The Task Force came to many areas of agreement over the course of their work. However, there were some key findings and recommendations where consensus was not achieved. This section contains the opinions of a minority of members of the WPZ Elephant Task Force and explains areas where they disagree with the majority of the Task Force.

ACTIVITY LEVEL OF ELEPHANTS

- Watoto, Chai and Bamboo cannot be “active” within the confines of the existing exhibit, where the outdoor area is approximately one acre, and each elephant has access to only a part of that acre.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL WELLBEING OF ELEPHANTS

- If Chai, Watoto and Bamboo cannot be safely reintegrated, WPZ should consider transferring one or more of the elephants to an elephant sanctuary with no current or recent history of active TB.
- There is insufficient evidence that creating a multi-generational herd would cure the repetitive behaviors of Chai, Watoto or Bamboo. African elephants in the wild *do* live in matriarchal herds, but it is unreasonable to think natural conditions can be re-created in a zoo environment.
- Having a larger space and an improved enrichment program might address repetitive behaviors more effectively than creating a multi-generational herd.
- If improvements to the WPZ elephant program and exhibit cannot be done expeditiously for the benefit of Watoto, Chai and Bamboo, WPZ should consider transferring the elephants to an elephant sanctuary without the presence of active TB.

ELEPHANT EXHIBITS AND CONSERVATION

- There is insufficient evidence to support the majority’s finding that the WPZ elephant exhibit contributes in any significant way to changing attitudes or behaviors, and to engaging the public in elephant conservation programs.
- Studies may have shown some attitude changes towards animals as the result of visiting zoos and aquariums, but there is no compelling evidence of increased conservation actions.

- The minority notes that there are few scientific studies dealing with how zoos change conservation attitudes and behaviors of visitors. A study funded by the AZA (Falk, 2007), analyzed attitudes, not behaviors, and found that zoo visits resulted in long-term positive effects on visitors’ attitudes toward other (non-human) animals. A study conducted by scientists from Emory University and other institutions concluded that the AZA study was flawed and that therefore “there is no compelling or even suggestive evidence for the claim that zoos and aquariums promote attitude change, education and interest in conservation in visitors.”
- Another study (A Closer Examination of the Impact of Zoo Visits on Visitor Behavior, Smith et al, 2007) focused on changes in behavior. It concluded that, although visitors said that they would engage in more conservation activities, no significant behavioral changes occurred as a result of zoo visits.
- There are no other studies that were brought to the attention of the Task Force and therefore, the minority believes there is insufficient evidence to support the majority’s claims that visits to zoos result in changes in visitors’ conservation attitudes or behaviors.
- WPZ’s financial contribution to elephant conservation efforts in Asia and Africa has not been substantial. Between 1998 and 2012, it totaled \$267,805. There should be an increase in conservation funding in range countries.

BREEDING PROGRAM

- WPZ should not have a breeding program. Elephants belong in the wild in Asia and Africa. The elephants that are currently in zoos, including Chai, Bamboo and Watoto, cannot be returned to the wild but intentionally increasing the captive elephant population through breeding should be avoided.

- The captive elephant population in zoos should not be increased, particularly in light of the claim that the main purpose of the zoo exhibit is to foster conservation attitudes and behavior, and the absence of significant evidence that this is achieved. There are other ways to educate, engage and motivate conservation behavior that do not require breeding more captive elephants. These include sophisticated use of video, live web cams, and educational techniques used in other fields.

NEXT STEPS

The Task Force has completed its data-driven, objective review of the zoo's elephant program, exhibit and current elephant welfare and produced this report for the WPZ Board's consideration. Materials will also be available on the Task Force website (elephanttaskforce.org) for one year. The Task Force is deeply interested in the WPZ elephant program and respectfully requests an update from the WPZ Board within a year on its actions and plans regarding the WPZ elephant program.

