



AFRICAN  
**ELEPHANT  
CROSSING**

CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO

## African Elephant Crossing A Successful Public/Private Partnership

The scale and world-class quality of African Elephant Crossing is the result of a successful and healthy public/private partnership between Cleveland Metroparks and the Cleveland Zoological Society.

Funded half by Cleveland Metroparks' general fund and half by a Zoo Society capital campaign, the \$25 million exhibit represents 10 years of joint planning and hard work.

The campaign for African Elephant Crossing is the largest one ever undertaken by the Zoo Society. To date, the campaign committee has raised \$12 million from more than 3,400 donors. This is three times the funds from 10 times as many donors as any previous funding effort.

Zoo Society Board President Rob Rogers and campaign co-chairs Pat Mullin and Mike Cogan have skillfully steered the campaign through five years of fundraising. Their perseverance and drive enabled the campaign to weather one of the toughest economic downturns in 60 years. In the final months of the campaign, the Zoo Society is now within 3 percent of its \$12.5 million goal.

Two foundation gifts in particular speak to the collaborative nature of the project and the quality and innovation of the exhibit. In 2006, the George Gund Foundation contributed \$1 million to "green" the exhibit and help create the first LEED certified large animal exhibit in North America. Impressed by the Zoo's accessibility and broad audience, the Kresge Foundation selected African Elephant Crossing for a \$725,000 challenge grant in 2009. The challenge grant provides matching funds for all gifts and pledges made to the campaign through the May 5 grand opening weekend.

The passion for and commitment to elephants in Northeast Ohio is clear. The Zoo Society will continue funding noteworthy projects by launching a new Conservation Endowment Fund, to be officially announced at the exhibit opening. Funds contributed will help ensure the Zoo's excellent work on behalf of elephants and other species as part of an institutional commitment to conservation of wildlife in wild places. Each year, the Zoo Society provides approximately \$350,000 in private funding for the Zoo's international and regional conservation programs. The Conservation Endowment Fund will allow the Zoo/Zoo Society to significantly further these critical conservation efforts.

The Cleveland Zoological Society promotes Cleveland Metroparks Zoo as a regional funding priority. Zoo Society donors underwrite the excellence that marks Cleveland Metroparks Zoo as one of the top zoos in the nation through support from the largest membership program in Northeast Ohio (43,000 households) contributing 50 percent of the funding for capital improvements and 15 percent to the Zoo's annual operating budget.

