



# Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

With an average of 1.2 million visitors annually, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo has tremendous potential to promote stewardship, influence behavior and effect positive change through compelling exhibits and programs that interpret and model sustainable practices. The Zoo strives to be a leader in sustainability by developing and implementing Zoo-wide green practices and promoting sustainability in Northeast Ohio.

## **LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) – the nationally accepted standard for design, construction and operation of a green building.**

- The Zoo's new African Elephant Crossing exhibit is on track to be the first major outdoor animal LEED-certified animal exhibit in North America.
- 92 percent of construction waste from the African Elephant Crossing site is being recycled and diverted from landfills.
- About a third of materials being used to build the elephant habitat comes from recycled materials.
- A new water filtration system will cut water usage by 72 percent at the elephant habitat – from 26.3 million gallons per year to 7.5 million.
- The exhibit's education center aims to inform visitors about sustainability practices and how they can make a difference at home.
- Innovative air systems reclaim over 75 percent of the heat from exhaust air.

## **Zoo and community recycling projects:**

- In 2010, the Zoo recycled more than 140 tons of materials including cardboard, computer equipment, glass, aluminum, assorted metals, paper and phonebooks.
- In addition, the Zoo offers community recycling for cell phones, CFL light bulbs, phonebooks and more.

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- Zoo employees participate in mandatory recycling and sustainability training sessions and ongoing education is encouraged year-round.
- The Zoo holds multiple “Cans for Conservation” can drives throughout the year, benefiting local and national conservation efforts.
- Employees and members of the community participate in an annual Big Creek Cleanup project, removing trash and debris from Big Creek, a tributary of the Cuyahoga River that runs through Brookside Reservation and the Zoo.
- Animal manure and bedding materials are composted and turned into ZooPoo – a natural soil amendment used within the Zoo and sold to the public.
- The Zoo’s Resource Planning Committee, acting as the Zoo’s “green team,” brings staff and volunteers together to coordinate sustainability programs and recommend new programs to management. Such projects include a no-driving policy in the Zoo during specified hours, purchasing bicycles for staff use in the Zoo for transportation and executing the Zoo’s first ever recycling event –America Recycles Day – on November 15 every year.

### **Greening the Zoo:**

Zoo horticulturists planted 102 trees and 341 shrubs in 2010. Additionally, 3,177 tropical plants and 24,315 flowers were planted during 2010.

### **Looking Ahead:**

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is committed to continually improving its green practices. A new three-year strategic plan devoted to sustainability will guide the Zoo in its efforts to reduce waste and energy consumption, educate employees and the public about sustainability and reduce the Zoo’s carbon footprint. With strong local partnerships in place, the Zoo hopes to be a regional and national leader in sustainability.