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2016-17 Biennial Budget – Minnesota Zoological Gardens

Agency Profile – Minnesota Zoological Gardens..... 1

www.mnzoo.org

AT A GLANCE

- A world-class conservation venue that is home to over 4,300 animals—many endangered
- 485 acre campus with 121 buildings and related facilities
- 1.25 million visitors annually
- The State’s largest environmental educator with 484,000 participants last fiscal year
- \$146 million annual economic impact, supporting over 1,700 jobs
- 125,000 free admissions distributed to economically disadvantaged Minnesotans in all 87 counties
- 11,000 free student admissions

PURPOSE

The mission of the Minnesota Zoological Garden (Minnesota Zoo) is to *connect people, animals and the natural world.*

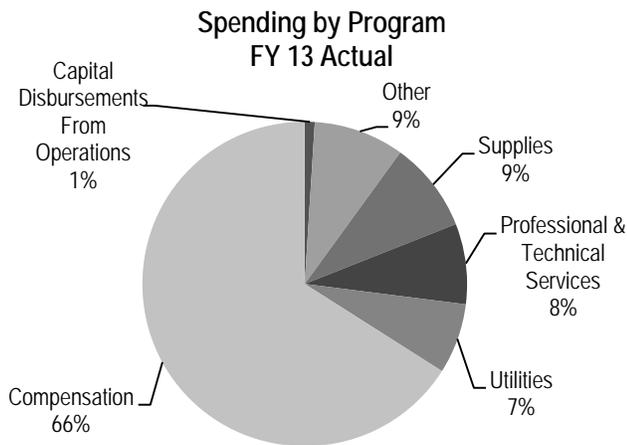
As one of only two state-owned and operated zoos in the country, the Minnesota Zoo is a cultural, environmental and recreational resource. Award-winning exhibits like Russia’s Grizzly Coast engage guests in global conservation issues through encounters with massive brown bears coupled with interpretive graphics illuminating an ecosystem halfway around the world. Year-round exhibits on the Medtronic Minnesota Trail and the Northern Trail celebrate Minnesota’s natural history while the Wells Fargo Family Farm exposes an increasingly urban population to the State’s agricultural heritage.

The Zoo is also directly engaged in conservation efforts both in Minnesota (studying declining moose and threatened prairie butterfly populations) and around the world (supporting programs to save the critically-endangered black rhino and true wild horses.)

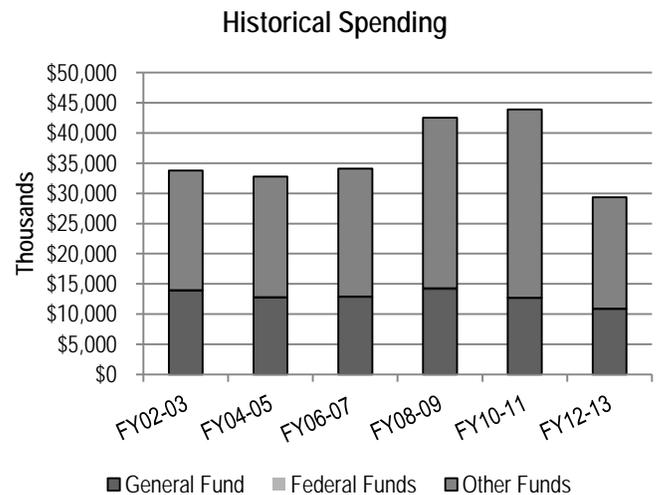
Zoo educational offerings reach students of all ages and in every corner of the State. Last year, nearly half a million people engaged directly with Zoo education initiatives. School field trips alone brought 97,000+ students from 66 counties to the Zoo while interactive video conferencing provided programming directly to other students right in their classrooms. Community programs ranging from a Conservation Speaker Series for adults to summer camps for students with autism spectrum disorders provided on-site learning opportunities while the Zoomobile took live animals to venues throughout the State. Captivating “close encounters” with animals at the Zoo provided opportunities for thousands of others to learn first-hand about animals and conservation from knowledgeable naturalists.

Through these programs and its operations, the Minnesota Zoo contributes to the following statewide outcomes: **a thriving economy that encourages business growth and employment opportunities; Minnesotans have the education and skills needed to achieve their goals; strong and stable families and communities; a clean, healthy environment with sustainable uses of natural resources; and efficient and accountable government services.**

BUDGET



Source: SWIFT



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Minnesota Zoo uses its resources efficiently and effectively, matching the State's investment with private funds and earned income and supplementing these resources with volunteer services.

In recent years, earned income and charitable contributions have made up a larger portion of the Zoo's budget. Charitable contributions raised through the Zoo's private partner--the Minnesota Zoo Foundation, from individuals, corporations and foundations account for approximately 10% of the annual revenues with most of the remaining amounts coming from earned income dependent upon Zoo admissions and programs.

The Zoo is committed to the well-being of its 4,300+ animals and the safety and security of its 1.25 million annual visitors. With more than 300 employees working at the Zoo throughout the year, 66% of the Zoo's budget is allocated to personnel compensation and related expenses. Another 7% (approximately \$1.6 million) is needed to cover utility costs.

The Zoo further leverages its financial resources by relying on the services of more than 1,000 volunteers who collectively donate more than 117,000 hours of time each year.

STRATEGIES

The Minnesota Zoo is in the process of completing a comprehensive strategic plan that charts a bold vision for the organization and its role in the State. Building on its current mission *to connect people, animals and the natural world*, the Zoo now explicitly acknowledges that the ultimate goal of the Zoo is to save wildlife, here in Minnesota and around the world.

In this regard, three core strategies are emerging as a focus of all Zoo activities and programs:

- Develop and implement a sustainable business model for a conservation-focused, 21st-century zoo.
- Position the Minnesota Zoo as a recognized conservation organization whose purpose is to save wildlife.
- Transform the Minnesota Zoo into a conservation destination that delivers extraordinary guest experiences.

Details on implementing these strategies will be developed as the strategic plan is finalized in October of 2014. The Zoo's historic strengths in creating memorable guest experiences, being a trusted resource for environmental learning, and conducting critical conservation programs will all be incorporated— now with an elevated conservation focus on saving wildlife.

RESULTS

The Zoo will measure its success in meeting its mission and implementing its strategies in part through the following:

Type of Measure	Name of Measure	Previous	Current	Dates	Zoo Strategy Alignment
Quantitative	Zoo Attendance	1.28 million	1.2 million	FY13 and FY14	Conservation Destination and Sustainable Business Model
Results	Guest Satisfaction - % of Excellent Rating	66%	76%	2012 and 2014	Conservation Destination
Quantitative	Educational Impact	306,000 participants	484,000 participants	FY13 and FY14	Conservation Destination
Quantitative	Economic Impact	\$113 million	\$146 million	2010 and 2012	Sustainable Business Model
Qualitative	AZA Accreditation	accredited	accredited	2007 and 2012	Recognized Conservation Organization
Results	Conservation Impact	AZA Conservation Award for black rhino research	LCCMR funding for butterfly conservation research	2013 and 2014	Recognized Conservation Organization

Performance Measure Notes:

Attendance: The number of guests visiting the Zoo each year is key to the Zoo's success. Attendance is directly related to the Zoo's long-term financial sustainability and its ability to deliver its conservation message. Guests' satisfaction with their visits is directly related to future attendance. In turn, attendance has a demonstrable impact on the economy of the region.

Zoo attendance is affected by many factors including weather, marketing, price and general economic conditions—many of which are outside of the Zoo's control. Recent analysis of attendance trends indicates that, perhaps most importantly, attendance is driven by new exhibits opening at the Zoo along with guests perceptions of their experience at the Zoo. Analysis also indicates that the Zoo has reached the ceiling with its current admission price.

Therefore, the Zoo must continually invest in the development of new exhibits *and* the maintenance of existing exhibits and related facilities to attract new visitors and encourage return visits.

Attendance numbers are captured daily. Guest surveys measuring satisfaction are conducted periodically.

Economic Impact: The University of Minnesota completed studies of the Zoo's economic impact in the 7-county metropolitan area in 2007, 2010 and 2012. Each study has shown an increase in the Zoo's impact in the area. These studies do not reflect any impact from construction projects at the Zoo, which would further increase the impact of the Zoo on the local economy.

Educational Impact: Educational impact is currently measured by the number of participants in a wide variety of Zoo educational programs including the following: Zoomobile visits, distance learning programs delivered through interactive video conferencing, school group visits, summer Zoo Camp and a variety of other community programs offered at the Zoo. In FY14, the Zoo also began counting the number of visitors that participated in structured educational presentations given throughout the day by naturalists on the Zoo site. As a result, the reported number of participants in educational programs increased significantly this year.

Conservation Impact: The conservation impacts include increased numbers and healthy population composition of endangered species in our care, increased engagement with partners in the field (*in situ* initiatives) and recognition of the Zoo's work by professional partners, peers and other stakeholders.

See Minnesota Statutes Chapter 85A (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=85A>) for an overview of the Minnesota Zoo's purpose, organization and authority.