

INTRODUCTION

The North American Save the Rhinos Campaign is motivated by the intensifying crisis in rhino conservation. In August 2005, the Association of Zoos & Aquariums' Rhino Advisory Group/Species Survival Plans (AZA RAG/SSP) and the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) formalized the historic bond between IRF programs in the wild and RAG/SSP activities involving rhinos in North American zoos. Signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU), the RAG/SSP and IRF agreed to work closely to identify, rank, and fund field projects and research consistent with the in situ and ex situ conservation priorities of RAG/SSP institutions and IRF's mission.

This exciting development opened the door to involving zoos in a North American Save the Rhinos Campaign. The North American Campaign was actually ignited by the multi-year commitment to IRF last January by Marc Ecko, founder and CEO of Ecko Unlimited, a remarkably successful young New York urban wear company that uses the rhino logo. Ecko has joined IRF in publicizing the need for rhino conservation – a highlight is the Save the Rhinos rock concert held in Central Park last June that reached a whole new constituency. The North American Campaign has also been catalyzed by and will complement the Save the Rhinos Campaign of the European Zoo & Aquaria Association (EZA), supported by Save the Rhino International, an IRF partner.

Ideas for the North American Campaign were discussed and endorsed at the RAG/SSP meeting at the 2005 AZA Annual Conference in Chicago in September, and approved by the IRF board in October. It was launched officially in January 2006. The North American Save the Rhinos Campaign will be managed by IRF in partnership with the RAG/SSP and Ecko Unltd.

The Campaign goals are to raise \$850,000 in new funds to supplement \$1,150,000 already pledged by North American sources of support for rhino conservation, and to increase public awareness among zoo visitors and new constituencies.

The Campaign is focused on three critically endangered species of rhino – the Black Rhino, Greater One-Horned Asian or Indian Rhino, and Sumatran Rhino – with the goal of reinforcing protection measures and expanding rhino populations and ranges. Campaign funds will be used to expand populations (in situ and ex situ) and ranges:

In situ – Double the number of critically-endangered rhino populations in select protected habitats in the wild within ten years. This goal is based on the *Rule of 72*, by which a population of rhinos can increase two-fold within a decade at a natural reproductive rate of 7 percent, if adequately protected.

Ex situ – Genetically and demographically enhance captive rhino populations through exchanges of animals and the development of technical capacity and programmatic cooperation.

An initiative to raise funds and awareness, the North American Save the Rhinos Campaign will build upon the deep commitment of existing supporters to involve new zoos,

corporations, foundations, and others in rhino conservation. We also seek to increase government support for IRF's species programs through the Rhino & Tiger Conservation Fund of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, as supported by AZA's new grassroots initiative to collect signatures from political constituents.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES:

- (1) **Sumatran Rhinos** – Double the current wild population of Sumatran Rhinos in Sumatra from 200 to 400 through direct support of the Rhino Protection Units (RPUs). Increase the current captive population through additional breeding enabled by exchanges between North American zoos and Southeast Asia.

Cost = \$700,000

- (2) **Indian Rhinos** – Double the number of secure reserves for Indian Rhinos by adding three new reserves in India, and then within those reserves expanding the population to 100 rhinos each (total of 300) through translocation and support to ensure they are properly protected – thereby establishing minimum viable populations. Reinforce this achievement in the wild by also enhancing the captive population of Indian Rhinos, adding three new genetic bloodlines to the North American population through an exchange with Indian zoos. The objective will be for these new pairs to produce 12-15 new bloodline calves born in the United States. The program will also help Indian zoos to better manage their captive populations.

Cost = \$650,000

- (3) **Black Rhinos** – Participate in the Southern African Rhino Range and Population Expansion Program to add 100 new rhino to secure habitats over the next 10 years, and reestablish Black Rhino populations in countries where they had gone extinct. Support the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to: (1) rescue and provide triage care to rhinos at high risk in IPZs in national parks and private conservancies in Zimbabwe and other conservation actions; (2) reestablish a viable population of Black Rhinos in protected wild habitat in Botswana (50 rhinos in 10 years; ultimately, 100 or more); (3) translocate orphaned and captive female Zimbabwean rhinos and male rhinos from North American and Australian zoos to free-ranging habitats in a Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) straddling the borders of at least two range states in Southern Africa; and (4) establish an in situ sanctuary and propagation facility in the TFCA to produce additional rhinos for the range expansion/reintroduction program.

Cost = \$650,000

Total Cost of Programs = \$ 2,000,000

***Total Number of Rhinos from Endangered Populations
Added to Secure Wild Habitats over the Next 10 Years = 500***

We want to involve all zoos in the Save the Rhinos Campaign. In North America, about 30 AZA member institutions have participated in the conservation of rhinos in the wild. However, there are over 50 AZA member institutions which have rhinos but do not yet contribute to *in situ* work. We invite all zoos to raise their level of support for rhino conservation by joining the North American Save the Rhinos Campaign this year. The EAZA Campaign is targeting European zoos with rhinos – most had not funded *in situ* rhino conservation.

Please consider joining the North American Save the Rhinos Campaign with the largest pledge you can manage in 2006. We can assure you that 100% of Campaign funds raised will go directly into conservation work benefiting the Black, Indian, and Sumatran Rhinos.

The Campaign can also increase public awareness among new constituencies – from inner city kids to farm families. This Info Pack will be shared all participating zoos for use in reaching zoo visitors with information about just what your institution is doing to protect the rhino in the wild. This Info Pack is a “toolkit” containing educational materials, a brochure on the three species and associated field project activities, and ideas for grassroots fundraising to support the Campaign.

The Info Pack is divided into six sections --

Section I, “Campaign Guidelines,” informs you how you may participate and register for the Campaign, provides practical and legal guidelines, describes the certificates and awards offered to participating institutions, gives contact details for the Campaign Committee, and thanks and acknowledges those who have contributed to the Campaign so far.

Section II, “Awareness, Education and Fundraising” gives reasons why both rhino- and non-rhino-holding AZA institutions should become involved in the Campaign, and goes on to suggest how they might do so. Formal and informal education activities are outlined – some completely ready for you to use, others that can be developed by each zoo – together with some fundraising ideas.

You will probably find Section III, “Rhino Information” most helpful when developing your own displays and educational programs. In it, you will find information about: the evolution of the rhinoceros; the history of the European discovery of rhinos; descriptions of the five rhino species; the threats facing their survival, which are common to so many other species; ways in which *in situ* conservation efforts are protecting the rhino; and a couple of complex issues to inspire further discussion and debate.

Section IV, “Beneficiary Programs,” describes the Sumatran, Greater One-Horned/Indian, and Black Rhino Programs of IRF that will benefit from the Campaign. It also lists the very worthwhile *in situ* conservation projects that have been selected, with the input of IRF, for sponsorship by the EAZA Save the Rhinos Campaign.

There is Campaign-themed merchandise that we are considering for joint production with interested zoos and corporate sponsors. You will find details about this in Section V.

Finally, for those who want to look further, Section VI, "Reference Material," points you towards the Campaign website, selected books and a specialist reference facility.

This Info Pack contains a CD-ROM, which not only contains an electronic version of this Pack, and also includes educational activities, logos, images that you can use, and the template for the poster and brochure covering each species targeted by the Campaign that each zoo or aquarium can adapt for its own needs.

We hope that there is something for everyone in this Info Pack, and that you will enjoy using it to run a fun and successful **Save the Rhinos** Campaign.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time with any questions about or ideas for the Campaign: tel (703) 864-7770 or NASaveTheRhinos@rhinos-irf.org. This is a cooperative effort and all levels of participation are welcome!

Very best regards,

Julie Anton Dunn
Manager
North American Save the Rhinos Campaign



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