

## POINT DEFIANCE ZOO OPENS KIDS' ZONE

*Kids' Zone*, the new children's section at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, opened on 28 May. The colorful new addition incorporates animal exhibits with experiential climbing and play areas as well as age-appropriate conservation activities.



© Dick Milligan



The celebration included a special performance by the Gentlemen Jugglers, musical entertainment by community groups, children's activity booths, giant puppets and the National Awareness Campaign's Aza.

The \$3.1 million *Kids' Zone* will replace the farm-style petting area at Point Defiance Zoo. The play area is opening with two of five planned sections – Contact Junction and Magical Movement. The remaining three sections – Awesome Beginnings, Fantastic Features and Home Sweet Home – will be built after a fund-raising campaign by The Zoo Society.

This phase of *Kids' Zone* completes the \$35 million makeover of the Zoo and Aquarium, made possible with proceeds from a bond issue approved by Tacoma voters in 1999.

## THE PITTSBURGH ZOO & PPG AQUARIUM OPEN NEW INTERACTIVE CLASSROOM FOCUSING ON BACKYARD CONSERVATION

The Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium opened a new interactive classroom called *Windows to Conservation*, focusing on local habitats. The classroom was funded with a \$150,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The goal of the classroom is to encourage students to think about their views and behaviors regarding conservation and promote positive environmental

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## ELEPHANT ENCOUNTER OPENS AT HOGLE ZOO



© Hogle Zoo



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Utah's Hogle Zoo recently opened *Elephant Encounter*, their largest new animal exhibit in 25 years. *Elephant Encounter* brings a part of the Serengeti to Salt Lake City in the re-creation of an African plain featuring three African elephants and two white rhinoceros.

*Elephant Encounter* features four outdoor habitats as well as the Convergys African Lodge. Guests first encounter a naturalistic habitat on the east end of the exhibit that features a swimming channel, which holds 110,000 gallons of water. It is 10 feet 6 inches deep with enough room for an elephant to completely submerge and swim from one end to other. This provides additional exercise for elephants. The pool uses environmentally sound principles including

and maintenance. A re-circulating stream feeds the pond. This area also features a large mound surrounded by an outcropping of rocks. The elephants can walk up this mound and survey the visitors and surrounding area.

Guests can then enter the Convergys African Lodge, a 2,600 square foot open-air African structure constructed of wood and thatch materials, overlooking the Working Yard. The lodge will help create an emotional connection between guests and the elephants and rhinos. The Convergys

African Lodge features hands-on elephant and rhino artifacts, including an elephant skull, a femur bone of an elephant, and the hide and horn of a rhino.

The Convergys Conservation phones not only educate guests about conservation efforts in the wild but also help raise money for these

efforts. With integrated voice response technology provided by Convergys, Zoo guests can talk to Jeff, an Eco-Explorer, Nathan, a game warden in Kenya, and McKenzie, a field researcher based in Africa. These guides will explain what people are doing to protect and preserve elephants and rhinos across world. By using the Convergys Conservation phone, guests will contribute to the conservation of these magnificent creatures.

Walking further down into the exhibit, guests can get a nose-to-nose view of the elephants and rhinos in the West Habitat. The Kopje, which resembles the small hills that rise from the African veld, provides an observation area for viewing the animals through the safety of two-inch thick specially made windows. A feeding area and watering hole are near the Kopje to attract the animals over for a better view.