

## Chimpanzee Five-Year Action Plan: 2009-2013



The Chimpanzee Species Survival Plan (SSP) is charged with the maintaining a genetically and demographically healthy population of chimpanzees within institutions accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Equally important, is the program's goal to establish a leadership position to promote the conservation and wellbeing of chimpanzees both within and outside of the AZA community. Below we outline six primary points of emphasis in regards to these efforts.

### **I. *In situ* conservation. (Elizabeth Lonsdorf)**

**Goal: to promote the preservation of chimpanzee habitats and extant populations**

#### **Actions:**

- a. Continue to liaise with the Ape TAG to develop and support the conservation activities of the TAG while providing specific technical support in the area of chimpanzee conservation.
- b. Make AZA members aware of chimpanzee *in situ* conservation issues and potential avenues for involvement or support through identification of at least five specific projects with proven histories as a menu of opportunities.
- c. Update the Chimpanzee SSP Management Group and member institutions on the status of previously supported projects.
- d. Work with the Chimp SSP webmaster to update conservation content of the website, including highlighting the *in situ* initiative supported by the TAG and its members.
- e. Provide support and advice to SSP member institutions seeking guidance on how to get involved in *in situ* conservation
- f. Support field research on the biology and behavior of the species.
- g. Support of indigenous NGO's in the species' range that support the preservation of chimpanzee habitat and/or raise awareness among local people about the importance of conserving chimpanzee habitat and the species.
- h. Lessen commercial trade in chimpanzees by supporting sanctuaries for confiscated chimpanzees and conservation education.

## **II. Husbandry (Jennie McNary & Terri Hunnicutt)**

**Goal: to improve the husbandry of chimpanzees in zoos**

### **Actions:**

- a. Finalize the Chimpanzee Care Manual and maintain regular review of the document to ensure current and comprehensive content.
- b. Create better representation on the Ape TAG hand-rearing team for chimpanzees and provide information to zoos needing help.
- c. Continue husbandry workshops on biennial basis (odd-number years).
- d. Communicate with IRs about resources available to them through the SSP such as various listservs, the website, and expertise on the management group.
- e. Increase use of website as a tool for husbandry and management questions.
- f. Develop management and husbandry guidelines for integration of chimpanzees with atypical rearing and social backgrounds (pets, performers).

## **III. Exhibits and Facilities (Lisa New)**

**Goal: to review and improve facility design and maintenance for chimpanzees in zoos**

### **Actions:**

- a. Network with AZA community to promote the inclusion of chimpanzees in new exhibit planning.
- b. Compile information on existing chimpanzee facilities and exhibits.
- c. Review and update Chimpanzee Care Manual to ensure complete and current information on facility design and maintenance.

## **IV. Education (Nadine Kocanjic)**

**Goal: Identify current trends and needs for better education messaging about chimpanzees**

### **Actions:**

- a. Identify important key educational messages and create user-friendly talking points.
- b. Work with the SSP webmaster to maintain website content, including information available in the member's only section to aid member zoos pertaining to husbandry, behavior management, and research.
- c. Create a survey to assess the importance of chimpanzees to zoo education.
- d. Identify graphics and interactives that are most effective for zoo educational displays concerning chimpanzees.

## **V. Research (Mollie Bloomsmit)**

**Goal: to facilitate research on topics deemed critical to the operation of the SSP and the management of the chimpanzee population**

### **Actions:**

- a. Conduct survey of holding institutions and steering committee members to compile a list of needed research projects, and of on-going research projects at SSP zoos.
- b. Review research proposals for sponsorship by the SSP.
- c. Complete publication of findings from collaborative study of adolescent male chimpanzees.
- d. Identify the next step of research based on findings from c.
- e. Plan chimpanzee session for presentation at annual AZA conference
- f. Plan session at veterinarian conference on wound and aggression management and/or targeting new audiences, like marketing or education.
- g. Identify specialized audience to present chimpanzee issues via Connect and AAZK
- h. Encourage research on the topics identified in a. above, as well as
  - Developing nutritional guidelines for the aged chimpanzee and special needs chimpanzees, in addition to the general chimpanzee population
  - Personality research and investigation into how chimpanzee personality should be incorporated into management decisions, breeding decisions and promoting welfare.
  - Use of novel contraception methods (such as gonadotropin releasing hormone agonists) for efficacy, as well as for influence on aggressive and sociosexual behavior.
  - Develop information on a descriptive tool for evaluating the progress of introductions.
  - Management of large social groups including managing aggression, modeling fission/fusion social organization in captivity, introductions of young, nursery-reared chimpanzees to large social groups, and the effects of reduced reproduction on parental behavior.
  - Promoting the psychological well-being of zoo-housed chimpanzees by evaluating the effects of zoo visitors on chimpanzee welfare, studying enrichment that is cognitively challenging, evaluating positive reinforcement training, and studying the effects of choice and control over the environment on chimpanzee well-being
  - Geriatric management of chimpanzees
  - Keeper emotions and the effects on chimpanzee behavior

## **VI. Sanctuaries (Tammie Bettinger & Lorraine Smith)**

**Goal: To strengthen relationships with sanctuaries housing chimpanzees in the United States and Africa through a combination of financial support, professional assistance, development and information sharing**

### **Actions:**

- a. Work with the education advisor to develop a template for an *in situ* conservation display that could be used by zoos or sanctuaries.
- b. Identify displays or other education materials no longer being used by zoos that may be appropriate for use by a sanctuary.
- c. Investigate possibility of keeper exchanges between sanctuaries and zoos.
- d. Continue to work with Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) to provide material and supplies needed for use at the sanctuaries (medical supplies, enrichment devices, educational materials, uniforms, etc.)
- e. Establish a program to support registration fees for African Sanctuary participants that attend Husbandry Workshop.
- f. Liaise with Project ChimpCARE to facilitate the development of long-term sustainable housing options for chimpanzees currently living outside the SSP.

## **VII. Veterinary Care (Kathryn Gamble & Kay Backues)**

**Goal: To provide timely information and sound veterinary advice for the collections of chimpanzees in AZA institutions and non-member participants in the SSP**

### **Actions:**

- a. Review and maintain relevant veterinary information in the Chimpanzee Care Manual, especially sections on geriatric care, nutrition, anesthesia and infectious diseases.
- b. Liaise with Project ChimpCARE to provide veterinary advice and work to identify possible collaborating veterinarians.
- c. Continue to address ongoing cardiac issues in chimpanzees and work with other experienced veterinarians and cardiologists to determine future course of action to help diagnose and treat these conditions.
- d. Continue collection and maintenance of necropsy reports for comprehensive pathology review.

## **VIII. Chimpanzees outside the SSP (Steve Ross)**

**Goal: To establish and maintain a leadership position in which the welfare of all chimpanzees, regardless of ownership and circumstance, are provided with appropriate housing, care and management**

### **Actions:**

- a. Liaise with Project ChimpCARE to maintain current records of chimpanzees living in zoos, sanctuaries, and under private ownership as pets and performers.

- b. Continue to evaluate ability of AZA zoos to integrate chimpanzees from outside the current SSP population when possible.
- c. Develop management and husbandry guidelines for integration of chimpanzees with atypical rearing and social backgrounds (pets, performers).
- d. Work with relevant legislative and policy groups to promote AZA's position against the use of chimpanzees as pets and performers.