

*Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services*

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Happy Hollow Zoo Granted Accreditation by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums**

**San Jose, CA** –The Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) announced that Happy Hollow Zoo was granted accreditation by AZA’s independent Accreditation Commission on March 21, 2011. “Not all Zoos are the same. **Happy Hollow Zoo** is one of the best in the world because it has met the highest standards in the world,” said AZA President and CEO Jim Maddy. “It takes hard work and dedication to meet Association of Zoos and Aquariums Accreditation Standards.”

Happy Hollow Zoo has been accredited since 1993. AZA requires zoos and aquariums to successfully complete this rigorous accreditation process every five years in order to be members of the Association. To be accredited, Happy Hollow Zoo underwent a thorough investigation to ensure it has, and will continue to, meet ever-rising standards, which include animal care, veterinary programs, conservation, education, and safety. “If it were not for Happy Hollow Zoo, many kids would have no first hand experience of wildlife,” Maddy added. “Members of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums are centers of conservation and education, and the National Science Foundation found that zoo and aquarium education programs are highly effective at teaching people about science.”

The accreditation process includes a detailed application and a meticulous on-site inspection by a team of trained zoo and aquarium professionals. The inspecting team observes all aspects of the institution’s operation in areas such as animal care; keeper training; safety for visitors, staff, and animals; educational programs; conservation efforts; veterinary programs; financial stability; risk management; visitor services; and other areas. The inspection team prepares an extensive written report for the Accreditation Commission. Finally, top officials are interviewed at a formal Commission hearing, after which accreditation is granted, tabled, or denied. Any institution that is denied may reapply one year after the Commission’s decision is made.

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science, and recreation. AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, please visit [www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org).

Please contact Vanessa Rogier, 408-794-6404 for additional information about Happy Hollow Zoo, including special events and activities and its ongoing commitment to wildlife conservation and science education. Happy Hollow Park & Zoo celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year.

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