

JOIN US ON THE **Green** Journey



DETROIT ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY



DETROIT ZOO ♦ BELLE ISLE NATURE CENTER

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The Detroit Zoological Society (DZS) is helping to create a healthier environment for our animals, our visitors and the planet. We are continuing our journey to environmental sustainability – which began with critical species conservation work – by reducing our environmental impact while advancing regenerative solutions. *Greenprint is our unique green strategic plan that aligns with DZS's commitment to progressive resource management and environmental leadership. It is the map for our journey toward environmental sustainability.*

“Green” is widely used to describe environmentally conscious actions and programs. The Detroit Zoological Society defines green as a fundamental value that moves us toward our goal of environmentally responsible operations. The DZS is committed to being a green leader, an active educational resource and a showcase in the community for the best environmental policy and action by integrating literacy, awareness and responsibility in all operations at the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center.



Awards

- Top Honors, 2015 Green Award with the Association of Zoos & Aquariums
- 2015 Advocate of the Year with the Michigan League of Conservation Voters
- 2016 “Best and Brightest” Sustainable Company
- 2017 “Keep Michigan Green” Award



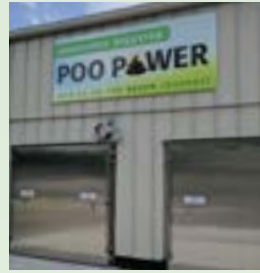


The Journey:

Here are the steps of our Green Journey:

Energy and Water

- Energy and water-efficient upgrades throughout the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center
- 100% of electricity from renewable sources
- Solar/electric hybrid golf carts in place of gas-powered carts
- Bicycles for staff to use on the grounds of the Detroit Zoo
- Eliminated the sale of single-use plastic water bottles, installed zoo-wide filtered water refill stations
- Rain barrels and rain gardens at the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center
- Permeable pavement installed at the Detroit Zoo, diverting rainwater from the stormwater drains
- Diverting over 500 tons of herbivore animal waste and food scraps from the landfill and converting it into energy and compost with an anaerobic digester, the first zoo-based system of its kind
- Generating renewable energy from solar power, using an all-in-one ground-mounted solar-panel system that tracks the sun across the sky throughout the day via a GPS-based dual-axis tracker



Materials Choices and Recycling

- Cotton Family Boardwalk constructed with a material made of 50% plastic bags, 45% recycled hardwood and 5% polymers
- Metal, glass, plastic, paper, cardboard, light bulbs, clothing, IT equipment, cell phones, inkjet cartridges and batteries are recycled
- Green Seal cleaning products are used throughout our grounds
- Zero chemical fertilizers are used on our 47-acres of lawns
- Green purchasing policy enacted to promote investment in sustainable goods and reduce waste
- Reducing plastic waste by discontinuing plastic gift bags at gift shops and encouraging reuseable bags. Plastic straws or lids are not provided at our concessions

Operations

- Arctic Café named a Tier 3 Green-Certified Restaurant
- Green Team suggests and acts on green initiatives
- Electronic communication is used in place of printed documentation whenever possible; both sides of office paper are used when printing is necessary
- Manager of Sustainability is dedicated to developing and managing current and future green initiatives



Education

- Shades of Green helps people reduce their ecological footprint
- Educational programs discuss our place in the natural world and how our choices can make a difference and improve the lives of wildlife and humans alike

Next Steps:

Green Goals at the Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center

- Energy efficiency improvements will continue to be evaluated and implemented as new exhibits are developed and old exhibits are maintained
- Further implement water use reduction and recirculation technology throughout Detroit Zoo and Belle Isle Nature Center
- Incorporate green infrastructure into all our new and ongoing construction projects
- Continue to improve storm water management by incorporating additional permeable surfaces into new and ongoing maintenance projects
- Continue to build awareness and advance green literacy through engagement of staff, guests and community
- To model innovations in sustainability, reducing our impact and inspire others
- Reduce waste generation further in order to become a waste-free organization



Bringing You Along, Too:

Learning as a Community to be More Sustainable

Our journey so far has taught us that we know what sustainability looks like, but we will never be done learning how to be more sustainable. As an educational institution, the Detroit Zoological Society is committed to sharing this learning experience with our colleagues and the community so that all of southeast Michigan can join us on our journey to find ways to improve regional sustainability. We work with like-minded environmental organizations to assess green literacy in the community. With that information, we work to build awareness around environmental issues among our visitors neighbors. Together we can reduce our collective ecological footprint and grow ourselves closer to a sustainable future.

To support the Detroit Zoological Society's green initiatives or for more information, please visit: detroitzoo.org.

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