



PHILADELPHIA ZOO

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May 13, 2008

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

I understand that you have recently signed a petition to express your opposition to our plans to relocate our three African elephants, Petal, Bette and Kallie, to the new, non-profit International Conservation Center (ICC) in western Pennsylvania under the direction of the Pittsburgh Zoo.

Our decision was made after working closely with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) to extensively analyze, investigate and evaluate a wide array of housing and care options for all four of our elephants. This research led to the conclusion that the ICC (the first such facility run by an AZA-accredited zoo) would be excellent in meeting the unique health, safety, recreation, and social needs of the African elephants Petal, Bette and Kallie. We will closely monitor every facet of their transition and maintain a close relationship with the ICC and its highly-skilled professional staff, which will be acutely focused on their well being.

Our other elephant, an Asian named Dulary, was relocated to The Elephant Sanctuary (TES) in Hohenwald, Tennessee after we decided it was the best facility given Dulary's individual circumstances. Established in 1995, TES is home to two herds of Asian elephants and one group of African elephants.

You also raised the matter of elephant conservation and herd management in South Africa. We think it is relevant to understand that the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) has identified the African elephant as an endangered species. While the proposed culling order applies to elephants in Kruger National Park, South Africa, the broader issue in our view, and in the view of the IUCN, is a continental problem involving over 470,000 elephants across the entirety of Africa. Many African elephants remain under severe strain due principally to elephant-human conflict, especially in Central and West Africa. I urge you to read the IUCN's African Elephant Status Report for 2007 at <http://iucn.org/themes/ssc/sgs/afesg/aed/>.

I would also suggest you consider the plight of the Asian elephant, which is also under severe threat due to many factors. The Philadelphia Zoo has made a multi-year financial commitment to support conservation of elephants on the island of Borneo. There are roughly 2000 pygmy elephants on Borneo that are being decimated by habitat loss and human-elephant conflict, reducing this important sub-species to dangerously low numbers.

For more information on what you can do to participate in our Borneo project or in our other conservation efforts, I invite you to log onto our website at www.philadelphiazoo.org.

Sincerely,



Vikram H. Dewan
 President and CEO

