

NEWS RELEASE

Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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SAN ANTONIO ZOO DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM RESPONDS TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE FROM AUSTIN ZOO

Austin, Texas - Earlier this month, icing from Winter Storm Mara uprooted trees and dropped limbs throughout the Austin Zoo. No animals were injured because they were all in their night houses and dens. The storm left the animals' outdoor habitats littered with debris, and damage to some fencing and roofs.

The zoo was closed for six days while their staff cleared visitor paths, creating massive brush piles they struggled to remove. The zoo's executive director, Patti Clark, realized it was time to call Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3) for assistance.

Eric Trager, an experienced ZDR3 responder from Animal World & Snake Farm of New Braunfels, conducted a needs assessment within 24 hours of receiving the call for support. That allowed ZDR3 to better prepare the six-person disaster response team from the San Antonio Zoo.

"They have cleared four of our worst-hit habitats in a matter of seven hours," said Clark. "It's absolutely amazing! Their crew is twice the size of our facilities department. It would have taken us weeks to accomplish what they've been able to do in one day. We are so grateful for their help, and for them helping us to recover and create a safe environment for our staff, our animals, and our guests. While there is still much work to be done, this has helped move us further down the long path to full recovery."

Both zoos are members of the Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3) Network, which provides support to zoos, aquariums, sanctuaries, and other non-domestic animal businesses before, during, and after significant incidents. More than 120 zoological facilities in 29 states are members of the network.

“After Hurricane Harvey—a natural disaster where San Antonio Zoo led rescue work at Houston Downtown Aquarium and Texas Zoo in Victoria—ZDR3 was formed. It has since become a nationwide asset for zoos and aquariums,” said Tim Morrow, President & CEO San Antonio Zoo. “We are very proud to say that San Antonio Zoo has responded multiple times in Texas, Florida, and Louisiana in recent years to lend our services and assistance as part of this network.”

“When we receive a call for assistance, we identify the team or teams with the best skills and equipment for the job who are willing and able to deploy in a timely manner. As it happens, the nearby San Antonio Zoo has one of the most experienced zoological disaster response teams in the country,” says ZDR3 executive director, Julia Wagner. “Austin Zoo has always been willing to assist other zoos so it was satisfying to be able to tell them help was on the way.”

About ZDR3

Zoological Disaster Response, Rescue, and Recovery (ZDR3) is the largest zoological response organization in the United States. As an industry-led effort, ZDR3 provides support to zoos, aquariums, sanctuaries, and other non-domestic animal businesses before, during, and after significant incidents.

Learn more: zdr3.org

For current news: <https://www.facebook.com/ZDR3.USA>



Ice storm damage at Austin Zoo (Photo: Austin Zoo)



Ice storm damage at Austin Zoo (Photo: Austin Zoo)



San Antonio Zoo disaster response team clearing debris in an alpaca habitat at Austin Zoo (Photo: ZDR3)



San Antonio Zoo disaster response team clearing debris at Austin Zoo (Photo: ZDR3)



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