

## **Policy Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that animals acquired for the collection are consistent with the museum's mission, are acquired and disposed in compliance with all pertinent government regulations and to ensure that the highest ethical standards are observed, acting in the best interest of the animals involved.

### **A. Registration**

#### **1. Acquisitions**

Acquisitions involve all transactions by which title to incoming animals are transferred to the Museum. Acquisitions can occur through donation, purchase, or exchange. Due to specific limitations of the collecting scope of the animal program, space limitations, and specific educational needs, the animal department cannot accept all animal donations.

Acceptance of animal donations which do not fall into any of the collections categories is at the discretion of the Animal Curator. It might be decided to accept animals for trade or placement with another museum/zoo. If at all possible, the Animal Curator should refer a prospective donor to an institution where acceptance is more likely.

It is not the practice of the animal program to accept donations of animals for resale purposes, except under highly unusual circumstances. Proceeds from such animal sales must be restricted to enhancing the live animal collection.

Acquisitions of new species to the collection which require the building of a new habitat will be reported to the Collections Committee of the Board and receive full Board approval. The Animal Curator makes the final decision on acquisitions based on considerations discussed below.

**a. Acceptance of animals into the Museum's Collection:** Animals accepted into the

collection must be consistent with the mission, purposes, and programs of the Museum.

The Museum will not accept an animal donation unless humane care and management can be provided, in keeping with professionally accepted standards.

**b. Laws Governing Acquisitions:** The Museum will discourage and avoid, by all practical means, unethical, illegal and destructive practices in acquiring, collecting, transporting and trafficking in wildlife with respect to the animal acquisitions.

Specimens must be acquired in compliance with all State and Federal regulations; proper licenses and permits must be maintained where required. (See **Appendix E & G** for Federal and State regulations and other required legal documents).

**c. Conditions of Acceptance:** Title shall be acquired free and clear for all specimens when the donor signs the Museum's "Animal Gift Agreement" form, or by means of a sales receipt from the source. The donor shall make no restrictions as to the use and future disposition of an animal once ownership is transferred to the Museum.

**d. Animal Loans:** The Museum loans of animals for specific purposes and for specific time periods. The Museum maintains long term loans with federal agencies and reserves the rights to engage in long term loans with individuals and other institutions. All loans will be negotiated and stated in writing using the "Animal Loan Agreement" form subject to professionally accepted standards, pertinent law, and all terms outlined in this policy.

**e. Appraisals:** The Museum does not appraise animals for possible donation or loan. Obtaining such appraisals, from a qualified third party, is the responsibility of the donor or lender. Doing otherwise could leave the Museum open to questions of conflict of interest.

When the Museum requires insurance on any loans that it makes to another party, it will furnish information on the value of the loaned animal for use by the borrower's insurance company.

## 2. Accessioning Acquisitions

The Animal Curator is responsible for all paperwork and permanent records on accessioned animals. He/she may delegate this to another animal department staff member, but should check to see that all the appropriate records including donor recognition are completed promptly and properly.

Gifts should be unconditional with clear title transferred to the Museum through the use of the Museum's gift form. The gift form should include a description of the donated animal(s) and the signatures of the Animal Curator and the donor(s). One copy is given to the donor; the original is kept by the Museum. The gift form and any correspondence documenting the animal shall be maintained as part of the permanent collections records.

Records shall be kept on each animal and maintained in a permanent file, whether said animal remains in the collection or not. Animal records consist of: **Accession Log** – Animals which are accessioned into the collection through donations, purchases, births or hatches are entered into the accession log. The log reflects the species, sex, date of accession and source. **Primary File** contains accession data, condition upon arrival, animal identification cards, and health/reproductive records. The Primary File records are inputted into the **International Species Information System (ISIS) Animal Record Keeping System (ARKS)** computer database. Computer records are backed up on a regular basis and safely stored on and off site. All of these documents become part of the permanent collections of the Museum and are maintained by the Animal Department staff.

## 3. Marking Animals

Not all animals in the Museum's collections are marked. However, those animals not marked

are being marked as handling opportunities are presented.

## 4. Cataloging Procedures

The Animal Registrar is responsible for entering information into the permanent records.

## 5. Disposition of Animals

The disposition of live specimens must be in accordance with all governmental regulations and any pertinent donation or loan agreements in effect. The best interests of the specimen, the Museum, and its public must be taken into consideration when a disposition is contemplated.

**a. When:** Animals may leave the collections through several circumstances including: Surplus; age or illness (euthanasia); returned loan; death; or in cooperation with a breeding program, and other programs.

**b. How:**

1. Surplus specimens - When it is determined that a surplus of specific animals exists; these animals will be placed with appropriate institutions.
2. Euthanasia - When an animal is in an irrevocably declining state because of illness or old age and the quality of life is determined to be below acceptable levels the animal may be euthanized. The decision to euthanize is jointly made by the Curator and the consulting veterinarian. Euthanasia is administered by the consulting veterinarian or by the veterinary technician under the veterinarian's directions.
3. Return of Loans - Animals on loan to the Museum are returned upon completion of the loan period.
4. Death - The remains of animals which die in the collections are disposed of in a way which is compatible with pertinent laws, for example the USFWS *Endangered Species Act*. Consideration will be given to the use of carcasses for mounts or other educational or research use.

5. Other Programs - Such as the Species Survival Plan (SSP) - animals come and go at the direction of the SSP studbook keeper.

**c. Record keeping:** Records on disposed animals are kept and maintained in the permanent inactive file.