

February 29, 2012

Reid Park Zoo Elephants Connie and Shaba On Their Way To San Diego Zoo

Tucson zoo elephants, Connie and Shaba, began their move to the San Diego Zoo this morning. Their trip is anticipated to take about 10 hours.

After a highly-public dispute over the Reid Park Zoo's earlier plans to separate the elephants by sending Connie, the Asian elephant, to San Diego, and keeping the African elephant Shaba at Reid Park, Tucson's Mayor negotiated a deal last month with San Diego to take both elephants.

With zoos frowning on the mingling of species, at first it looked like Shaba would be staying in Tucson to join a breeding herd of African elephants coming to Tucson's new elephant exhibit, while Connie would be joining other Asian elephants in San Diego.

PAWS director, Pat Derby, has written a letter to Tucson's Mayor urging him to ask Reid Park Zoo to exercise "due diligence" with San Diego Zoo and require a written agreement that will protect the bond between the two elephants by agreeing to revert ownership of the elephants back to the donor (Tucson) if they are unable to provide proper care for them, something that has always been asked of PAWS each time we have accepted an elephant from a zoo