



Media Advisory
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Three African Elephants to Make Trek from Toronto to the PAWS Northern California Sanctuary

(San Andreas, CA) — The Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) was surprised and happy to learn of the Toronto City Council's decision, late Tuesday night, to send their three African elephants, Toka, Thika and Iringa, to the PAWS ARK 2000 sanctuary in San Andreas, CA.

"We have the space and three other well socialized African elephants for companions. Although moving the elephants will be challenging, we hope to provide a long, happy retirement for them," Pat Derby, co-founder of PAWS stated.

PAWS has considerable experience in relocating elephants after successfully moving elephants from San Jose Zoo, Detroit Zoo, San Francisco Zoo, Los Angeles Zoo and Alaska Zoo.

November 2, 2011, will mark the fourth anniversary of the famous airlift of Maggie, one of PAWS three African elephants, who was flown from Anchorage, Alaska, by the United States Air Force to her new home in Northern California. "That was certainly one of the most harrowing moves in our experience, but all went well, and Maggie is enjoying the California sunshine with her African elephant buddies — Mara from San Jose, and Lulu from San Francisco," Ed Stewart, PAWS co-founder added.

"We have enjoyed the full cooperation of zoo administration and staff for these previous moves. That is an essential component of a successful transport; we hope the acrimony expressed in the news reports by some of the personnel involved will subside in the best interest of the elephants. To clarify some points: we have 24 hour keeping staff who monitor and log elephant activity constantly, so there is no possibility that an elephant can fall without immediate attention, and our veterinarian is on 24 hour call at all times," Derby continued.

The ARK 2000 Sanctuary is the largest captive wildlife sanctuary in the United States and is the only sanctuary able to house bull elephants.

PAWS has been honored by numerous wildlife agencies around the globe and its ARK 2000 sanctuary is considered a world model for the humane housing of elephants and other captive wildlife.

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The Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) is a nonprofit, captive wildlife protection organization that was founded in 1984. PAWS cares for more than 100 animals at its three wildlife sanctuaries in Northern California. At ARK 2000, a 2,300-acre state-of-the-art sanctuary, animals live in spacious natural habitats with rolling hills, lush natural grasses, trees, lakes and ponds. PAWS' ARK 2000 sanctuary is home to three female Asian elephants, three female African elephants and three bull Asian elephants -- each of whom has been successfully relocated from zoos or the circus industry. At PAWS, the elephants are free to explore the hillsides, splash in their pools, graze and nap as they please. The elephants, and the other rescued wildlife at PAWS, receive humane care, 24 hours a day, and because of ARK 2000, they have a bright and promising future.

www.pawsweb.org