

From Tim Tetzlaff, Director of Conservation and Communications

**News Release**      **Contact:** Tim L. Tetzlaff, Director of Conservation & Communications  
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## **Donation Paves the Way for Zoo Improvements**

### ***Trust for Public Land donation creating smooth paths at Naples Zoo***

Since 1954, a mulch or crushed rock path has wound its way through the historic gardens at Naples Zoo. That's all changing this week. Thanks to the donation from The Trust for Public Land (TPL) made in February, smooth paths will soon welcome guests for years to come. Paving is now underway to make Naples Zoo an even better experience for everyone and especially guests with strollers and wheelchairs.

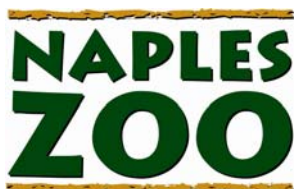
And the Zoo hopes for even more improved guest experiences from amenities like these to expanding animal opportunities with growing donor support for the newly formed nonprofit Naples Zoo. "Operating without a long term lease and funding every improvement from ticket revenue has been difficult and it's slowed down projects like this, but it's also been a great learning experience," explains Zoo Director David Tetzlaff. "Now thanks to TPL and the citizens of Collier County, the Zoo's future is secure and we are able to use those years of experience to keep our focus on what matters the most. After looking over plans for using the full \$200,000 TPL donation for the upcoming Leopard Rock exhibit, we realized that we could scale back in several places that wouldn't alter the quality for the cats and would only slightly change the guest experience. Directing a portion of those funds toward the path, however, would greatly enhance the visitor experience throughout the entire Zoo. I'm grateful to TPL for seeing the greater vision and coming alongside in the spirit of doing what was best for everyone." The Zoo's careful approach to budgeting is also allowing the Zoo to begin rebuilding a marsupial and crane exhibit in the next few months. The previous exhibit which was flattened by Hurricane Wilma will be further improved by the addition of an elevated guest observation deck.

Paving is expected to be completed in the next few days depending on weather conditions. Although some trail sections are temporarily closed during these few days, it's a great opportunity to visit as all guests are being welcomed at a child's rate of \$9.95 and receiving rain checks for a return visit.

Naples Zoo is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization located at 1590 Goodlette-Frank Road across from the Coastland Center mall. Within the historic garden, guests experience a full day of fun wildlife presentations as well as a cruise through islands of monkeys, lemurs, and apes. The nationally accredited Zoo supports conservation and research around the world. The Zoo welcomes guests daily from 9:30 to 5:30 with the last ticket sold at 4:30. To learn more, click [www.napleszoo.com](http://www.napleszoo.com) or call (239) 262-5409.

**Print Quality Images:** 300 dpi high resolution images may be immediately downloaded by the media at [www.napleszoo.com/press](http://www.napleszoo.com/press).

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