



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 24, 2016

CONTACT:

Sandra Maravilla

Communications Director

(909)387-4855

Sandra.Maravilla@bos.sbcounty.gov

Big Bear Zoo Contract receives approval

SAN BERNARDINO- On Tuesday morning, the Board of Supervisors approved the construction contract for the Big Bear Alpine Zoo Relocation Project with M.S. Construction Management Group.

The Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District (BBVRPD) currently operates and maintains the Big Bear Alpine Zoo (BBAZ) on a leased 2.3-acre site in the City of Big Bear Lake. BBAZ has occupied leased property for the past 54 years, with the last six years being on a month-to-month basis. BBAZ is being relocated to a property owned by BBVRPD within the City of Big Bear Lake's Moonridge business corridor.

The new BBAZ will feature five marquee exhibits (Grizzly Bear, Timber Wolf, Mountain Lion, Black Bear, and Snow Leopard), along with an Administration Building, Snack Bar, Ticket and Gift Shop, and multiple additional exhibits to relocate the entire collection.

Supervisor James Ramos commented, "I gave my commitment to the community of the Big Bear Valley that the zoo relocation project would become a reality and I am happy to say that we are one step closer. With the collaborative support of our Department of Special Districts, the City of Big Bear Lake, Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo, and the NAY Foundation we have been able to bring this project to fruition. We expect the zoo completion to be finished by the winter of 2018."

The construction project will be provided supplemental funding from the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo (FOBBAZ) and the Blanche and Gene Nay Foundation. The FOBBAZ and the NAY Foundation have been long-time supporters of the BBAZ and its mission to rescue, rehabilitate, and release injured, orphaned, and/or abandoned animals back

into their natural environment. The donations from both organizations were also approved by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

“It is a very emotional moment for all of us,” commented Kathy Greenwood, President of the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo. “This was a wonderful project to be involved in because it was a collaborative effort that got us to this point. I would like to thank Supervisor Ramos, Jeff Rigney, and Reese Troublefield for all the hours of tireless work they have put in to help bring this project closer to completion.”

To celebrate the approval of the BBAZ construction contract, Supervisor Ramos will be hosting a ground-breaking ceremony on Friday May 27th, 2016 at 3:00pm at the zoo’s new site location. Festivities will include zoo staff and several animals from the zoo including raccoons, a great-horned owl, and our majestic golden eagle “Ares”, brief comments from various project partners, and Supervisor Ramos will be conducting a Native American Ceremony for the zoo’s recently rescued fledging red tailed hawk who will serve as an animal ambassador. Snacks and refreshments will be provided. See attached flyer for more details.

More information on this item can be found in the May 24, 2016 Board agenda at <http://cob-sire.sbcounty.gov/sirepub/>.

###