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Toledo Zoo Dedicates Acres for the Atmosphere with 850 Trees

Toledo, Ohio— Over 850 trees were officially dedicated today as part of Acres for the Atmosphere, a program that inspires people to take action to reduce the amount of CO₂ in our environment by planting trees. These trees were recently planted in the Sylvan Prairie Park by volunteers from the Toledo Zoo, Olander Park System and Timberstone Junior High.

Finding new ways to care for animals and conserve the natural world, the Toledo Zoo has partnered with Polar Bears International (PBI) and the Olander Park System to do our part to reduce the effects of greenhouse gases on the ozone and the negative impact on polar bears in the Arctic!

The connection may not seem obvious at first, but planting trees can help save polar bear habitat. Polar bears depend on sea ice to hunt, breed and in some cases to den. Less carbon in the atmosphere means better conditions to retain arctic sea ice and improve polar bear habitat and survival. One of the easiest projects that can be undertaken to combat excessive carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is to plant trees. The more carbon dioxide extracted from the atmosphere, the more likely it is that the sea ice will be stronger and last longer each season.

A small step towards conservation, these 850 trees in Sylvan Prairie Park, once matured, will provide over 40,000 pounds of carbon dioxide absorption, decreasing the rate at which the ozone layer is being destroyed. This will help to keep the Arctic frozen and aid in the preservation of polar bears.

“We’re pleased to be able to partner with PBI and the Olander Park System in this initiative,” said Dr. Anne Baker, Executive Director of the Toledo Zoo. “This is an excellent example of how our efforts locally can have a global impact, helping to sustain the Arctic environment and improving the odds for polar bears.”

Robert Buchanan, President and CEO of Polar Bears International said “As one of the world’s leading zoos, the Toledo Zoo serves as a PBI Arctic Ambassador Center, helping visitors connect with polar bears inspiring them to conserve the natural world and encouraging them to take action to save polar bears by participating in programs such as Acres for the Atmosphere.”

“The Park System was thrilled to offer a site to kick off the Acres for the Atmosphere program.” said Erika Buri, Conservation Manager, Olander Park System. “The trees donated by the Zoo will reduce carbon input to the atmosphere as well as provide habitat for wildlife and increase species diversity at Sylvan Prairie Park. Visitors are sure to enjoy this woodland for generations to come!”

You can make a difference, a single tree can help. We can all make a difference, a lot of trees can make a big difference!

The Toledo Zoo is open daily from 10 am to 4 pm and is located on the Anthony Wayne Trail (US 25), four miles south of downtown Toledo. For more information, please visit www.toledozoo.org or call 419/385-4040. Lucas County residents are admitted free of charge each Monday from 10 am to noon. ID showing proof of residency is required.

The Toledo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200 accredited members, AZA is building North America’s largest wildlife conservation movement.

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