

January 19, 2011

Ms. McDonald  
Animal Protection Service  
Edmonton Humane Society  
13620 - 163 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5V 0B2

Dear Ms. McDonald:

Re: APS File #A41278

Thank you for your letter dated January 13, 2011 regarding the results of your review of Lucy's care. While we are pleased you have confirmed the Edmonton Valley Zoo is not in contravention, in any way, of the Animal Protection Act, we take your recommendations seriously. Since receiving your letter, I have had a chance to review your recommendations and consult with our veterinarian Dr. Milton Ness.

The Edmonton Valley Zoo fully accepts the recommendations provided by the Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) following your investigation of the care provided to Lucy, the Zoo's 35-year-old Asian elephant. In fact, Dr. Ness has been in contact with Dr. James Oosterhuis to do a follow-up examination of Lucy.

The Edmonton Valley Zoo (EVZ) also commits to the following actions:

**1. Modification of the Indoor Facilities**

*EHS Recommendation:*

In order to ensure Lucy has adequate space during the winter months the Edmonton Valley Zoo must either:

- a/Modify the existing facility to meet industry standards by December 31, 2011 or
- b/Consult with experts with the appropriate experience and implement an adequate alternative option by December 31, 2011

*EVZ Action:*

While the zoo is already meeting, and in some cases exceeding, industry standards for elephant enclosures, we recognize the need to ensure Lucy is getting enough exercise even on the rare days when extreme cold prevents her from walking the zoo grounds. As outlined in the June 2010 update to Lucy's treatment program, the zoo is considering options to increase the indoor exercise space available to Lucy during the winter months and to ensure her existing space is used to its full potential. The options will be reviewed with Dr. Oosterhuis when he returns for his follow up examination with Lucy. The zoo will enhance Lucy's winter exercise alternatives by December 31, 2011 as per the EHS recommendations.

It's important to note that much work has already been done in this regard. Working with Dr. Ness and Lucy's care staff, an Edmonton veterinarian who specializes in rehabilitation therapy developed a comprehensive program to increase Lucy's activity level and flexibility to support ongoing weight loss. This program includes exercises, such as range of motion and stretching, to enable Lucy to be more active throughout the day even during colder weather when she spends more time inside. Elephant care staff hours have been increased allowing for this new exercise program to be implemented, in addition to her daily walks. With all of this in mind, I should note that Lucy does spend a great deal of time outside even in the winter months. In 2010, there were only 14 days that Lucy did not go for a walk outdoors.

## **2. Diagnosis and Treatment of the Respiratory Problems**

### *EHS Recommendation:*

By March 1, 2011, the Edmonton Valley Zoo must consult a veterinarian of their choice who has the appropriate expertise to assess and treat Lucy. All veterinary recommendations must be followed in order to determine a diagnosis of Lucy's respiratory ailment. The Edmonton Valley Zoo must make all reasonable attempts to determine a diagnosis and determine the appropriate treatment required.

### *EVZ Action:*

EVZ veterinarian Dr. Ness has continued to consult with Dr. Oosterhuis and is scheduling Dr. Oosterhuis for a follow up examination with Lucy that will include an endoscope evaluation of her trunk and nasal passages. At this time, a biopsy will again be attempted. This examination will take place prior to March 1, 2011 as per the EHS recommendation.

Since Dr. Oosterhuis examined Lucy in September 2009, Dr. Ness has followed the treatment plan developed in consultation with Dr. Oosterhuis and other experts. A biopsy was attempted during a follow-up endoscope exam in 2010. However, Dr. Ness was not able to get a proper sample for biopsy given the swelling in Lucy's trunk. Dr. Ness and the Edmonton Valley Zoo will continue to work with Dr. Oosterhuis and other experts to determine a diagnosis and appropriate treatment for Lucy's respiratory problem.

## **3. Weight Management Reassessment**

### *EHS Recommendation:*

By March 1, 2011, the Edmonton Valley Zoo must have Lucy reassessed by a veterinarian of their choice who has the appropriate expertise to assess and treat Lucy. During this assessment, the weight loss program should be re-examined to produce the required results. The Edmonton Valley Zoo will be responsible for following all veterinary recommendations required to assist Lucy in her weight loss.

### *EVZ Action:*

By March 1, 2011, the Edmonton Valley Zoo will consult with Dr. Oosterhuis during his follow up exam with Lucy to determine the next steps in Lucy's weight loss program. In addition, an animal nutrition expert who specializes in zoo animals is scheduled to do a

review of Lucy's diet and make suggestions to improve Lucy's weight loss. This will be a follow up to a consultation in Spring 2009, which resulted in Lucy's current meal plan.

We feel it's important to note that Lucy has made some progress in reaching her weight loss goal. Lucy currently weighs approximately 9,000 pounds, down about 360 pounds from when Dr. Oosterhuis examined her in September 2009. Lucy's weight fluctuates up and down, but despite these fluctuations we are pleased that it continues to show a downward trend. We must manage her weight loss carefully, as exercise is the best way to lose weight, but strenuous exercise compromises Lucy's ability to breathe. Noting all of this, we do agree with the Edmonton Humane Society that it's time to review her diet and exercise to help ensure Lucy reaches her targeted weight of about 8,300 pounds.

Thank you again for the time, care and attention you put into this investigation. I can assure you that the Edmonton Valley Zoo commits to continuing to consult with experts to ensure all of Lucy's needs are met, including her social requirements. Lucy is a unique and wonderful animal and we are doing everything we can to ensure she receives the very best care available.

To keep you fully informed, we will provide you with an updated treatment plan for Lucy following Dr. Oosterhuis' examination. I am also attaching the original treatment plan and the update completed in June 2010. Thank you for your letter.

Yours truly,



Denise Prefontaine  
Director, Edmonton Valley Zoo  
Community Facility Services Branch  
Community Services Department

DP/mlr  
Attachment

c: Linda D.M. Cochrane, General Manager  
Community Services Department

Rob Smyth, Branch Manager  
Community Facility Services  
Community Services Department