

LEGACY FUNDS FY 2023



PROGRESS REPORT

THE HISTORY OF THE LAKE SUPERIOR ZOO

Educational Exhibit



GRANT #207024 PO#300-11385

ACCREDITED BY THE
**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**



Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Grant

Lake Superior Zoo | January 2024 | FY 2023 Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Legislative Citation: Pursuant to 2017 Minnesota Session Laws, 2019 Special Session, Chapter 2, Article 4, Section 2, Subd. 6, "\$75,000 each year is to develop educational exhibits and programs."

Source:
Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund

Duration:
FY 23 - July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Total Funding Amount: \$150,000

Administrative Costs: 3% to MN Department of Administration Grant Management (\$2,250).

Direct Expenses: \$71,732.28



The Lake Superior Zoo is a statewide resource for every Minnesotan to experience close-up experiences with animals to inspire connections to wildlife and action towards conservation in our region and around the world. As one of the top-paid attractions in Duluth, both locals and tourists alike can learn about over 140 species of animals amongst a beautiful naturalistic setting with a DNR trout stream, Kingsbury Creek, running through the entire zoo grounds. We celebrated our centennial anniversary in 2023, and this exhibit will continue to highlight the importance of our legacy of education and conservation in Minnesota for years to come.

Though we are a paid attraction, LSZ staff and board members prioritize accessibility initiatives to ensure that all people, no matter their financial situation, are able to experience the wonders of wildlife and nature through programs such as Museums for All, Blue Star Museums, and Community Access Programs through our local libraries. Funding from the Legacy Amendment's Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund has allowed us to bring to life new experiences for many years, and we are excited to wrap up this historic exhibit in 2024!

The Lake Superior Zoo grounds and buildings are owned by the City of Duluth and operated by the Lake Superior Zoological Society. We are one of three facilities in the state of Minnesota that are accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). This educational exhibit will also highlight the importance of AZA accreditation and why visitors should choose organizations that prioritize animal well-being, conservation, veterinary medicine, field conservation and research participation, and uphold the highest standards of animal care. Only 10% of zoos and aquariums in the United States hold this prestigious accreditation, and Legacy funding has allowed us to bring to life many different exhibits and educational programs that support our AZA accreditation.

Oversight of these projects is the responsibility of the Lake Superior and key senior staff. Questions about these projects may be directed to:

Haley Hedstrom
Chief Executive Officer
hhedstrom@lszoo.org

PROJECT OVERVIEW

History of the Lake Superior Zoo: An Educational Exhibit

Guests who visit the zoo will embark on an exhilarating journey as we work towards the culmination of our Legacy-funded project – a dynamic exhibit designed to immerse our visitors in the rich history of the Lake Superior Zoo. Delve into the fascinating tale of our accreditation by the esteemed Association of Zoos & Aquariums, understanding its pivotal role in ensuring the utmost care and welfare of our beloved animals. This immersive experience extends beyond the confines of traditional exhibits, weaving in educational elements that illuminate the history and stories of local and regional indigenous tribes. Traverse the zoo grounds and buildings to discover an expansive display featuring diverse mediums such as educational signage, cutting-edge digital elements, and interactive, hands-on components.



Our exhibit is a tapestry of discovery, showcasing a moveable timeline that encapsulates our storied past, life-size statues immortalizing our most iconic animals, and captivating virtual reality experiences that transport you into their world. With an abundance of interpretive and interactive features, we aim to create an unbreakable bond between our guests and the incredible world of animals and nature, as well as provide impactful educational programming alongside each visit. The completed exhibit will bring to life the essence of our culture at the Lake Superior Zoo, fostering connections that inspire a profound appreciation for wildlife and the environment.



Two young guests enjoy life-size fun and learn about the Zoo's history!

FUNDING & EXPENSE OVERVIEW

Project Duration: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024*

**Extension granted by MN Department of Administration Grants Management*

FTEs: 0.19

Expense Categories: Contracted services, exhibit supplies, software licensing (for digital signage), advertising

Direct Expenses: \$71,732.28

Administrative Expense: 3% to MN Department of Grant Administration (\$2,250.00)

LSZ INFORMATION & LEADERSHIP

Mission: To provide close-up animal experiences that inspire connections to wildlife and action towards conservation in our region and around the world.

Vision: A future where all living things thrive together.

SENIOR STAFF

- Haley Hedstrom, CEO
- Heidi Beal, Director of Business Operations
- Lizzy Larson, Director of Animal Management & Facilities
- Samantha Halligan, Director of Guest Experience
- Sarah Wilcox, Director of Education & Preschool Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FY22-23

- Joey Engseth, Board President
- Susan Waldie, Vice President
- Jim Lewis, Treasurer
- Kala Pedersen, Secretary
- Nicki Britton
- Noah Hobbs
- Maya Mattke
- Mike Polzin
- Kathleen Privette
- Britta Schielke

Community: We strive to be a place of gathering for our community and empower our neighbors in conservation.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion: We value and welcome all people and understand that diversity makes our organization stronger and more successful.

Innovation: We take pride in our work and pledge to ensure ethical excellence in every function of our organization.

Safety: We provide a safe space for all guests, staff, volunteers, and animals in our care.

Stewardship: We compassionately act each day to protect wildlife, the environment, and all resources entrusted to us.



MEASURABLE OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

Measurable outcome results and data will be available in the FY24 report when the exhibit has been fully implemented. Please see below for the anticipated outcomes, how we will gather data, and more.

Proposed Outcome #1: Visitors to the Lake Superior Zoo will report increased understanding and knowledge of the Zoo's history.

Proposed Outcome #2: Visitors to the Lake Superior Zoo will report increased awareness and knowledge of the importance of AZA accreditation.

Proposed Outcome #3: Visitors to the Lake Superior Zoo will report feeling increased interest, understanding, and knowledge of local indigenous culture.



Evaluation Methods: Data for all proposed outcomes will be collected via paper, email, and digital surveys provided to visitors to provided quantitative and qualitative feedback and results.

On-site digital surveys will be taken directly by guests on project purchased iPads providing participants the ability to take pre- and post-visit surveys. This will allow us to not only measure the outcomes but also inform any needed adjustments to reach the exhibit's goals as listed above. The advantage of using digital signage and interactive is the ability to adjust messaging and interpretive elements in real-time without incurring additional costs.

