



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2023

Birmingham Zoo Kicks Off Public Phase of Cougar Crossing Capital Campaign **Robust Goal to Raise \$500,000 by June 15, 2023**

BIRMINGHAM, AL - Your Birmingham Zoo is kicking off the public fundraising phase in support of the new *Cougar Crossing* habitat in the *Alabama Wilds* section of the Zoo. Planning for the construction of a new home for two deserving animals: Bob, the Zoo's resident bobcat, and a new cougar, the largest cat in the Americas, began in 2019. However, like many projects, the pandemic interrupted its progress. Having already achieved 87% of the overall funding goal, the public is now invited to invest in this addition, which will enhance visitors' experiences in *Alabama Wilds* by adding new species to see close up and have the opportunity to learn about.

"Of key importance will be the educational aspect of *Cougar Crossing*; it will provide a new destination for engaged learning about the magnificent wildlife found in Alabama, and heighten the need for wildlife conservation in Alabama," stated Chris Pfefferkorn, President & CEO of the Birmingham Zoo. He added, "Annually, 500,000 people visit the Zoo and *Cougar Crossing* gives us the ability to expose our guests to these incredible animals. *Alabama Wilds* is a popular destination for all guests to learn how to co-exist peacefully with native Alabama wildlife."

Cougar Crossing will include indoor animal housing with a viewing area and two spacious outdoor habitats. These habitats will ensure the cougar and bobcat have ample ability to explore and engage in natural behaviors. The public viewing area inside the animal-holding building will provide guests with a look at how the Zoo's Animal Care Professionals care for these animals.

Campaign Chair Wally Nall, III said, "With our community's generous help, we can raise the remaining \$500,000 by June 15 and will be ready to break ground later this year." He continued, "Our donor recognition paw prints also provide an opportunity to honor loved ones or remember a significant person."

With a gift or pledge of \$1,000 or more (payable over 3 years), the donor's name or that of someone special will be featured on a paw print at the habitat. These personalized paw prints are available in varying sizes in recognition of donation amounts as follows: (4") \$1,000, (6") \$2,500, (8") \$5,000, and (12") \$10,000. Gifts in any amount are appreciated and make a measurable difference.

Please consider making a gift to help build a new home for Bob the bobcat and a deserving cougar by June 15. Visit birminghamzoo.com/donate to learn more about *Cougar Crossing*. To make a gift using PayPal or Venmo, go to Givebutter.com/CougarCrossing.

Zoo Logo, "Bob" the Bobcat Photo



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ABOUT THE BIRMINGHAM ZOO

The Birmingham Zoo is an independent, not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA).

Our mission: Inspiring Passion to Conserve the Natural World.

Approximately 500 animals of 172 species call the Birmingham Zoo home, including sea lions, zebras, elephants, bongos, and endangered species from six continents. The Birmingham Zoo is a non-profit and is open Wednesday-Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm, unless stated otherwise. All Birmingham Zoo Members and children under two-years-old receive free admission. The Birmingham Zoo is the only AZA-accredited Zoo in the state of Alabama.

www.birminghamzoo.com | 2630 Cahaba Road | Birmingham, AL 35223