



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Coastal Conservation Center opens on World Oceans Day**

SAN FRANCISCO – In addition to educating youth about animals around the world, San Francisco Zoo & Gardens is expanding its educational curriculum to also include marine life from a spectacular new vantage point. A ribbon was ceremonially cut at the new temporary Coastal Conservation Center during a private ceremony on Thursday, June 8, [World Oceans Day](#). The Center is the first of its kind - a portal facing the ocean to view and study the biodiversity of the coastline.

“We are absolutely thrilled to embrace and utilize this overlook to the ocean,” said Tanya M. Peterson, President of San Francisco Zoo & Gardens. “Not only is it a spectacular view, this space allows us to talk to youth about environmental issues impacting the ocean and marine life.”

Located at the old Fleishhacker site, west of the parking lot, the Center will directly connect students of SF Zoo’s camp and education programs to an extraordinarily productive marine region where three marine sanctuaries merge to form one of the richest ecosystems in the world. There, students will learn about climate change, sea level rise, the problems plastics present to marine life and other challenges facing our ocean and coast. A weather station has been installed on the roof and technology inside the Center identifies marine traffic, speed and destination. Students will begin using the Center as early as next week; it’s not accessible to the public at this time.

To publicly celebrate World Oceans Day, Saturday and Sunday, June 10-11 is World Oceans Weekend at SF Zoo. Animal and conservation partners Aquarium of the Bay and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will be on site near the Elinor Friend Playground to interact with, educate and showcase amazing marine life.

SF Zoo is highlighting its rescued marine animals, like sea lions “Henry” and “Silent Knight” and a plethora of pelicans. The sea lions were both rescued after being found blind and injured. They would

not have survived in the wild, so SF Zoo has been caring for them since 2011. The Zoo has three species of pelicans – rescued American white and brown pelicans and pink-backed pelicans. The pink-backed pelicans are part of an Association of Zoos & Aquariums Species Survival Plan to grow the population, which is native to Africa and regionally extinct in parts of Madagascar.

Guests are encouraged to attend Keeper Talks all about marine animal residents at the following times:

- 10:30 Penguins, Penguin Island
- 2:00 Sea Lions, Fred Carroll Family Sea Lion Pool
- 3:00 White Pelicans, Pelican Beach
- 3:30 Penguin, Penguin Island

**Attached photo caption:** From left, San Francisco Zoological Society Board Member Margaret Hauben, President Tanya Peterson and Board Director Ed Poole cut the ribbon to ceremonially open the new Coastal Conservation Center at San Francisco Zoo & Gardens. Credit San Francisco Zoo & Gardens.

### **About San Francisco Zoo & Gardens**

Established in 1929, San Francisco Zoo & Gardens connects people to wildlife, inspires caring for nature and advances conservation action. An urban oasis, the Zoo & Gardens are home to more than 2,000 exotic, endangered and rescued animals representing more than 250 species as well as seven distinct gardens full of native and unusual plants. Located at the edge of the Pacific Ocean where the Great Highway meets Sloat Boulevard, the Zoo is open 365 days a year from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and is accessible by San Francisco MUNI "L" Taraval Line. You can find us on the web at [www.sfzoo.org](http://www.sfzoo.org).

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