



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release

Thursday, September 19, 2024

**MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES  
SENECA PARK ZOO IS GRANTED CONTINUED ACCREDITATION  
BY THE ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS, THE GOLD  
STANDARD FOR ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS WORLDWIDE**

*Seneca Park Zoo has been accredited continuously since 1979*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced that the Seneca Park Zoo (SPZ) has earned continued accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) following their Accreditation Commission Hearings in Calgary, Canada this week.

Membership in the AZA requires zoos and aquariums to pass a rigorous accreditation process every five years. The Seneca Park Zoo has maintained continuous accreditation since 1979, making it one of the country's longest-accredited facilities.

“The Seneca Park Zoo is truly one of the most prized attractions in all of Monroe County, and we’re fortunate to have such an incredible institution. The AZA’s rigorous accreditation process recognizes that our Zoo has achieved the highest standards in animal care, educational programs, conservation initiatives and overall guest experience,” **said County Executive Bello**. “I’m grateful to the Zoo’s staff who work hard every day to take care of our animals and ensure that every visit is filled with unforgettable memories. A special thanks to Pamela Reed Sanchez, Executive Director of the Seneca Park Zoo Society, Zoo Director Steve Lacy, and Parks Director Patrick Meredith for their leadership.”

The AZA noted SPZ’s inter- and intra-organizational relationships and collaboration, the impressive number of community and conservation initiatives, the excellent repair and condition of the facilities, and the immersive visitor experience of the new Animals of the Savanna exhibit.

“Earning AZA accreditation reflects excellence and unwavering dedication to the highest standards of animal care and conservation,” **said Dan Ashe, president and chief executive officer at AZA**. “We are proud to count the Seneca Park Zoo as an accredited member. This incredible facility models our vision for a modern zoo, with engaging, inspiring and educational exhibits that are linked to powerful programs conserving wildlife, near and far.”

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums around the world, including the United States and 12 other countries

AZA accreditation is a thorough process, assessing every aspect of the Zoo's operation, to ensure that it meets ever-rising national standards. Currently, there are only 235 AZA Accredited facilities worldwide.

"This mark of achievement is the result of hard work and a commitment to excellence in every area of the Zoo's operations from the administration, leadership, staff and support from the Seneca Park Zoo Society," **said Seneca Park Zoo Society President and CEO Pamela Reed-Sanchez.** "Every person, either employed or volunteering at the Zoo, worked diligently to make this possible and we could not be prouder."

The AZA accreditation process includes a detailed application and a meticulous on-site inspection by a team of trained zoo and aquarium professionals. The inspecting team observes all aspects of the institution's operation, including animal care and welfare; keeper training; safety for visitors, staff and animals; educational programs; conservation efforts; veterinary programs; financial stability; risk management; visitor services; and more. Finally, top officials are interviewed at a formal hearing of AZA's independent Accreditation Commission, after which AZA accreditation is either granted, tabled, or denied.

Seneca Park Zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from April 1 through October 31, and 10 a.m to 3 p.m. from November 1 to March 31. Learn more at [senecaparkzoo.org/visit](http://senecaparkzoo.org/visit).

—30—

**Media inquiries:**

**Gary Walker, Director of Communications**

[GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov)

(585) 753-1064

**Meaghan M. McDermott, Deputy Director  
of Communications**

[MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov](mailto:MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov)

(585) 469-4365