

December 4, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been asked to comment on the situation of Peaches, Tatima (Detema), and Wankie, three adult female African elephants who were moved from San Diego Wild Animal Park, California to the Lincoln Park Zoo, Illinois in the Spring of 2003. I spent 5 years with these elephants as their keeper in San Diego from January of 1984 to June of 1988, have visited them since, and know them very well.

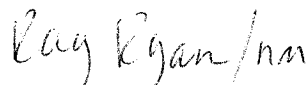
I have routinely visited Peaches, Tatima, and Wankie since their arrival at Lincoln Park Zoo. It is my firm belief that these elephants are dying in their new environment, and if not retired to a sanctuary soon, will not last more than a few years at Lincoln Park Zoo. Compared to what they were used to in San Diego, these elephants are suffering from the shock of climate change, lack of space, depression, and boredom.

The elephants appear to be in distress both physically and psychologically. I have witnessed the following:

- All three elephants have visibly lost weight in the months they've been at Lincoln Park Zoo.
- One elephant is limping, which appears to have only gotten worse. Rather than attempting to lift her leg like she did a few months ago, the elephant now drags the injured leg behind her. In my experience, whether the cause of the injury was due to the move or from another elephant, the small enclosure and the fact that she will be indoors most of the year at Lincoln Park Zoo will not allow her to heal properly.
- All three elephants look weakened, saddened, and lethargic, most probably due to factors such as depression and potential lack of proper care.
- Peaches requires regular "skin scraping" due to a skin condition. It does not appear that this is being done because of a large patch of dead skin on one cheek.
- Tatima spends time swaying, which is neurotic behavior that elephants in captivity display as a result of stress and boredom. She lost a partner years ago and never recovered emotionally. The move probably exacerbated her distress.
- The elephants don't interact with each other like they used to, which indicates that their group harmony has been disrupted, perhaps due to the change in environment. They don't act like "themselves" anymore.
- In San Diego, the elephants were used to being outside all day, but at the Lincoln Park Zoo, they have not been outside upon my 11 a.m. visits.

I believe that this move was strictly facilitated with no consideration for the elephants' welfare. Moving elephants who have spent their entire lives in a warm climate to one with months of frigid temperatures where they will be kept indoors for a large part of the year is a death sentence for these sensitive animals who deserve so much better.

Sincerely,



Ray Ryan

Former Elephant Trainer

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