

Zoo Atlanta's Zambezi Elephant Center and Savanna Hall Awarded LEED Gold

ATLANTA, July 7, 2020 — Helping to cap the most ambitious expansion in Zoo Atlanta's history, both the Zambezi Elephant Center and Savanna Hall Renovation have officially earned LEED Gold certification. Administered by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program recognizes buildings across the world for design and construction geared toward conservation of resources and environmental health.

At Zambezi Elephant Center, Epsten Group teamed up with the construction team at Winter Johnson Group to provide the elephants with a new home focused on optimal animal welfare while also providing a healthy environment for Elephant Care Team members and visitors. The care quarters maximize natural daylight for elephants and staff alike through the installation of glass roll-up doors and a translucent fiberglass clerestory. Through conscientious design and construction techniques, the building also balances the durability needed for the home of megafauna that can reach 13-feet in height and over 6 tons in weight and the energy performance standards of human-scaled buildings. Together with efficient LED lighting, building mechanical systems, and life-support filtration systems for the adjacent habitat's waterfalls and pools, Zambezi Elephant Center was able to achieve a 16.9% energy cost savings relative to the standard baseline building.

Savanna Hall is the embodiment of the adage that the greenest building is often the one that is already standing. By conserving 96% of the existing historic Cyclorama structure, the design and construction team was able to avoid many of the negative environmental impacts associated with construction of a brand-new facility. Through Environmental Life-Cycle Assessment (LCA) tools, Epsten Group was able to show a minimum of a 14% reduction in negative environmental impacts across three important categories that included an estimated 45% reduction in carbon emissions that would've come from the manufacturing, transportation, and installation of new materials. Through a mixture of strategies that also included building envelope improvements, installation of efficient LED lighting, and the selection of efficient HVAC systems, energy cost is reduced 25.8% relative to the standard baseline building while selection and installation of low-flow and low-flush plumbing fixtures reduced anticipated potable water use by more than 36%.

Together, Zambezi Elephant Center and Savanna Hall help represent Zoo Atlanta's ongoing commitment to conservation and to protect wildlife and wild places around the world. Through their conscientious efforts to reduce resource consumption and provide healthier environments for animals and people alike, these facilities are designed and built to help preserve our natural world for the health and enjoyment of future generations.

About Epsten Group

Epsten Group has been a global leader in sustainable design, consulting, and commissioning services since 1991. Headquartered in the heart of downtown Atlanta, the firm seeks to help clients implement sustainable practices to achieve efficient, beautiful, and healthy building solutions. As the largest third-party certification firm for the United States Green Building Council, Epsten Group is recognized for keeping sustainability at the forefront of its operations while continuing to spread a global message of the green building movement. For more information, visit www.epstengroup.com.



About Zoo Atlanta

A proud accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the gold standard for animal care and welfare, Zoo Atlanta has a mission to save wildlife and their habitats through conservation, research, education, and engaging experiences. The Zoo is home to more than 1,000 animals representing more than 200 species from around the world, many of them endangered or critically endangered. Highlights include giant pandas, including Ya Lun and Xi Lun, the only giant panda twins in the U.S.; one of North America's largest zoological populations of great apes; and a global center of excellence for the care and study of reptiles and amphibians. Recent transformations include the all-new African Savanna, featuring new and expanded habitats for African elephants, giraffes, zebras, ostriches, warthogs, meerkats and rhinos, and Savanna Hall, a state-of-the-art special event destination in the newly restored historic former home of the Atlanta Cyclorama. For more information, visit zooatlanta.org.

About Winter Johnson Group

Winter Johnson Group, a joint venture, is comprised of Winter Construction, a privately owned and operated Atlanta-based construction management and general contracting company and Johnson Construction Services, a minority-owned contracting company in Atlanta. Winter Johnson Group provides construction and environmental services to clients in the hospitality, retail, government, education, corporate/office, religious, healthcare, historic restoration, industrial, and multifamily markets in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic. For more information, visit www.winterjohnsongroup.com.

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