Spring River Park & Zoo has failed to meet minimum federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has repeatedly cited this facility for failing to repair damaged coating in the enclosures, failing to fix fences that could injure the animals or could allow for unauthorized people to come into contact with them, and failing to have a sufficient number of employees with animal husbandry knowledge.

May 16, 2017: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to provide a barrier fence between the enclosure housing three muntjacs and the general viewing public. The facility was also cited for repeat violations for failing to fix a 3- to 4-foot gap in its perimeter fence and failing to fix stucco coating in the enclosures housing the wolves and coyotes, which exposed underlying concrete and could potentially allow the animals to ingest the coating.

February 21, 2017: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to have documentation of the environmental enhancement plan for three lemurs. It was also cited for a repeat violation for failing to have a sufficient number of trained zookeepers with experience in proper animal husbandry.

The facility was also cited for multiple repeat violations for failing to maintain the following structures in good repair: an eroded concrete surface in the enclosure housing bears that exposed underlying chipped and broken concrete, a chain-link fence that was inadequate to contain the large animals being housed inside it, a chain-link fence that had broken and sharp points that could injure the bison being held inside it, an off-exhibit building that held two bobcats and two coatimundis that was “very rusted” and extremely hard to clean and sanitize because of its set-up, and a deteriorating storage building that was filled with construction debris and other materials.

December 13, 2016: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to have a safe and effective program for the control of rodents. Inspectors noted rodent fecal material and a hole created by rodents inside the building where the lemurs were housed. There were pieces of insulation, banana peels, and rodent feces under the food bowl. The facility was also cited for failing to have a sufficient number of trained zookeepers with experience in proper husbandry and care of nonhuman primates.

The USDA also cited the facility for multiple repeat violations for failing to maintain the following structures in good repair: exposed underlying concrete in the enclosure holding the bears, which could allow them to ingest the stucco coating; a fence around the exhibit holding the beaver, which contained approximately 4-inch gaps where the animal could become trapped or injured; and a fence surrounding the facility, which had an 8-inch gap and a loose gate and couldn’t function as a secondary containment system or as a means to prevent unauthorized people from having contact with the animals.

July 21, 2016: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to repair missing stucco coating in the area housing the bears. The underlying concrete was exposed, and the bears could ingest pieces of the coating.

September 15, 2015: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to secure metal panels on a hay-storage building in a way that adequately protected food from deteriorating or becoming moldy or contaminated. The facility was also cited for failing to fix a gap in its perimeter fence.

April 7, 2014: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to contain animals safely. Because of employee inattention, a moat in an enclosure housing bears was overfilled, raising the water level high enough that a bear cub was able to swim across to the wire fence at the front of the exhibit and climb over it. The animal was then able to get on a cinder block wall separating the enclosure housing the bears from the one confining the cougars, walk along the wall, and gain access to the roof area over the bear enclosure.

March 24, 2014: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to repair broken stucco that had fallen from the interior walls onto the floor of the enclosure holding two bear cubs. The facility was also cited for having a 2.5-foot-long crack and splintered trim boards in the shelter holding the deer.

September 17, 2013: The USDA cited Spring River for failing to repair or replace fencing that was curling upward inside the pen that housed four deer.