

Sierra Nevada Zoological Park

10200 N. Virginia St. Reno, Nevada 89506

Sierra Nevada Zoological Park, formerly known as Sierra Safari Zoo, has failed to meet minimum standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established by the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA). Among other issues, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited the facility for failing to supply adequate shade to animals, failing to have a contracted attending veterinarian, failing to have sanitary enclosures and facilities, failing to prevent contamination, failing to maintain enclosures and the facility grounds in good repair, selling animals without proper documentation, and failing to provide facility records for review.

May 24, 2021: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to maintain enclosures in good repair. A baboon night enclosure had exposed wood and concrete blocks that were exposed and unsealed in multiple areas. The facility was also cited for failing to create an environmental enhancement plan for a vervet monkey infant born one month prior to inspection. A further citation was issued for an off-exhibit holding area containing two very large piles of construction debris measuring approximately 6 by 4 by 50 feet and for grass, weeds, and other overgrown plants around the entire facility. A repeat citation was issued for a barrier fence surrounding the domestic farm animal section that had multiple sharp points of wire protruding through the hog panels used to patch several holes in the bottom of the barrier. Several baby goats were noted outside their enclosures, making the barrier fence part of

their primary enclosure and putting them at risk of injury from the sharp points.

August 27, 2019: The USDA issued Sierra Nevada Zoo a citation for failing to provide baboons with adequate shade. During the time of inspection, the temperature was in the 90s with full sun. The baboons only had access to shade from a small building outside the enclosure (that provided a small, unreliable patch of shade) and from a small off-exhibit concrete structure. The concrete enclosure was 85 degrees inside during inspection and did not allow the animals to see outside.

Another citation was issued for failing to maintain multiple enclosures in good repair:

- The aoudad enclosure had a damaged side with exposed sharp points. The exterior fence line had 4-by-2-inch mesh that curled up at the bottom, creating sharp points. The dividing fence had exposed, twisted wire ends curling into the enclosure along the bottom of the fence.
- The indoor hyena enclosure had particleboard siding that was damaged and had exposed splinters.
- The white tiger enclosure had rusty, twisted wire on the dividing fence.
- The back of the camel shelter had damaged, sharp metal edges.

The USDA also cited the facility for improper sanitation. The “pest” control programs for flies and rodents were not effective:

- The female lion had flystrike on her ears and was rubbing them along the fence.
- The Patagonian caviars had damage to the edge of the ear pinnae from the flies.
- Flies were swarming hay and old food in several enclosures, especially around discarded food that was not picked up.
- Rodent feces were visible in areas such as the brown-nosed coatimundi enclosure and the hay storage area.

April 29, 2019: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have a formal arrangement with an attending veterinarian. The facility was also cited for failing to keep animal enclosures in good repair. The enclosure for the older female lemurs had a floor that was separated and sagging, creating sharp points. The shelter for three younger lemurs had an entryway that had wire mesh with sharp points, and the patas monkey shelter had bolts sticking out. Loose wires were present throughout the sheltered areas for the primates. The facility was also cited for failing to meet the 8-foot perimeter-fencing requirement for the potentially dangerous animals held at the facility. In many places, the fence was 7 feet high or there was a 1-foot gap under it. An area near the baboons had fencing material stored adjacent to the perimeter fence, which reduced the effective height. Another citation was issued for improper sanitation throughout the facility grounds. There was a large dumpster overflowing with piles of trash, bedding, and fecal material on either side of it; the barn area was cluttered and full of debris; and in various places, trash and other items had been discarded but not picked up.

April 26, 2016: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to provide facility records for inspection, including the current program of veterinary care and the environmental enhancement plan for primates.

October 27, 2015: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to maintain the camel enclosure fence in good repair. The ground along an 80- to 100-foot stretch of the north fence had washed away, leaving a gap at the bottom of the fence of about 4 to 6 inches.

May 26, 2015: Sierra Nevada Zoo was cited by the USDA for failing to maintain a 10- to 15-foot wide and approximately 100- to 150-foot long area of foxtail grasses near the

back of the lion enclosure. The inspector noted that the foxtails were starting to dry and that if the seeds got inside the enclosure, they could penetrate the skin, nose, ears, eyes, or other body parts of the animals. The tall grass also made it difficult to monitor rodent activity to prevent contaminants and created a fire hazard.

February 25, 2014: Sierra Nevada Zoo was cited by the USDA for a food storage cargo container that had a door that wouldn't shut and old spilled food and debris accumulated between the slats of the floor. Another citation was issued for the kitchen floor, which was in disrepair. The floor had water damage from a leaking refrigerator and mopping, leading to soft spots and hairline cracks on the edges of the vinyl tile. Duct tape had been used to try to reinforce the floor.

February 22, 2011: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have a written exotic-cat diet plan and for allowing pigeons to roost inside a storage shed above hoofstock, causing their feces to collect on enclosure structures.

May 12, 2010: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have acquisition records for 21 animals.

April 14, 2010: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have acquisition records for two rabbits who were on temporary display while their enclosure was under construction and two goats who were out in the petting zoo area.

June 3, 2009: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have acquisition and disposition forms available.

March 13, 2008: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for storing a bale of hay on the ground, which could lead to possible contamination.

March 10, 2005: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to provide the inspector with the program of veterinary care, the environmental enhancement plan for primates, and an inventory of current animals for review. A further citation was issued for an open bag of chow that was on the floor of the temporary primate housing area. A repeat citation was issued for failing to control potential contamination by pigeons in the shed behind the baboon enclosure. Three separate direct citations were issued for a broken shelter in the zebra enclosure that had nails exposed that animals could step on, for an open bag of dog food on the floor of the kitchen area, and for garbage cans in the kitchen area and the visitor picnic area that did not have lids to minimize infestation, odors, and disease hazards.

April 6, 2004: Sierra Nevada Zoo was cited by the USDA for having numerous pigeons in the baboon food storage shed and the rear shed near the baboon enclosure. Fecal material had built up and covered the area. The inspector noted that this was a health hazard for both the baboons and the keepers.

February 6, 2002: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for not having an environmental enhancement plan for primates available for review. Another citation was issued for a lemur enclosure that was missing paint and had holes in the walls, which exposed drywall. The inspector noted that drywall could not be sanitized properly.

April 26, 2001: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for failing to have a written program of veterinary care in place following a change in its attending veterinarian. The facility was also cited for failing to trim two aoudads' hooves. Management stated that it had been over a year since the hooves were trimmed, and they were growing over each other on some of the feet. Another

citation was issued for failing to ensure structurally strong enclosures. The deer stall had a hole that was about 6 by 8 inches in the anterior wall, about 2 feet off the ground. A citation was also issued for an 18-inch puddle of standing water that was left in the buffalo pen.

May 25, 2000: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for selling two rabbits with no records and for allowing loose chickens in the barn and other areas of the zoo.

July 14, 1999: The USDA cited Sierra Nevada Zoo for inadequately storing food in open buckets with no lids; for feeding pigs from rubber pans that chickens, pigeons, and peacocks had access to; for allowing 20 to 40 pigeons in and around the wallaby exhibit who were eating the food and debris; and for allowing roosting peacocks in the barn area. The USDA also cited the facility for a meat refrigerator that had meat/blood drippings from thawing on several of the shelves. The refrigerator was only cleaned monthly. A sixth citation was issued for having a new veterinarian on board but no completed program of veterinary care.