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Grand Opening of *Predator Passage* Along the Phoenix Zoo's Africa Trail - November 20

PHOENIX (November 19, 2023) - The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation (ACNC)/Phoenix Zoo is thrilled to announce the Grand Opening of *Predator Passage*. More than two years in the making, and the Zoo's largest capital campaign project to date at $8.5 million, this six-acre expansion and remarkable addition provides an unforgettable experience for guests as they step into the heart of Africa and encounter its most fascinating and awe-inspiring predators.

Predator Passage at the Phoenix Zoo is now home to a diverse array of majestic and captivating creatures including female African lions who are rotating days in the new habitat with our current resident male lion, Boboo. The Zoo has also welcomed hyenas, an enchanting leopard and charismatic red river hogs. The Zoo's Rüppell's griffon vultures moved into their new habitat at *Predator Passage* last month and are adjusting well. The Zoo's fennec fox habitat received a facelift as well. The last to come – the Zoo is anxiously awaiting meerkats in the near future!

Grand Opening & Member Celebration: November 20, 21 & 22
Embark on a journey through Africa's wilderness right here in Arizona starting Monday, November 20! Guests are welcome to wind their way through this impressive experience. Phoenix Zoo members will enjoy members-only exclusive activities including coloring stations, book readings, interactive activities, a special member gift and more! Other activities will be scattered throughout the Zoo for everyone to enjoy including an African musical instrument station hosted by the MIM, drum circle workshops and more!

Predator Passage is included with general admission to the Phoenix Zoo.

Meet the New Residents:
Lionesses Kamara and Zuri: These majestic big cats, known for their strength and beauty, will soon establish their pride with Boboo, the Zoo's existing male lion in *Predator Passage*. Guests can witness the grace and power of these lions up close and gain a deeper appreciation for their role as apex predators. Kamara and Zuri have joined us from Pueblo Zoo in Colorado and are settling in nicely. The five-year-old sisters were born in 2017. At this time, the females rotate time in the outdoor habitat with our male lion, Boboo.

Tamu & Taziki, spotted hyenas: With their unique vocalizations and social behaviors, hyenas are fascinating animals to observe. *Predator Passage* will provide a comfortable and engaging environment for these intelligent scavengers to thrive. This mother-daughter duo arrived from Busch Gardens, Tampa, Florida. They have already established a daily routine of exploring their

habitat every morning near the viewing windows, then finding a nice sunny spot to take a nap in the afternoon at the back of their habitat.

Jasper, Amur leopard: The Amur leopard is one of the world's most endangered big cats. Known for their stunning spotted coats, these leopards are a symbol of the importance of protecting and preserving threatened species. Two-year-old Jasper arrived from the Greenville Zoo in South Carolina. Amur leopards are a cooperatively managed population in AZA zoos like Phoenix, and Jasper and the Amur leopard subspecies serve as an ambassador to the closely related African leopard.

Olive & Pugsley, red river hogs: Known for their striking appearance with distinctive facial markings and impressive tusks, red river hogs are a delightful addition to *Predator Passage*, offering guests a chance to learn about a lesser-known species from the African continent. Mom and son duo; Pugsley, a five-year-old male, and Olive, a nine-year-old female, came from the Kansas City Zoo. They are slowly adapting to their new home, so they may not be visible each day until they get more comfortable.

Meerkats (Coming Soon): The Phoenix Zoo has plans to introduce a lively group of meerkats to *Predator Passage* in the near future. These charismatic and highly social animals are sure to be a crowd favorite. We are initially obtaining a group of three brothers (from separate litters) approximately eight years old from the Capron Park Zoo in Massachusetts and hope to add females to the group soon after the males' arrival.

Join us in celebrating the grand opening of *Predator Passage* at the Phoenix Zoo and experience the wild wonders of Africa right here in Phoenix.

Video and photos of *Predator Passage* and its residents.
https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ibu6ly5vocnvwlu7mcdhd/Predator-Passage-Broll.mp4?rlkey=r0969cmahpqk7la7qbn0wwznm&dl=0
Credit: Phoenix Zoo

About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation
The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.4 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 3,000 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit www.phoenixzoo.org.