



For Immediate Release  
October 17, 2008

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## TORONTO ZOO'S ECO-CELL PROGRAM GETS BOOST MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT DONATES OVER 240 IBS OF OBSOLETE CELL PHONES AND ACCESSORIES



**October 17, 2008, Toronto, Ontario:** The Ministry of the Environment's (MOE) Assistant Deputy Minister, Debra Sikora, presented the Toronto Zoo with 455 used cell phones towards the Zoo's Eco-Cell cell phone recycling program. The MOE collected not only the phones, weighing approximately 141.5 lbs, but an additional 100 lbs of cell phone accessories for a grand total of 241.5 lbs of cell phone product – this equals the weight of the Zoo's largest female gorilla, Josephine.

Also on hand were representatives from the Government of Ontario's Infrastructure Technology Services Department who surprised all in attendance with an additional 150 cell phones to contribute to this Conservation program. Toronto Zoo was the top North American cell phone recycler in 2007.

Dave Ireland, Toronto Zoo's Curator of Conservation, remarks, "As an animal conservation institution, the Toronto Zoo recognizes the impact of humans on our natural world. Providing environmental stewardship opportunities to our community, like the cell phone recycling program organized by Eco-Cell, is an effective way to engage people in our collective struggle to save the planet."

In 2007, the Toronto Zoo assisted Eco-Cell by collecting 4,356 cell phones mostly from visitors who dropped them into designated containers at the Zoo's entrance. Eco-Cell gives the Zoo anywhere from 45 cents to \$15 per phone. These funds in turn help support the Zoo's conservation programs, particularly those directed at saving gorilla habitat.

Approximately 100 million cell phones are discarded in North America each year. Cell phone production requires a metallic ore called "Coltan" which is mined predominantly in Eastern areas of the Congo – prime gorilla and elephant habitat. Eco-Cell is a cell phone recycling and fundraising organization that works with over 160 U.S. and Canadian zoos and conservation NGO's to collect used cell phones and raise funds for gorilla conservation. Eco-Cell diverts 100% of cell phones from landfills and provides organizations with a profitable, easy to use, environmentally focused fundraising program designed to reuse cell phone materials and help save gorilla habitats (visit [www.eco-cell.org](http://www.eco-cell.org) or [www.torontozoo.ca/conservation](http://www.torontozoo.ca/conservation)).

**The Zoo is challenging all organizations and individuals to contribute cell phones to this important conservation effort.**

**Current Zoo Hours and Admission Prices – Please note our hours will change:**

**Zoo Hours Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>: 9:30am to 4:30pm. Last admissions one hour before closing. General Admission 13-64 incl. is \$20, Children 3 and under are free, Children 4-12 are \$12 and Seniors 65+ are \$14. Parking is \$8. Events and admission prices are subject to change without notice. The Zoo is located at Meadowvale Road and Hwy. 401, Exit 389 east and west bound. For general information, call (416) 392-5929. The Toronto Zoo is open year round (except December 25<sup>th</sup>).**  
[torontozoo.com](http://torontozoo.com)