

## **For Immediate Release**

March 19, 2015

### **Ontarians invest \$2.2M to turn Zoo Poo & Food Waste into Renewable Power**

TORONTO – Nearly 300 local investors are celebrating today after reaching their goal of raising \$2.2 million to build North America’s 1<sup>st</sup> zoo-based biogas plant. The facility will be located across the street from the Toronto Zoo and will recycle 17,000 tonnes of Zoo poo and local grocery store waste into renewable power for the Ontario grid.

“We are extremely proud today – all of our members, investors, Board and staff have been focused on this goal for almost two years now,” said ZooShare’s Executive Director, Daniel Bida. “Having these funds in the bank brings us one step closer to putting shovels in the ground, which we plan on doing in the coming months. Our project proves that, given the opportunity, people will choose to invest for impact: our financial returns are good, but are our environmental returns are better – and our investors wanted their portfolios to reflect that.”

Beginning in October 2013, ZooShare began raising funds for the project by offering Community Bonds to both local retail and institutional investors. Supporters are almost entirely individuals, ranging in age from 18 months to 83 years old, and most live in the Greater Toronto Area. “It was exactly the kind of investment I had been looking for,” says investor Jennifer Neirinckx, “Smart, green and helping out right in my own city! Go poo power!” A few companies have also invested: “Bullfrog Power participated early on as a founding investor and the project’s Educational Sponsor and, earlier this year, increased our financial commitment,” says Ron Seftel, Chief Operating Officer of Bullfrog Power.

“As a not-for-profit organization, the Toronto Zoo is committed to energy efficient operations and environmental protection. We are excited to be associated with North America’s first zoo-biogas project, which will further strengthen the Zoo’s role as a global leader in conservation and sustainability,” said John Tracogna, CEO of the Toronto. “I want to congratulate everyone at ZooShare in reaching this significant milestone and thank the Community at large for their incredible enthusiasm and support for this project,” he added.

The Ontario Minister of Energy, Bob Chiarelli, is also a fan of the project: “ZooShare is a fine example of community power in action – raising local dollars to make a local impact through the development of a renewable energy project. I congratulate them on their success.”

ZooShare supporters will celebrate their success tonight at The Community Bond Showcase, an event ZooShare will co-host with other leaders in the sector, SolarShare and the Centre for Social Innovation. To learn more about the event, please [click here](#).

### **About ZooShare**

The ZooShare biogas plant will recycle manure from the Toronto Zoo and food waste from Canada's largest grocery chain into renewable power for the Ontario grid. This process will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of removing 2,100 cars from the road each year, and will return valuable nutrients to the soil in the form of a high-quality fertilizer. To learn more, visit [ZooShare.ca](http://ZooShare.ca)

For more information contact:

Daniel Bida  
Executive Director  
[daniel@zooshare.ca](mailto:daniel@zooshare.ca)