



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

February 15th, 2024

### **Alaska Zoo Executive Director Patrick Lampi Set to Retire after 38 Years, Board Unanimously Appoints Zoo CBO Tristan Thon as Successor**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Alaska Zoo announces a key transition of leadership as Executive Director Patrick (Pat) Lampi retires after 38 years as of April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The Zoo Board of Directors has unanimously voted to appoint current Zoo Chief Business Officer Tristan Thon as his successor.

Pat first began his career journey with the Alaska Zoo in 1986, a path which took him all the way up through the zoo ranks to the position of Executive Director. His leadership through the ups and downs of managing a zoo has made for many interesting stories. “It is strange how events in life change your path and where you end up. I found myself working at the zoo and wanting to make it a better place for the animals, the people working here and for the community,” said Lampi as he reflects on his experiences. He sees growth in the zoo’s future with fresh ideas and new energy already elevating the zoo to a new level. Above all else, he wishes zoo staff and volunteers the best and cherishes the memories of all the animals he has helped over the years.

Lampi’s successor Tristan Thon feels honored to have been chosen unanimously by the Zoo Board of Directors. Tristan has served the zoo for over five years as Chief Business Officer and has worked closely with Lampi in recent years to learn the nuances of managing a nonprofit zoo, including receiving a Certificate of Management from the Foraker Group. Over the years, Thon has worked to strengthen the zoo’s infrastructure, workforce, business functions and community support. Thon was born and raised in Anchorage and has core memories of growing up with the zoo in her life. “My parents first visited the zoo on their honeymoon and later brought me as a young child. I rode horses next door and walked the zoo trails after my lessons. The zoo continued to be a haven for me after I had children of my own, providing the natural and safe setting that we all know and love,” Thon reminisces. She wishes the best for Lampi, stating that, “The zoo would not be where it is today without Pat’s innovation, integrity, and compassion; both for animals and for the people who work here. I know without a doubt that I have big shoes to fill - or perhaps a hat,” in reference to Lampi’s iconic brimmed hat which many visitors grew accustomed to seeing on the trails.

#### ***About the Alaska Zoo***

The Alaska Zoo is a nonprofit that has provided a home for orphaned, injured and captive-born animals since 1969. Open year-round, the zoo promotes conservation of Arctic and sub-Arctic species through education, research, and community enrichment. Visit [www.alaskazoo.org](http://www.alaskazoo.org).

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