

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: As the L.A. Zoo expansion project moves forward, the recently-released Focused Recirculated EIR (FREIR) touted by the zoo is framed as “environmentally superior.” Yet, there are few specifics for why/how the zoo can make this claim. The zoo seems more focused on creating expanded entertainment venues rather than a more sustainable environment geared toward animal welfare. Take for example the recent “Brew at the LA Zoo” which occurred Friday, August 12, 2022. 50 breweries and pub-style grub were represented along with live music coupled with animal feedings and keeper talks. In no way does this create an environment that takes captive animals into consideration. In fact, I cannot fathom how it’s appropriate to expose these animals to nighttime events when it’s far more appropriate to allow a break from the human interaction they face during the day. Nor does the current plan address the literal “elephant in the room”... how the zoo will interact with the Park’s native species – both plant and animal, replacing once pristine spaces with new plants and trees, after removing the existing mature, protected trees – certainly not a win-win for an environment facing severe droughts in coming years. When the zoo talks about their overarching “commitment to protecting the environment,” one key component – take down a hillside to create a climbing wall so kids can see the condor restoration project in action seems to run counter. One would hope this type of restoration interaction would be extremely limited, shielded from the public eye, yet, this is perpetually framed where the zoo is taking credit, implying they’re the only entity working to restore this species in the western landscape. In fact, this zoo is merely one of many entities working on the project. While I have little doubt others will address other issues with this plan, I truly hope the zoo will continue to engage the public in their ongoing discussions as this project moves forward. I was on the call this past week and listened closely to zoo officials. Unfortunately, because of the software, many from the public were prevented from being heard. In the future, this must be addressed. I’ll just end with “the LA Zoo inhabits acreage within Griffith Park, and not the other way around.”