

**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**



CONTACTS:

Joan Barns
Virginia Aquarium
757-385-0252
jmbarns@VirginiaAquarium.com

Virginia Gabriele
Virginia Living Museum
757-534-7479
marketing@thevlm.org

Winfield Danielson
Virginia Zoo
757-441-2374x223
winfield.danielson@norfolk.gov

ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS SUPPORT REGIONAL ECONOMY

Hampton Roads, Va. (June 14, 2011) – Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) attractions in Hampton Roads generate significant economic benefits locally and regionally, according to a new analysis conducted on behalf of the AZA.

“Zoos and aquariums, including Virginia Aquarium, Virginia Zoo and Virginia Living Museum, support the community in more ways than one,” said Jim Maddy, president and CEO of the AZA. “Not only do they have deep commitments to education and wildlife conservation, but they also generate valuable economic benefits to the region.”

Combined, the three attractions are visited by more than 200,000 school children annually, directly contribute to conservation efforts locally and worldwide, and have a significant economic impact in the Hampton Roads area:

- Employ more than 300 people
- Spend more than \$15.5 million each year on goods and services
- Serve more than 1.25 million visitors each year

The AZA has commissioned the state-by-state economic impact analysis conducted by a nationally recognized economist, Dr. Stephen Fuller. The study found that AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums statewide generated the following impacts for the Commonwealth of Virginia:

- \$70.1 million in economic activity (contribution to national GDP)
- \$22.8 million in personal earnings (salaries and wages)
- 656 jobs

ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS SUPPORT ECONOMY

Dr. Fuller writes in his report regarding zoos and aquariums nationwide:

“Annual spending by zoos and aquariums for operations and capital projects generate significant economic benefits for their host jurisdictions. These benefits build from the initial outlays, as they are re-spent across the breadth of the economy. These benefits accumulate and expand the economy’s total output as measured by their contributions to Gross Domestic Product and respective Gross State Products. These benefits also generate new personal earnings to the benefit of workers residing in the host jurisdictions and support job growth locally, regionally and nationally.”

Nationwide, the cumulative economic impact of 212 AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums, as they serve more than 179 million annual visitors, is as follows:

- \$16 billion in economic activity (contribution to national GDP)
- \$ 4.7 billion in personal earnings (salaries and wages)
- 142,000 jobs

A copy of the report can be found at <http://www.aza.org/PressRoom/NationalEconomicImpact/>

###

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science, and recreation. Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. The AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, please visit www.aza.org.