

An underwater photograph showing a dense field of green seagrass in the foreground. Numerous small, dark-colored fish are swimming in the clear blue water above the seagrass. The background is a solid blue color with large, light blue wavy lines that sweep across the upper right portion of the image.

OUR  
Legacy

**PROTECTING OUR NATURAL  
RESOURCES, TRANSFORMING  
OUR FUTURE.**

EAST COAST ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
Brevard Zoo | The Aquarium Project

**“THE CONSERVATION EFFORTS  
OF THIS COMMUNITY HAVE NEVER  
BEEN MORE RELEVANT OR URGENTLY  
NEEDED. THIS NEW AQUARIUM IS A  
SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR OUR REGION  
AND OUR FUTURE.”**

**KEITH WINSTEN** | Executive Director, Brevard Zoo and East Coast Zoological Society



**The essential connection between humans and nature is undeniable. Our compassion for others grows through increased understanding of and care for animals of all kinds.**

Addressing the vulnerability of our ecosystem is crucial to not only this region's future but to the future of the world, OUR WORLD. We must be cognizant of the interconnected fates of people, animals, water and vegetation and the fact that clean, healthy water enables life.

# THIS IS **OUR** **LEGACY**



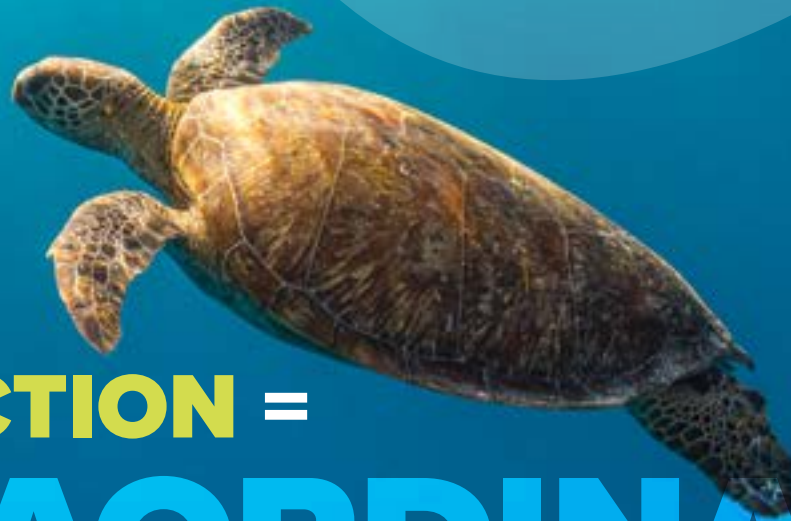
**EAST COAST ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
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OUR  
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transforming **our future.**

**BOLD**IDEAS +  
SHARED**ACTION** =

**EXTRAORDINARY  
RESULTS**



# AS OUR COMMUNITY HAS GROWN INTO AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE THAT SERVES AS HUMANKIND'S CONDUIT TO OTHER PLANETS, OUR VISION HAS EXPANDED AS WELL.

**Brevard Zoo is living proof that bold ideas—shared among a community and paired with action—can create extraordinary results.**

We are embarking on a historic campaign to create a second campus, defined by the ecological treasures we are privileged to steward: the Atlantic Ocean to the east, the Indian River Lagoon in the middle and St. Johns River to the west. These priceless assets fuel our urgency to construct a world-class aquarium on the shores of the Banana River.

**Created of, by and for our community—and serving as a national example of engagement for common good.**

Over a quarter of a century ago, this community joined together as one. More than 16,000 people, including business owners, retirees, engineers, artists, tradespeople, military members and more contributed their talents to build this world-leading Zoo. Today, Brevard Zoo reflects the heart, soul and values of a community dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural treasures of this exceptional part of the world. The engagement, passion and commitment of this region moves our work forward.

**We answer the call.**

For more than 28 years, this community and Brevard Zoo have worked shoulder-to-shoulder, enriching lives and improving our natural environment. We reject the false choice of *either* people or the planet, *either* economic progress or conservation. **We know this truth—nature, animals and humans will *only* thrive together.** Our aspiration is nothing less than to continuously lead the nation in defining the role of a community zoo, and creating best practices in animal wellness, conservation, sustainability and education.

Since opening its gates in 1994, Brevard Zoo, the flagship location of East Coast Zoological Society, has never stopped pursuing excellence in service to its community and its mission. The Zoo's designers created our distinctive experience of a lush setting with animal habitats incorporated into the natural environment. Funding came from a broad public-private partnership. A local family donated the land and supported the cause, County Commissioners committed funds from a modest hotel tax and the State of Florida and thousands of individual donors and businesses contributed additional funds.





# OUR Legacy

Protecting our natural resources,  
transforming **our future.**

# THE ZOO'S SIGNATURE DESIGN USED ITS AUTHENTIC SETTING TO CREATE ANIMAL HABITATS THAT INCORPORATED THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

With the support and involvement of thousands of volunteers and community partners, we preserve habitats, create new conservation and education programs and directly engage people in restoration of the Indian River Lagoon.

Together, we work to restore water quality and living shorelines by planting clam and oyster gardens and rejuvenating seagrasses. We elevate appreciation of art and beauty—both in the natural environment and in education programs for children and collaborative efforts such as the Brevard Achievement Center Festival. Education programs and partnerships with schools improve science literacy and spark interest in STEM careers. We were the first zoo in the country to build on-site classrooms for at-risk students.

A hallmark of Brevard Zoo's priorities has been its dedication to saving Florida species from extinction, while also providing one of the most highly respected animal wellness programs in the nation. Enabled by a highly trained and expert staff of professionals, our Sea Turtle Healing Center, Animal Care Center led by two board-certified veterinarians, conservation team, education department and animal keeper staff represent the “gold standard” nationally. We are a source of training, information and support for institutions around the country as we proudly share our knowledge in these vital mission areas.

The results are indisputable—Brevard Zoo consistently ranks among the nation's **Top 10 Zoos in USA Today's Readers' Choice Awards** and other polls. A stunning achievement given that the East Coast Zoological Society is a not-for-profit that receives no recurring government funding for our operating costs yet generates a tangible financial impact in our community.



MORE THAN  
**460,000**  
GUESTS VISIT  
EACH YEAR

CONTRIBUTING  
**\$65M**  
ANNUAL  
ECONOMIC IMPACT

SUPPORTING  
**875+**  
JOBS IN  
THE REGION





Protecting our natural resources,  
transforming **our future.**

## **A COMMUNITY, REGION AND WORLD URGENTLY NEEDING MORE OF PRECISELY WHAT WE DO.**

There is an essential connection between humans and nature. Decades of research shows that people who spend time in nature experience less anxiety and depression and increased mental well-being and resilience. And our compassion for others grows through increased understanding of and care for animals of all kinds.

The vulnerability of our ecosystem—the interconnected fates of people, animals, water and vegetation—is not a political issue. Clean, healthy water enables life, and it is a matter crucial to this region's future.

Animals are becoming extinct at ever-increasing rates, and more than one-third of marine mammals are threatened. Throughout Florida, each and every day we witness the impacts of pollution, chemicals and temperature shifts. The tragic decline of the Indian River Lagoon affects every person in our region and beyond. Seagrass loss has reached catastrophic levels, with manatees dying from lack of food. Recurring algal blooms leave lasting damage in our precious waterways. From the fish die-offs of 2016, we can see the potential for more extreme impacts on tourism, property values and our way of life.

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## SOLUTIONS TO THESE CHALLENGES REQUIRE ACTION TODAY—AND NEW APPROACHES FOR TOMORROW.

**As magical as it is, Brevard Zoo is more than a place—it is a movement, and we have more work to do. The longer we wait, the more difficult and costlier it will be to recover.**

To realize our vision, **we are launching the most significant campaign in our history** to raise a total of \$100 million over five years. Through expanded partnerships with our volunteers, supporters and business leaders, the East Coast Zoological Society will develop a world-class aquarium and conservation campus on the Banana River that will have far-reaching impacts throughout Florida and beyond. The new aquarium complex will allow us to increase marine conservation programs and make the Space Coast a more essential tourism, heritage and cultural destination. It will enable us to ex-

pand our living shoreline efforts and other restoration programs across the region. It will create jobs and positively impact property values, Indian River Lagoon-dependent businesses and our region's ability to attract and retain a high-wage, high-talent workforce. We will develop innovative programs that show the world how to spark and regenerate ecological thriving.

To further amplify our impact, we will increase Brevard Zoo's animal wellness programs by constructing new habitats that mirror the way animals live in the wild. We will ensure animals have the best possible veterinary care, nutrition, challenge and stimulation. We will enrich the lives of children and families through new and expanded programs. And, by combining forces of the Zoo's current conservation efforts with the new aquarium's programs, we will make a massive impact on our environment and long-term sustainability.

## MULTIPLYING OUR IMPACT THROUGH A NEW COASTAL AQUARIUM

The largest component of our campaign, \$85 million, is to create a world-class aquarium and conservation campus on 14 acres of shoreline on the Banana River at Port Canaveral.

The vision for the new campus mirrors the distinctive aesthetic of Brevard Zoo, leveraging the beauty and benefits of natural Florida and encountering sea life through a personal, accessible, joyful and relaxed experience. Visitors will enter through a sand dune experience with canopies for shade. Hands-on activities will engage guests in science in action and be a springboard for even larger community involvement in conservation work. Following Brevard Zoo's model, once built, the aquarium will generate resources and programs that serve the entire Indian River Lagoon and our region.

Through the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast, we have conducted an economic impact analysis that found the new aquarium will bring jobs and prosperity to the Space Coast.

WITH A PROJECTED  
ANNUAL IMPACT OF  
**\$85M+**



AND MORE THAN  
**900**  
JOBS

Aquarium programs will engage visitors and conserve Florida's treasured natural environment.

Our plans for the aquarium were affirmed by a large national survey in 2020 about the issues the public wants to see aquariums tackle. **The top five responses—marine animal rescue, climate resilience, conserving marine habitats, conservation education and sustainable seafood—align with our purposes.** We seek to mobilize a larger, regional force of Indian River Lagoon champions and unite in action to promote a common vision and a national model for a sustainable future.



### TOP 5 SURVEY RESPONSES:

1. Marine Animal Rescue
2. Climate Resilience
3. Conserving Marine Habitats
4. Conservation Education
5. Sustainable Seafood





AQUARIUM AT PORT CANAVERAL | AERIAL WEST



## OUR AQUARIUM'S **PROGRAMMATIC FOCUS** INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING **COMPONENTS:**



### **Saving the Indian River Lagoon**

Our focus will be on returning the Indian River Lagoon to a healthy waterway carpeted with seagrass, vital and alive with mullet jumping and with partners developing sustainable seafood practices and solutions. One dollar from every ticket will be used for Indian River Lagoon restoration and stewardship. These funds, to be administered by the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program, are estimated to be \$500,000 annually.



### **Immersive Experiences and Education**

Interactive experiences will engage more than 500,000 visitors each year in the thrill of science, adventure and exploration. Guests will witness our aquatic ecosystem up close through canoe and kayak excursions. We will model low-footprint ways for all of us to make a personal difference in clean water, wildlife habitats and coastal restoration. Powerful new programs with K-12 schools will connect young people with nature and science, and will connect individuals and families with our environment.

“The Aquarium Project is one of the only projects proposed for the Indian River Lagoon that will be truly **transformational**. Building species recovery and habitat restoration capacity is an **essential precursor** to implement the full-scale restoration work needed to recover this **estuary of national significance**. ”

**DUANE DE FREESE, PHD** | Executive Director, Indian River Lagoon Council and Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program



### Aquatic Animal Conservation and Well-being

New and expanded programs will help to save species native to our region, and a state-of-the-art facility will provide unmatched care and rehabilitation of aquatic animals. New national and international training efforts will help others learn how to reverse the global biodiversity crisis.



### Research and Innovation

Research partnerships will benefit from our location at the boundary of subtropical and more temperate climates—enabling us to explore different environments and more deeply understand animals and nature. We will build on existing partnerships with Florida Institute of Technology, University of Central Florida, University of Florida, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and others to develop innovative next-generation solutions.





**Even as we undertake planning for a new aquarium to expand our reach, our ambitions for Brevard Zoo never stop, with the following strategic priorities totaling \$15 million over five years:**

### **Conservation**

We will expand our work with a myriad of partners to develop a Florida Endangered Species Center to save animals from our state, such as our work with West Indian Manatees, Perdido Key Beach Mice, Florida Scrub-Jays, Florida Black Bears and Diamondback Terrapins. Additional programs will enable us to train and model effective conservation work for other zoos and organizations around the world.


### **Animal Wellness and Veterinary Services**

Enhancements to the Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center will ensure staff and volunteers can provide the best possible care for injured and sick turtles. New diagnostic technologies, funds for nutrition and veterinary internship programs and innovations in animal management will ensure all the Zoo's 900+ residents receive best in class care.

### **Education and Community Engagement**

We will expand programs for underserved and at-risk communities and intensify partnerships with the schools to improve science literacy. We are currently considering adding a one-of-a-kind nature-based preschool. By bringing the benefits of spending time in nature to community members of all ages, we will improve human health and wellness.



A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a red and white plaid shirt, is looking intently at a display in a museum or aquarium. The background is a blurred image of a large, curved structure, possibly a tank or exhibit. The overall tone is educational and inspiring.

## THE EAST COAST ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY STARTED WITH AN AUDACIOUS IDEA, AND 27 YEARS LATER, THAT IDEA HAS BECOME A REALITY.

We seek once again to link arms with this community to create a world-class aquarium on the Space Coast that will engage the region and serve as a center for estuary restoration, stewardship and conservation.

It will pilot and prove innovative and sustainable solutions that can be deployed throughout Florida and around the world. The aquarium will bring engaging new recreation opportunities, add jobs to our economy, give tourists another exciting reason to visit and help attract the talent our corporations need to grow.

This campaign is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to accelerate the positive impact of the East Coast Zoological Society's work through Brevard Zoo and the new aquarium complex. The transformational nature of these programs, projects and initiatives is extraordinary and represent a commitment to the future that has always been a cornerstone of this community. We are deeply grateful for the overwhelming support of the Central Florida region to make this dream a reality that will provide far-reaching quality of life benefits.

## WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN...

OUR  
**Legacy**  Protecting our natural resources,  
transforming **our future.**

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“**OUR MISSION** IS SHARING OUR JOY OF NATURE  
TO HELP WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE **THRIVE.**”

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