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Cincinnati Zoo Turning Pachyderm “Poop” into Power *Zoo LEEDs the Charge to Go Green!*

CINCINNATI – The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden is turning to its biggest animal to help with one of its biggest visions yet. The Zoo’s four Asian Elephants, which weigh a combined total of over 37,000 pounds, produce over 800 pounds of waste each day! *The idea is to turn that poop into power.* Partnering with Duke Energy and the Ohio Department of Development, the Zoo will begin a biomass feasibility study to measure the organic waste produced by the elephants and study its potential energy production. The study is scheduled to begin early 2008.

“Duke Energy is excited to partner with the Cincinnati Zoo on this environmental management study,” said Jim Lefeld, Duke Energy director of renewable energy. “This project will provide Duke Energy the opportunity to further investigate the feasibility of small scale waste-to-energy applications and it compliments current work Duke Energy is doing in rural areas of its service territory to develop economic solutions to resolve livestock waste management problems.”

As the leading conservation based organization in the city, the Cincinnati Zoo plans to become a national model for sustainable design and renewable energy. With the new Harold C. Schott Education Center as the catalyst, the Zoo has committed to pursuing LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for all future projects, starting with the new Vine Street Village Project, currently underway.

In an effort to reduce its carbon footprint, the Zoo will continue to LEED the green charge through its green initiative and programs, such as upgrading energy efficient lighting systems for routine operations, converting to LED lighting for PNC Festival of Lights, centralizing HVAC controls, pursuing geothermal

heating and cooling systems, upgrading mechanical systems, educating visitors on the importance of recycling and fine-tuning water systems, which has already reduced water usage by more than 30% between 2005 and 2007. The Zoo has also converted its diesel-powered fleet, including the iconic Safari Train that carries more than 250,000 passengers each year, to a blended bio-diesel.

With each of these efforts, the Zoo is reducing its impact on the environment. If other institutions could do the same, the impact would be much greater. That's why the Zoo is one of a dozen institutions that are part of the Go Green Challenge, a movement that advocates green practices. The Zoo is also part of the Energy Task Force working on Mayor Mallory's Climate Protection Plan.

This summer the Zoo will open a new 27,000 square-foot Giraffe Ridge exhibit, featuring five Massai giraffes and two key green components. Visitors will have the opportunity to hand-feed giraffes at eye level from the new 2,700 square-foot deck, made entirely of composite wood. The exhibit will also highlight a 2,500 square-foot green roof which will reduce the rate and volume of rain water going into the City's sewer and help insulate the giraffe barn.

"It is our mission to educate and inspire the million visitors that come through our gates each year," said Mark Fisher, Cincinnati Zoo's Senior Director of Facilities and Planning. "By showing them what we are doing with our green initiatives, and why we are doing it, we can empower them to take similar action at their homes, their schools, and their places of work. For the zoo, there is no greater cause. So, if not now, when? And, if not us, who?"

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The world famous Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden was rated the #1 attraction locally and one of the top zoos in the nation by Zagat Survey. It has also been recognized by Child Magazine as one of "The 10 Best Zoos for Kids." Over one million people visit the Zoo's award-winning exhibits, and more than 500 animal and 3000 plant species annually. The Zoo is an accredited member of the American Zoo & Aquarium Association (AZA) and the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), is internationally known for its success in the protection and propagation of endangered animals and plants, and engages in research and conservation projects worldwide.