



Contact:

Brandy Gamoning
Marketing Manager
559-498-5936 (office)
714-853-2656 (cell)
bgamoning@fresnochaffeezoo.org

For Immediate Release

February 10, 2019

FRESNO CHAFFEE ZOO MOURNS DEATH OF BELOVED AFRICAN ELEPHANT

Fresno, CA – Officials at Fresno Chaffee Zoo are deeply saddened to announce the death of 11-year-old female African elephant, Bets.

On Friday, February 8, during her morning wellness check, the animal care team noticed that Bets was not behaving normally. The veterinary team was notified and worked quickly to examine Bets and run diagnostic tests. Despite their efforts, within a 36 hour period, her health rapidly declined and she died late on Saturday, February 9.

“We consulted with zoo veterinarians around the country to devise our treatment plan. Bets had staff with her to monitor and care for her,” states Dr. Shannon Nodolf, Chief Veterinary Officer. “We did everything we could in a short amount of time,” Nodolf adds.

The cause of death is unknown, pending necropsy and pathology reports. Tissue samples and remains will be analyzed for scientific study. These findings will allow Bets’ veterinary and animal care teams to learn more about her health and help other elephants in the future.

“We’re extremely saddened by the loss of Bets. This is a great loss to Fresno Chaffee Zoo and our community. Our veterinary and animal care teams worked diligently to assist and treat her. I’m grateful to work with such passionate and talented people. The team continues to work to understand the underlying cause,” said Scott Barton, CEO.

Bets came to Fresno Chaffee Zoo in May 2015 prior to the opening of the African Adventure exhibit. Bets shared her exhibit with Vus’Musi 14-year-old male African elephant as well as Nolwazi and Amahle mother-daughter pair of African elephants.

"Fresno Chaffee Zoo inspires wonder of our natural world, provides an engaging learning environment, and creates a passion for conservation."

###