

December 30, 2007

To Our Members:

We are writing to you in response to the tragic events that occurred this past Christmas Day at the San Francisco Zoo. One of our Siberian tigers – four-year-old Tatiana – escaped from the big cat grotto, resulting in a 17-year-old man’s death and injuries to his two companions. Responding police officers shot and killed Tatiana.

On behalf of the entire Zoo family we want to express our deepest sympathy to the victims and their families. This incident runs counter to everything that the Zoo stands for. The safety of our visitors, staff and our animals has always been our highest priority and will continue to be as we move forward.

Many questions remain about the circumstances surrounding this terrible event and we are committed to finding all of the answers. This incident, while tragic, is rare and isolated.

Our policies and procedures are reviewed in accordance with our accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Nonetheless, we are conducting a full review of our practices. At our request, AZA is convening a panel of zoo experts to inspect our big cat outdoor exhibits. In the meantime, immediate safety enhancements are underway to the grotto enclosures.

We know many of you have been ardent supporters of the Zoo, its mission and its animals. We will need your support even more now and in the days ahead.

Since 1889, the San Francisco Zoo has been dedicated to the education of families and school children who visit our Zoo to foster their understanding of and caring for the world’s wildlife. Even in this challenging time, our mission remains the same and with your help the Zoo will remain a place to educate children and their families in a safe environment and to conserve and protect the animals in our care.

Sincerely,

Nick Podell
Chair, San Francisco Zoological Society

Manuel A. Mollinedo
President and CEO