



News From

Cheryl Dinolfo

Monroe County Executive

For Immediate Release

Monday, June 12, 2017

DINOLFO ANNOUNCES BIRTH OF SEA LION PUP AT SENECA PARK ZOO

County Executive **Cheryl Dinolfo** and Seneca Park Zoo officials are pleased to announce the birth of a California sea lion pup at the Zoo. The pup was born last week to 8-year-old Lily and the gender will be determined by animal care staff as the pup develops.

“Right as summer begins, we are thrilled to welcome this new addition to the Seneca Park Zoo family,” said **Dinolfo**. *“While there are many reasons to visit the Seneca Park Zoo this summer, seeing the new sea lion pup in the Rocky Coasts is sure to be a highlight of the season for all of our guests.”*

The new pup will have access to both the indoor and outdoor areas of its habitat as it bonds with Lily during the next few weeks. *“Animal care staff will be closely monitoring the pup’s health and development, while ensuring that its mother guides the process,”* says Zoo Director **Larry Sorel**. *“We will provide Lily with support as she establishes maternal behaviors.”*

Seneca Park Zoo participates in the Association of Zoo and Aquariums (AZA) Species Survival Plan (SSP) for the California sea lion. This program aims to sustain in conservation care genetically diverse populations of California sea lions, which face environmental threats from pollution and the fishing industry in their natural range.

Lily came to the Zoo in 2009 after sustaining an injury to her right front flipper and becoming stranded on a beach in Los Angeles County. She was rehabilitated at the Marine Mammal Care Center at Fort McArthur in San Pedro, California before coming to the Zoo.

“Many sea lions in zoos have been injured in and cannot be released back to their natural range,” says Zoo Society Executive Director **Pamela Reed Sanchez**. *“Our sea lions help our guests understand the difficulties encountered when humans and animals share the same space.”*

Last year, three sea lions at the Zoo died unexpectedly of causes found to be unrelated after extensive testing. The Zoo initiated assessments of its sea lion program by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). After their assessment, the USDA found no issues requiring documentation. The AZA report did not observe any aspect of the sea lion care

program or habitat that did not comply with AZA standards and best practices, and noted the Zoo's exemplary water quality management and record-keeping. The AZA also stated "zoo leadership is to be commended for reaching out to USDA and AZA and asking for this audit. They were incredibly transparent and provided access to anything we requested to explore."

"After a difficult fall for the dedicated staff that cares for the sea lions, we are delighted to see Lily and her pup doing well and are looking forward to a wonderful summer," says **Sorel**.

The sea lions reside in the *Rocky Coasts* section of the Zoo and can be viewed from multiple locations, including an indoor, underwater viewing gallery. Plan a visit this summer to see the sea lions in action and welcome the new pup.

Larry Sorel, Zoo Director, will be available at the Zoo today, Monday June 12, from 2:30pm to 4:00pm to answer questions.

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