

## **Association of Zoos and Aquariums Supports Cincinnati Zoo Regarding Transfer of Ndume the Gorilla**

**Silver Spring, MD (June 14, 2019)** – Last week, a federal judge ordered The Gorilla Foundation (the Foundation) to cooperate in good faith with the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden by returning 38-year-old western lowland gorilla Ndume back to a facility accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) as required by a 2015 loan agreement.

After multiple delays by the Foundation, the United States District Court for the Northern District of California has ordered the Foundation to return Ndume to Cincinnati Zoo by June 13. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums strongly supported this action as in the best interests of the animal.

“Cincinnati Zoo has worked with expert after expert to assure the right thing for Ndume, and that right thing is to return Ndume to the companionship of the large social groups of gorillas of all ages at the zoo,” said Dan Ashe, President and CEO of AZA. “We applaud Cincinnati’s continued commitment to advocating for his transfer. Their combination of passion for conserving wild gorillas and compassionate care for individual animals, like Ndume, perfectly exemplifies a modern, accredited zoo.”

Ndume, loaned from the AZA-accredited Cincinnati Zoo, served as a companion for Koko, the other gorilla at the Foundation, until Koko’s death in June 2018. Koko’s death isolated Ndume as the Foundation’s only remaining gorilla. Cincinnati Zoo, AZA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), and others have advocated for Ndume’s transfer back to Cincinnati Zoo where he may live with a gorilla troop in a state-of-the-art gorilla habitat.

### **About AZA**

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums in the United States and ten other countries. Look for the AZA accreditation logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. The AZA is a leader in saving species and your link to helping animals all over the world. To learn more, visit [www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org).

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