

PAWS Sanctuary Opposes Six Flags Discovery Kingdom White Tiger Cub Display and Conservation Claims

Performing Animal Welfare Society opposes display of white tigers as outdated, inhumane, and inconsistent with conservation standards.

SAN ANDREAS, CA, UNITED STATES, March 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), which operates a captive wildlife sanctuary in Northern California, today sent a letter to Six Flags Discovery Kingdom opposing the amusement park's acquisition of two white tiger cubs and its promotion of unfounded conservation claims.

"The breeding and display of white tigers is an outdated practice that does not support conservation," said Ed Stewart, PAWS co-founder and president of the board of directors. "Modern zoological organizations worldwide have rejected the intentional

breeding of white tigers as inconsistent with contemporary animal welfare and conservation standards." The Association of Zoos and Aquariums banned the practice in 2011.

White tigers are Bengal tigers with a recessive gene for coat color. Producing them requires intensive inbreeding, a practice strongly associated with genetic abnormalities and serious health problems. As a result, white tigers commonly suffer from congenital defects, including cleft palates, strabismus, and spinal abnormalities, as well as compromised immune systems, neurological disorders, and shortened lifespans. "These outcomes are not rare," said Stewart. "They are predictable consequences of breeding for a novelty trait."

"White tigers are not a distinct subspecies and therefore have no conservation purpose," said Catherine Doyle, director of science, research and public policy. "Displaying animals that do not represent the normal characteristics of the species creates a confused education message."

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PAWS is urging Six Flags Discovery Kingdom to stop presenting white tigers as a conservation asset and to do the right thing for the cubs. "Ideally, these cubs should be retired to a facility where they will not be bred or used for entertainment and can live out their lives in an environment that prioritizes their welfare," said Doyle.

The continued breeding and display of white tigers places a burden on sanctuaries like PAWS, which currently cares for one white tiger seized by the federal government from a roadside zoo. Sanctuaries across the country are often left to provide lifelong care for animals with complex medical needs associated with inbreeding.

"The breeding and display of white tigers perpetuates a cycle of harm for the sake of appearance," said Stewart. "It's time to end this contemptible practice."

A copy of the letter to Six Flags is available upon request.

For more information about PAWS, visit www.PAWSweb.org

About the Performing Animal Welfare Society

Founded in 1984, the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) provides lifetime care for captive wild animals rescued or retired from circuses, zoos, and the exotic animal trade. PAWS' 2,300-acre sanctuary located in San Andreas, California, is home to elephants, bears, big cats, monkeys, and others. PAWS is accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and a founding member of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance.

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