



## Inspection Report

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Chestatee Wildlife Preserve Inc.  
469 Old Dahlonega Hwy  
Dahlonega, GA 30533

Customer ID: **3325**

Certificate: **57-C-0325**

Site: 001

CHESTATEE WILDLIFE  
PRESERVE

Type: ROUTINE INSPECTION

Date: 24-JAN-2023

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### 2.40(a)(1)

#### **Attending veterinarian and adequate veterinary care (dealers and exhibitors).**

A written program of veterinary care was not available for review, therefore employment of an attending veterinarian under formal arrangement could not be verified at the time of inspection. A written program of veterinary care is needed to establish an adequate standard of veterinary care for the animals on hand. The facility's formal arrangement with the attending veterinarian must include a written program of veterinary care and regularly scheduled visits to the premises. To be corrected by March 1, 2023.

### 2.40(b)(3)

#### **Repeat**

#### **Attending veterinarian and adequate veterinary care (dealers and exhibitors).**

The following animals had veterinary care issues and/or communication with the attending veterinarian was lacking or inadequate:

- A white female tiger named "Georgia" had a pink hairless growth on her lower right eye lid. The growth was approximately less than ¼ the width of her lower lid, protruding out away from her eye. The licensee had never noticed it before, and the attending veterinarian had not been notified.
- A singly housed male lemur was deemed overweight by the attending veterinarian who instructed the previous animal caretaker to decrease the amount fed of his diet by 25 percent. The current employees were not aware of these

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**Prepared By:** LISA EKMAN

USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

**Date:**

03-FEB-2023

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instructions which were not being implemented at the time of inspection.

- A prairie dog was also noted to be overweight and, per one of the facility representatives, had been slowing down in her activity level as well. Neither of these concerns were communicated to the attending veterinarian.

Failure to identify medical conditions by daily observations as well as the lack of direct and timely communication between the facility and the attending veterinarian have led to treatment delays which may negatively impact the health and well-being of the animals. Daily observation of all animals is necessary to assess their health and well-being. If any problems of animal health, behavior and well-being are noted, they must be conveyed to the attending veterinarian in a timely and accurate manner to allow for appropriate diagnosis and treatment.

### 2.131(c)(1) Critical

#### Handling of animals.

The following interactions occurred, and the general public and/or the animals were either harmed, or could have been:

- Sloth encounters occurred where patrons were allowed to walk into the enclosure and pet the sloths without an attendant directly controlling or being within close proximity. The attendant was on the other side of the enclosure, often taking a picture of the interaction. The sloth was located in the corner or floor of the enclosure, back hunched, facing the wall, and folding in on himself with his head tucked in on his chest. This demeanor may indicate a lack of interest or distress from the interaction. With this set up, the sloth was unable to escape the interaction if he so desired.
- An interaction with tigers occurred where patrons were allowed in an area approximately 3-4 feet wide located between an electrified fence and a secondary 10-foot chain link fence with a 2-foot kick in. The electric fence, the only barrier between the patrons and the tigers, was approximately 2.5 feet tall made of 3 electrified wires about 1 foot apart. The tigers, being of similar height as the fence, could possibly jump over it or reach the patrons through the gaps between or below the wires. In addition, pictures of the interaction shows patrons with their backs to the tigers making it difficult for

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the patrons to monitor the tiger's behavior. The proximity to the tigers paired with an inadequate barrier made this an unsafe interaction.

- Two incidents of animals biting members of the public occurred when, on two separate occasions, a bison and a zebra were being fed by patrons without an attendant present. The bites occurred on fingers of the patrons drawing blood.

Because of inadequate barriers between animals and the public, injuries occurred to members of the public. With the current design of the tiger and sloth interactions, injuries could result as well as undue stress on the animals due to the proximity of the patrons and the lack of adequate barriers. Any animal must be handled so there is minimal risk of harm to the animal and to the public, with sufficient distance and/or barriers between the animal and the general viewing public to assure the safety of animals and the public during exhibition and/or encounters. To be corrected from this day forward.

### 2.131(d)(2)

#### Repeat

#### Handling of animals.

During inspection, along the main patron's pathway between the zebra enclosure and the bear enclosure, members of the public were seen interacting with and petting zebras. A readily identifiable employee was not present during these periods of public contact. Without an attendant present to monitor the interaction, the safety of the animals and the safety of the public cannot be assured. A responsible, knowledgeable, and readily identifiable employee or attendant must be present at all times during periods of public contact.

### 3.75(e)

#### Housing facilities, general.

In the kitchen where food for nonhuman primates is prepared, containers of disinfectant and detergent were found on the floor below the sink, not enclosed within a cabinet or behind doors. Without enclosed storage, there is insufficient means to prevent a chemical spill from potentially coming into contact with the animals' food. Such substances can be toxic or

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harmful if animals are exposed to them. Substances that are toxic to the nonhuman primates but that are required for normal husbandry practices must not be stored in food storage and preparation areas but may be stored in cabinets in the animal areas. To be corrected by March, 1, 2023.

### 3.125(a)

### Repeat

#### Facilities, general.

During inspection, some primary enclosures were found in need of repair while others were found to contain items that may be injurious to the animals within:

- The primary enclosure housing 3 tigers was made up of 2 fences:

- A first fence, approximately 2.5 feet tall, was made of 3 electrified wires about 10-12 inches apart, held together by about 3 feet tall cylindrical wooden poles evenly dispersed throughout the enclosure.

- A second fence was an approximately 10 feet tall black chain link fence with about a 2-foot kick-in made up of two electrified wires.

Some of the wooden poles of the first fence have scratch marks but, one in particular, near the start of the public walkway, had the most damage. The bottom quarter of the pole was, per the facility representative, chewed and scratched by a previously housed tiger all around the circumference, thinning it to almost half the diameter of the rest of the pole. The structural integrity and therefore function of such a pole may be compromised.

Due to some erosion, small gaps are forming below the black chain link fence, mainly in the area nearest the start of the public walkway. In addition, on the side of the enclosure nearest the facility entrance, there is a thicket of tall trees between the first and second fence. The trees are protruding over and across the black chain link fence. The holes and trees may provide the tigers sufficient means to escape by climbing over or digging beneath the fence.

- In the lemur enclosure, one of the elevated bamboo branches, spanning the width of the enclosure towards the front, was cracked throughout with larger gaps towards the center of the branch with a moderately caved in/flattened area

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towards the highest end of the branch. This branch is not structurally sound to support the weight of a lemur.

- In the enclosure housing 2 sloths, there was an exposed live electrical wire connected to a humidifier. Electrical wires may present a health risk to animals that may chew or pull on them.
- In the enclosure housing 2 zebras, there was a downed metal roof propped against a wooden fence and a wooden pole with an exposed nail, remnants of a collapsed shelter. In the same enclosure, near the hay bale, the bottom horizontal rail of the 3-rail wooden fence, was cut all the way through on one side, with the remaining post leaning against the ground, thus creating a wider gap in the fence.
- Furthermore, the enclosure containing 2 camels was undergoing extensive construction. There were large piles, about 5 feet high, of soil and rocks at the center and to the side of the enclosure, covering more than 50% of the enclosure. On the side of the enclosure furthest from the camel barn, there was a pile of metal cattle gates in one area and in another, remnants of a platform composed of propped up large wooden poles with many exposed nails. On the side closest to the barn, there were 2 parked tractors, some exposed and damaged wires, broken wooden pallets, as well as a pile of PVC pipes. In front of the entrance to the barn, there was a more than 7-foot drop-off creating a cliff, spanning the entire length of the large barn, that the camels had to go around in order to go in and out of their shelter. Set ups such as these, as well as maintaining such items within enclosures, could result in injury to the animals within.
- Small gaps are forming at the bottom of the fence of the hoofstock enclosure towards the far side of the facility. This enclosure is currently housing bison and cows, but previously also housed elk. Per a facility representative, coyotes have been seen within this enclosure and the facility believes that the coyotes chased the elk causing them to jump out of the enclosure. The representative explained that the elk were euthanized in order to prevent them from continuously getting out. Such an enclosure is not protecting or safely containing the animals within.

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Damaged primary enclosures as well as enclosures containing possibly injurious items, may negatively impact the health and comfort of the animals within. Primary enclosures must be structurally sound and maintained in good repair to protect the animals from injury and to safely contain the animals.

### 3.125(c)

#### Facilities, general.

During inspection, several food storage areas were in need of cleaning:

- o The flooring of one of the freezers in the kitchen, in contact with many bagged food items, was coated with a green sticky material. Some dried blood could also be seen coating the bottom of the freezer and there was a large number of dead flies/insects on the surface.
- o A large portion of the kitchen ceiling, and some areas on the walls, were spotted with brownish/yellow sticky material. In some areas along the walls, larger smears of brownish/yellow sticky material could be seen.
- o In the large walk-in freezer, boxes of meat are stacked haphazardly. Some boxes are open, exposing the meat inside, while others have chunks of bloody ice attached to it. Many deer carcasses are stacked at the back of the freezer. A large amount of deer hair and dirt can be seen covering many containers and some of the exposed meat. On the floor, there is a large amount of spilled corn and other food items such as pieces of cake.

Dirty food storage amenities may allow for food contamination and may attract vermin. Supplies of food and bedding shall be stored in facilities which adequately protect such supplies against deterioration, molding, or contamination by vermin.

To be corrected by 02/27/2023.

### 3.127(d)

#### Repeat

#### Facilities, outdoor.

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During inspection, the following issues associated with perimeter fence for animals housed outdoors were identified:

- Three separate enclosures, one housing 3 tigers, the second 2 wolves and the third 2 juvenile bears, were not surrounded by a continuous 8-foot perimeter fence. In the case of the tiger and wolf enclosures, the facility had two fences in place; the first made up of electrified wire while the second was a black chain link fence. However, the first fence in both instances were not sufficient to truly contain the animals as a primary enclosure.

- The first fence in the wolf enclosure was made up of a single electrified wire, approximately 2 to 3 feet from the ground depending on the location. The wire was held up by approximately 4 feet tall thin plastic poles evenly dispersed throughout the enclosure which were about 2 feet away from the second black chain link fence. The first fence alone cannot contain the wolves who could jump above or crawl below it and therefore is not a sufficient primary enclosure.

- The first fence in the tiger enclosure, approximately 2.5 feet tall, was made of 3 electrified wires held together by about 3 feet tall wooden cylindrical poles evenly dispersed throughout the enclosure. The first fence was at least 3 feet away from the second black chain link fence. The first fence was about the same height or even slightly shorter than the tigers contained within. This fence therefore is not a sufficient primary containment for the tigers that could jump above it.

In these two enclosures, the two fences together make up the primary enclosure, and there is no perimeter fence surrounding them.

- Furthermore, beneath the gate that is part of the non-human primate perimeter fence, as well as beneath the gate of the adult bears' perimeter fence, there is an approximately 1.5-foot gap which could allow animal passage.

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The lack of an adequate perimeter fence presents a safety risk to the animals within the facility in that there isn't an adequate secondary containment system to hold animals that may escape their primary enclosures or a sufficient barrier to keep animals and unauthorized persons out. The facility must ensure that the above listed animals being housed outdoors are enclosed by a perimeter fence, 8-feet tall for dangerous animals and 6-feet tall for the non-human primates or shall obtain a variance from the regional office. The perimeter fence must be effective, continuous, and at least 3 feet in distance from the primary enclosures.

### 3.129(a)

#### Feeding.

During inspection, a thawed beef chuck roast was found in the fridge with an expiration date of 08/23/20 which a facility representative explained would be used to provide medication to the tiger. The piece of meat was generally pale/dull brown in color with a large yellowing section on the side. In fact, a large amount, about 50%, of the meat containers in the walk-in freezer had a 2019 expiration date, 4 years past due. The facility representative explained that no guidance had been sought with the attending veterinarian for how long past expiration frozen meat can be used to feed the animals and they had intended to feed this meat. In addition, many of the canned vegetables on the shelf were expired, some since 2019, and were mixed in with in-date canned items. The facility is not taking into account the expiration date of food items being given to the animals and the attending veterinarian has not been consulted on the topic. Expired food items may be unwholesome, unpalatable, and lacking in important vitamins/nutrients the animals need. Feeding such items may negatively impact animal's health and overall well-being. The facility must ensure the food given to the animals is wholesome, palatable, and free from contamination and of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to maintain all animals in good health. To be corrected by 02/13/2023.

This inspection and exit interview were conducted with facility representatives.

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USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

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## Inspection Report

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Additional Inspectors:

STEPHANIE MAYARD, VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICER

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### Species Inspected

Cust No	Cert No	Site	Site Name	Inspection
3325	57-C-0325	001	CHESTATEE WILDLIFE PRESERVE	24-JAN-2023

Count	Scientific Name	Common Name
000001	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>	RHESUS MACAQUE
000001	<i>Macaca radiata</i>	BONNET MACAQUE
000003	<i>Canis lupus</i>	GRAY WOLF / GREY WOLF / TIMBER WOLF
000003	<i>Panthera tigris</i>	TIGER
000007	<i>Equus quagga</i>	BURCHELL'S / GRANT'S / CHAPMAN'S / PLAINS ZEBRA
000004	<i>Bison bison</i>	AMERICAN BISON
000006	<i>Ursus americanus</i>	NORTH AMERICAN BLACK BEAR
000001	<i>Papio anubis</i>	OLIVE BABOON
000001	<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	GRIZZLY BEAR
000004	<i>Lemur catta</i>	RING-TAILED LEMUR
000001	<i>Atelerix albiventris</i>	FOUR-TOED HEDGEHOG (MOST COMMON PET HEDGEHOG)
000008	<i>Bos taurus</i>	CATTLE / COW / OX / WATUSI
000001	<i>Mustela putorius furo</i>	DOMESTIC FERRET
000001	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	BLACK-TAILED PRAIRIE DOG
000002	<i>Camelus bactrianus</i>	BACTRIAN CAMEL
000002	<i>Choloepus didactylus</i>	LINNAEUS'S TWO-TOED SLOTH
000001	<i>Osphranter rufus</i>	RED KANGAROO
000047	<b>Total</b>	



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