

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE



**OFFICIAL WARNING**  
**VIOLATION OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

CASE NUMBER:  
FL11076-AC

VIOLATOR:  
Stearns Zoological Rescue and  
Rehabilitation  
dba, Dade City Wild Things

ADDRESS (Street, City, State, ZIP Code):  
37245 Meridian Avenue  
Dade City, FL 33525

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has evidence that on or about the date(s) listed below, you or your organization committed the following violation(s) of Federal Regulations:

**Date of Violation: May 4, 2010**

**9 C.F.R. § 3.127(d) Facilities, Outdoor. Perimeter Fence.**

Respondent failed to enclose outdoor housing facilities with a perimeter fence that was of sufficient height to keep animals and unauthorized persons out. In one section, overhanging vines pulled down the barbed wire section at the top of the perimeter fence, making the fence height less than 8 ft.

**Date of Violation: September 21, 2010**

**9 C.F.R. § 2.40(b)(2) Attending Veterinarian and Adequate Veterinarian Care.**

Respondent failed to provide veterinary care for a black leopard with a bilateral swelling of its eyelid. Respondent failed to ensure that canids received the prescribed heartworm prevention medication required by the attending veterinarian.

**Date of Violation: September 21, 2010**

**9 C.F.R. § 3.125(a) Facilities, General.**

Respondent failed to ensure that the tiger's resting surface was free of splintered, worn wood, and that the surface was structurally sound. This resting surface needed to be repaired or replaced to protect animals from injury.

**Date of Violation: September 21, 2010**

**9 C.F.R. § 3.127(c) Facilities, General.**

Respondent failed to provide a suitable method to rapidly eliminate excess water. Respondent failed to ensure that a method of drainage was used so the tiger enclosures were not muddy and did not have standing water. Water must rapidly drain to eliminate water and keep animals dry and safe.

**Date of Violation: May 17, 2011**

**9 C.F.R. § 3.75(a) Housing Facilities, General**

Respondent failed to ensure that housing facilities for nonhuman primates were structurally sound, contained the animals enclosed, and protected them from injury. On this date of inspection, a welded pole that held the roofing became detached within the macaque's enclosure, and had an exposed metal end with sharp edges that could harm the animals.

**Date of Violation: September 14, 2011**

**9 C.F.R. § 2.131(b)(1) Handling of Animals.**

Respondent failed to handle a tiger cub as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that did not cause trauma, behavioral stress, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort. During a pool training exercise, Respondent introduced a tiger cub to the water when the animal was reluctant, vocalizing and moving toward the edge of the pool to exit, but the handler kept the animal in the pool.

**Date of Violation: February 23, 2012**

**9 C.F.R. § 3.125(a) Facilities, General.**

Respondent failed to maintain enclosures that were free of rust and structurally sound. The rusted tube at the bottom of the serval enclosure needed to be repaired or replaced to be kept in good repair.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) created federal regulations to ensure the welfare of animals and help prevent the spread of animal and plant pests and diseases. Since violations of the regulations can have serious and costly impacts that are detrimental to the public interest, APHIS is providing you with an Official Warning for the violation(s) described above. Any further violation of these federal regulations may result in the assessment of a civil penalty, criminal prosecution, or other sanctions. If you have any questions concerning this Official Warning or violation(s), please contact the APHIS official listed in this notice.

**APHIS OFFICIAL (Name):**  
Robert J. Huttenlocker

**OFFICE ADDRESS:**  
4700 River Road, Unit 85  
Riverdale, MD 20737

**APHIS OFFICIAL (Title):**  
Director, Investigative and Enforcement Services

**DATE ISSUED:** 5/31/2012  
**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** (301) 851-2948