

Philadelphia Zoo: Big Cat Falls

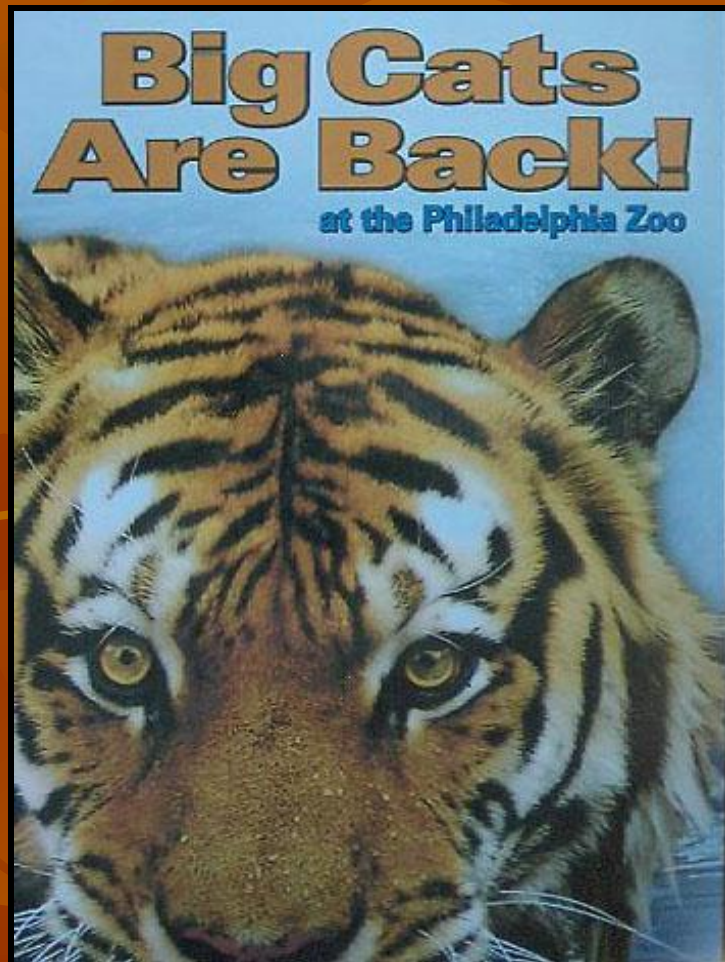


Former Facility



- Built in 1949
- Both interior and exterior animal bedrooms were on exhibit to guests
- Two yards with limited land mass and large water moats, available to lions and tigers only
- All other cats housed inside, with access to small barred cages outside
- No secondary containment provision

Big Cat Falls



Facts and Figures

- Length of construction was 19 months, opening date 25 May 2006
- Total cost was 21 million dollars
- Six different cat species were chosen for exhibit, including: African lions, Amur tigers, Amur leopards, Snow leopards, Jaguar and Puma
- There are 5 separate yards, with a total of 5 connecting tunnels
- Each exhibit yard was designed around one primary cat species; designs including species or region specific plantings, rock and water features.
- As a “green” opportunity, the original spacious and keeper friendly building was maintained as the animal holding facility
- There are graphics interpreting big cats, our conservation partners and the rotation system
- The area is divided into two sections with two full time keepers regularly assigned



Transfer tunnel description

- All five yards are connected in a circle by the transfer tunnels
- Only one yard requires cats to use a tunnel daily to gain access
- Four of the five tunnels are outdoors, the fifth is inside
- All tunnels are constructed of mesh with open slatted flooring
- None of the outdoor tunnels are covered or have solid flooring
- Doors within the tunnels are manual, operated from the ground

Elevated Tunnels: Public View





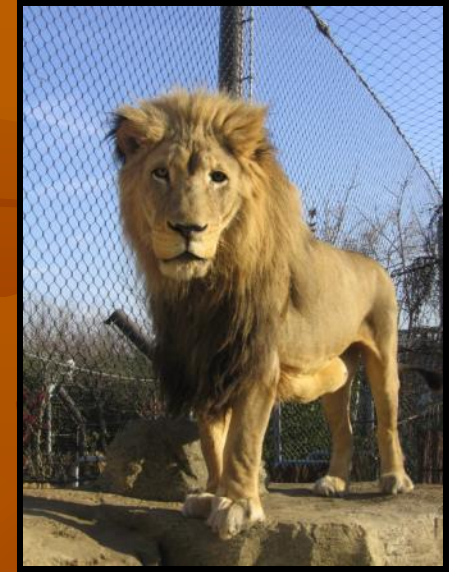
Off Exhibit Tunnels



Cats on the Move Jaguar yard



Leopard Yard



Safety First



- Simple signage
- Clear communication
- Defined area boundaries



Benefits of a Rotation System

- Quality animal/keeper enrichment
- Increased animal awareness
- Broadened guest experience
- Educational opportunities

Challenges

- Safety
- Clear communication between team members
- Weather conditions, outdoor equipment, tunnel maintenance
- Rotation systems where animals cross paths
- Animals that can not or will not shift, or that shift slowly
- Meeting institutional expectations

Additional Features: the "50 Cent Cure"



Feeding Panels



Come and see us!

