



STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

“Congratulations to the Project Chimps team and its partners on this historic achievement for chimpanzees. I am 100% in support, and am so glad this dream is coming true.”

Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE, Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute & UN Messenger of Peace

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INTRODUCTION

Project Chimps is the newest chimpanzee sanctuary in the United States and was founded to provide lifelong exemplary care to more than 200 former research chimpanzees at its sanctuary on 236 acres of forested land in the Blue Ridge Mountains of north Georgia.

Project Chimps has an agreement with the medical research facility that has the largest population of privately-owned chimpanzees in the world, which allows us to bring the lab's chimpanzees to permanent sanctuary.

We are now in the process of transferring these intelligent and sentient beings from the lab to their new homes, where they will spend the remainder of their lives.

Mission

To provide lifelong exemplary care for chimpanzees retired from research.

Vision

All chimpanzees will thrive and experience opportunities to make their own decisions on how they live, up until the day they sunset.

Project Chimps' 2019 Strategic Plan is a road map for achieving the mission and vision of the organization over five years. As we look to the future with vision and realism, we will respect our past, be of service in the present, and assume responsibility for the future.

Before we can chart a course forward, we must first take stock of where we've been...

The chimpanzees make a 12-hour journey from the lab in Louisiana to Project Chimps in the Blue Ridge Mountains of north Georgia. Stirlene, right, enjoys eating nuts outdoors in the forest.



OUR PROGRESS

Finding their Forever Home

The Humane Society of the United States (the HSUS) led the fight to end medical research on chimpanzees, alongside many other leaders and supporters in the chimpanzee sanctuary community, including Project Chimps founder, board chair and noted animal law attorney Bruce Wagman.

The HSUS then became a founding financial supporter of Project Chimps in October 2015, providing the capital needed to purchase a 236-acre property in the Blue Ridge Mountains of north Georgia, at below appraised value and market price. This property was originally developed as a gorilla sanctuary and had some of the needed infrastructure in place to repurpose immediately for chimpanzee housing.

Establishing a Foundation for the Future

Project Chimps founding board member Marsha Perelman (also a member of the Board of the HSUS) and additional Project Chimps founding board members Adrienne and Billie Joe Armstrong and Elizabeth Bradham, along with other notable donors such as Rachael Ray, Kat Von D and Judy Greer, also made key contributions toward the project's initial capital needs.



Aerial view of the first habitat at Project Chimps. Phase One includes a 6-acre outdoor habitat surrounded by five chimpanzee villas.

Building the Organization

In 2016, Project Chimps began hiring necessary staff for chimpanzee care and sanctuary operations, as well as development staff, to ensure a strong funding base. We launched the projectchimps.org website in May 2016, developed online fundraising platforms, and established a social media presence, all of which helped to increase awareness of and support for the sanctuary.

These early efforts were critical to sustaining the care of chimpanzees, each of whom can live for 50 years or more in a sanctuary environment.

Earning Key Accreditations

Project Chimps is an accredited charity by the Better Business Bureau and has achieved Guidestar Platinum status for transparency in disclosing financial metrics, progress and results. In February 2018, the sanctuary earned two key accreditations. The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), the only globally-recognized organization providing standards for identifying legitimate animal sanctuaries, awarded Accredited status to Project Chimps. GFAS certification allowed Project Chimps to be granted full member status in the North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance, a coalition of primate sanctuaries that care for more than 700 primates retired from the entertainment, biomedical research, and exotic pet industries.

Building Relationships to Advance our Mission

In 2017, Project Chimps welcomed a new executive director who, together with philanthropy staff, created a Case for Support for long-term funding needs. They expanded founding relationships and built new partnerships to support all lines of revenue. In less than one year, they successfully doubled sanctuary revenues. Today, our supporters come from all over the world to support our mission of providing exemplary care to chimpanzees.

Our new leadership also increased the sanctuary's fledgling volunteer program by more than 400 percent. By the end of 2018, more than 150 active volunteers had enlisted to support chimpanzee care, maintenance, and operations. Volunteer service actively offsets budget costs and supports fundraising programs, such as special events. Project Chimps has developed an active program of community outreach and education including open houses, presentations, and tours with school groups to strengthen community relationships.

2014

Project Chimps was formed in anticipation of the end of medical research on chimpanzees. Chimps who lived in private research institutions and who were not part of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) federally-funded chimp program would have nowhere to go. To avert that crisis, our founders negotiated an unprecedented agreement to transfer more than 220 chimps from the New Iberia Research Center (NIRC), the research facility with the largest population of privately-owned research chimpanzees in the nation.

2015

A landmark decision by the federal government marked the effective end of unrestricted medical research on chimpanzees in the United States. With the support of The HSUS, Project Chimps founders purchased a former gorilla sanctuary in north Georgia and began construction on Phase 1 to upgrade the existing facilities consisting of a 6-acre habitat and five chimpanzee "villas."

2016

Project Chimps successfully transferred the first group of chimpanzees – nine females – from NIRC in Louisiana to their forever home in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Construction continued on Phase 1.

2017

Construction continued on Phase 1. Thirty-one chimpanzees were in residence at Project Chimps by year end.

2018

We completed the 6-acre Peachtree Habitat and, in January, the chimpanzees explored the forest for the first time. Our team accelerated construction of the large-group villa for 40 additional chimpanzees with completion targeted in early 2019. Fifty-nine chimpanzees now had a permanent home at Project Chimps.



LOOKING FORWARD

Building on the substantial achievements in our first five years, our board of directors and leadership staff crafted the 2019 Strategic Plan to define Project Chimps' goals for the next five years.

Together, we identified three key focus areas:

Building an environment for a thriving, fission-fusion society of chimpanzees.

Ensuring Project Chimps' long-term financial sustainability.

Creating a culture of excellence for staff and volunteers.

The vision in this Strategic Plan is a shared one. We combined the expertise of our board members, staff, volunteers and founding supporters, engaging the members of Project Chimps' 13 standing committees to assist with the fast-paced evolution envisioned by our leaders. Each committee provided input on the Strategic Plan and how their team could support the organization's rapidly-evolving goals.

Together, we will implement this plan to realize our mission of providing lifelong, exemplary care to chimpanzees retired from research.



Kivuli, left, is currently the youngest male chimpanzee at Project Chimps. He is learning how to forage outdoors, as is Jabari, right.



2019 STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2019 Strategic Plan is organized around our focus and commitment to the following goals:

Fission-Fusion Society

We will create a physical environment and social structure that will enable former research chimpanzees to choose where, how, and with whom to spend their time, while promoting the highest quality of life.

Financial Sustainability

We will ensure the organization's long-term financial sustainability through progressive, revenue generating programs and controlled expenditures to complete the capital campaign and relocate the remaining chimpanzees from the New Iberia Research Center.

Culture of Excellence

We will develop a unified approach to build a culture of excellence and sustain a passionate, high-performing team.

Identical twins Charisse and Buttercup arrived in sanctuary at age 11. It took Buttercup nine months to feel comfortable going outdoors with her sister.



FISSION-FUSION SOCIETY

We will create a physical environment and social structure that will enable former research chimpanzees to choose where, how, and with whom to spend their time, while promoting the highest quality of life.

Caring for former research chimpanzees is our greatest responsibility.

These amazing, sentient beings inspire us to create a physical environment and care program that will allow them to be their true selves. At Project Chimps, we will create a network of interconnected outdoor habitats and cross-campus structures that facilitate habitat time-sharing among different social groups. This 25-acre network will provide the chimpanzees with dynamic opportunities to travel and explore, as their cousins do in the wild.

We will create a new and innovative model for captive chimpanzee care and evaluate the well-being impact of the approach. At the same time, we will work to exceed and drive best practices in veterinary care, nutrition and enrichment.

Every day, former research chimpanzees will be provided with choices that increase their autonomy, expand their social groups, and give them control over their physical environment.

Harley has the choice of whether to forage, climb, explore or nap in what is the first of four planned outdoor habitats at Project Chimps. At right, she's joined by group mate Almasi.

KEY INITIATIVES

Construct additional habitats with unique features and interconnecting structures that promote autonomy and travel.

Streamline the introduction process and encourage conspecific engagement by increasing staff skills in behavioral management and chimpanzee group formation.

Relocate all remaining chimpanzees from the New Iberia Research Center to the sanctuary.

Measure and monitor the well-being of the chimpanzees with a robust Quality of Life (QOL) assessment system.





FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We will ensure the organization's long-term financial sustainability through progressive, revenue generating programs and controlled expenditures to complete the capital campaign and relocate the remaining chimpanzees from the New Iberia Research Center.

Project Chimps will thrive and achieve its strategic priorities through strong leadership and a culture of financial discipline.

Over the past three fiscal years, Project Chimps has met or exceeded its annual operational budget of nearly \$2 million from private support. With additional funding from the HSUS, Project Chimps has been able to continue to increase its financial commitment to upgrading our physical infrastructure for the chimpanzees at the same time.

Our financial strategies are designed to drive continued operating surpluses. Those surpluses will be achieved through earned-revenue strategies and disciplined management of baseline expenses.

This mirrors general trends in the expectations of the donor community to provide respite to all of these privately-owned research chimps as quickly as possible.

We also will continue to re-invest in the Strategic Plan initiatives that increase mission effectiveness and achieve operating efficiencies.

KEY INITIATIVES

Launch and complete the capital campaign for Phase 2, which includes three habitats for 150 chimpanzees.

Enhance our current leadership giving program, including execution of a comprehensive planned giving portfolio.

Integrate programs that utilize the areas of the property not designated for chimpanzee care.

Motivate key audiences to increase financial support for Project Chimps through compelling stories distributed across a broad range of channels.

Create an organizational culture of fiscal responsibility.

As a sanctuary, we strive to limit human interaction with the chimpanzees. Guests have the opportunity to observe the chimpanzees in the habitat as part of our bi-annual Discovery Days open house.



CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

We will develop a unified approach to build a culture of excellence and sustain a passionate, high-performing team.

Success in realizing Project Chimps' innovative and ambitious aspirations will require a results-oriented culture dedicated to performance excellence. We are committed to fostering a work environment that embraces diversity and inclusion in a unified approach to delivering quality care to the chimpanzees, our volunteers, and one another.

We will accomplish this by developing practices and systems that encourage engaging and inspiring leadership, accountability, a passion for service, and creativity. We will continually strive to achieve outcomes in a collaborative and organized manner, allowing us to grow and perform at the highest level.

We will focus on the development and implementation of effective workforce planning processes, techniques and tools. Supported by these process improvements, we will build and sustain a capable, diverse, well-trained, forward-looking, and adaptable workforce; and enhance retention of our most valued employees and volunteers.

Inspired by our cultural excellence achievements, the community – both regionally and globally – will continue to embrace and support our mission.

Our volunteers are the backbone of the sanctuary, allowing us to operate with a limited staff focused principally on chimpanzee care and welfare.

KEY INITIATIVES

Cultivate an organization-wide philosophy that supports mission and business goals.

Expand organizational capacity through capital investments and strategic volunteer engagement.

Maintain positive awareness of Project Chimps within the local community to support sanctuary operations.

Raise our institutional profile and leadership position within the sanctuary community.

Elevate the sanctuary's institutional support of global chimpanzee conservation.



CAPITAL EXPANSION

2019

- Habitat A
- Glamping Area
- RV Site
- Project Harvest
- Hiking Trails



2020

- Habitat B
- Villa A
- Visitor Center
- Education Garden
- Staff Parking
- Interconnecting bridges from Habitat A to Peachtree





2021

- Habitat C
- Villa B
- Ropes Course
- Overlook Gazebo
- Interconnecting bridges from Habitat A to Habitat B and from Habitat B to Peachtree



2022

- Villa C
- Interconnecting bridges from Habitat B to Habitat C and from Habitat C to Peachtree



FIVE-YEAR OUTCOMES

2019

Successful relocation of an additional 30 chimpanzees, bringing the population to 90. Capital campaign launched to fund the three-part Phase 2 expansion including areas A, B and C. Revenue generating programs started to provide the foundation for financial sustainability. Harvestable gardens planted to offset long-term food expenses.

2020

Completion of Habitat and Villa A construction and relocation of an additional 30 chimpanzees, bringing the population to 120. Revenue generating programs fully in place to provide financial sustainability and balance increased expenses.

2021

Completion of Habitat and Villa B construction and relocation of an additional 30 chimpanzees, bringing the population to 150. New orchards begin to produce fruit and nuts to offset food expenses.

2022

Completion of Habitat and Villa C construction and relocation of an additional 30 chimpanzees, bringing the population to 180.

2023

Integration of existing groups and socialization, allowing us to relocate the remaining chimpanzees at NIRC, resulting in a total population of 200+ chimpanzees.

2024

Phase 2 reaches maximum population capacity. Staff and volunteer programs filled to meet the needs of this population. Sufficient revenue generated to offset the costs of this population. Garden growing foods to offset much of the costs to feed this population. All strategic goals met and next Strategic Plan is written.

Many factors will affect the success of the strategies and goals outlined in this plan. Some of them, such as the overall economic climate are out of the control of the organization. What can be controlled is the commitment of those who believe in the mission of Project Chimps.

For this plan to have any real significance in the health and success of the organization, the officers, staff, and volunteers must dedicate themselves to carrying out its strategies. They must also be willing to regularly review its contents, measure progress, and determine whether aspects of the plan remain relevant to the organization.

This Strategic Plan was developed with great hope and anticipation. It is only one piece of the many characteristics of a healthy, nonprofit organization. It is an indication of the desire of individuals in the Project Chimps community to provide lifelong, exemplary care to former research chimpanzees.

We will achieve the goals of this Strategic Plan because...

...it's their time to live.

Hercules, along with his former research-mate Leo, is thriving at Project Chimps. He spends afternoons watching over the younger members of his group outdoors.

IT'S THEIR TIME TO LIVE



Laticia is one of the alpha females in the sanctuary and was the first chimpanzee to climb a tree at Project Chimps.

Follow her story and those of the other chimps by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and Instagram. You can also subscribe to our newsletter and our online blog at projectchimps.org.



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Chimp photos by Crystal Alba