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## NEWS RELEASE

555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas 79601  
[www.abilenetx.com](http://www.abilenetx.com)

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### MEDIA CONTACTS:

Bill Baker, Abilene Zoo Director  
Ph: 676-6590 E-mail: [bill.baker@abilenetx.com](mailto:bill.baker@abilenetx.com)  
OR Lenka Wright, Communications & Media Relations Manager  
Ph: 325-676-6677 Fax: 325-676-6229  
Cell: 325-660-6429 E-mail: [lenka.wright@abilenetx.com](mailto:lenka.wright@abilenetx.com)

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## Record attendance at the Abilene Zoo

ABILENE, Texas – More people than ever before are visiting the Abilene Zoo with its 500 animals representing over 200 species. Zoo officials report 152,693 people visited the zoo in 2007, an incredible 25% increase from the year before. Zoo Director Bill Baker credits the record attendance numbers with the zoo's expansion efforts and facility upgrades which are helping fulfill the zoo's 10-year master plan.

Baker remarked, "We are thrilled that more people are discovering this great family attraction and making repeat visits. A visit to the zoo is truly an adventure where you can see animals from far-off lands and make long-lasting memories. We're continuing to expand our animal exhibits so there are even more reasons to stop by periodically during the year."

2007's attendance numbers are unprecedented with an increase of 31,021 visitors from the year before. The zoo had 121,672 visitors in 2006, 119,264 visitors in 2005, 114,119 visitors in 2004 and 117,900 visitors in 2003.

The year 2007 brought the addition of the Adventure Center, a 12,000 square foot complex featuring education classrooms, administrative offices, an entrance gate, a gift shop and gathering plaza along. The Creepy Crawler Center, which opened in December, contains 49 exhibits and 80 species of reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

More exciting changes are on tap for the zoo in the near future. Upcoming projects include the renovation of the African elephant exhibit for the Black rhinos, one of which went on exhibit this week; the Wetlands Boardwalk which will provide guests with a great vantage point to view species that inhabit our wetlands; renovation of the giraffe enclosure; Elm Creek Backyard which will showcase animals, found along Elm Creek such as Raccoons, in 16 animal exhibits; and a Cougar exhibit featuring three cougar siblings. This summer will bring the opening of the Maned wolf and Ocelot exhibits.

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