

Cherokee Bear Zoo

1204 Tsalagi Rd., Cherokee, NC 28719

Cherokee Bear Zoo, which is owned by Barry and Collette Coggins, has failed to meet minimum federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has repeatedly cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for violations, including failing to provide animals with veterinary care, failing to provide them with adequate diets, failing to provide primates with adequate environmental enhancement, failing to provide animals with heat and bedding during below-freezing temperatures, and failing to maintain structurally sound enclosures. Cherokee Bear Zoo has also been cited and fined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for allowing workers to come into direct contact with bears. On December 3, 2013, two tribal elders in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians filed a federal lawsuit against the Cherokee Bear Zoo for consistent and repeated violations of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) relating to grizzly bears. The lawsuit alleges that the roadside zoo's practice of keeping grizzly bears in barren concrete pits is causing them psychological damage, violating the ESA's prohibition on harming or harassing endangered animals.

December 30, 2013: OSHA cited and fined Cherokee Bear Zoo for multiple previous violations, including allowing workers to come into direct contact with bears during feeding and cage-cleaning. The facility was ordered to pay a \$3,120 fine.

August 29, 2012: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to repair a broken enclosure housing a brown bear cub. The enclosure had loose wires that could injure the cub.

January 5, 2012: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide details regarding the vaccination protocol for tiger cubs in its program of veterinary care. The facility was also cited for a repeat violation for failing to provide a tiger cub with an adequate veterinarian-approved diet. The cub appeared small and underweight and had a dry and brittle coat.

August 16, 2011: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide an underweight bear with a sufficient amount of good quality food and failing to repair large openings in a fence, leading to the escape of three baby goats from an enclosure. The facility was also cited for failing to have a sufficient barrier around the enclosure housing a brown lemur to prevent public contact.

February 23, 2011: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to trim multiple rabbits' nails. One rabbit had long nails, and others had broken, curved, or splayed nails. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to give its program of veterinary care, enrichment plans for primates, and acquisition and disposition records to the inspectors for review.

November 2, 2010: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide a grizzly bear with veterinary care. The bear had patches of hair loss and short broken hairs over her back and rear limbs, and she was observed scratching at herself and rubbing against a log. The facility was also cited for housing three lemurs in an enclosure within reach of an electrical outlet and an electrical cord, which could potentially injure them if they tried to touch it.

June 3, 2010: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for repeat violations for failing to repair rotten wooden supports in the enclosure housing tigers and failing to repair cracked and chipped concrete in several enclosures. The facility was also cited for having excessive amounts of feces in the petting zoo area—causing some of the animals to have feces caked onto their coats—and improperly storing hay bales, which were found to be damp and with a moldy smell.

August 5, 2009: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to repair cracked concrete in an enclosure housing bears and failing to repair a broken fence surrounding the goats. The goats were able to climb through the fence and wander throughout the facility.

October 29, 2008: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide multiple primates with heat and two tigers with shelter and bedding during below-freezing temperatures.

May 10, 2007: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to notice or treat a female goat in the petting area who was extremely thin and appeared “unthrifty, [with] eyes half open, just lying around” and a second goat with hair loss and “what may be flaky skin.” The facility was also cited for a repeat violation for failing to provide nine primates with adequate enrichment.

November 1, 2006: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide two very thin 1-year-old tigers with veterinary care and failing to clean a goat

feeder that had old, moist hay and feces in it.

April 5, 2006: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a public barrier around two tiger cubs on display and failing to restrain the cubs properly. The facility was also cited for failing to provide nine primates with adequate environmental enhancement.

February 2, 2005: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a public barrier around the enclosure housing the brown lemur.

March 28, 2002: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to provide inspectors with its program of veterinary care and primate enhancement plan so that they could be inspected, giving water to a tiger in a receptacle that couldn't be cleaned, and failing to repair a fence surrounding the goats that had broken, exposed wire.

January 24, 2002: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a responsible adult present to accompany officials during an inspection.

March 22, 2001: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a responsible adult present to accompany officials during an inspection.

May 17, 2000: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for using a dirty receptacle to give water to raccoons.

August 18, 1999: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to store food in sealed containers, failing to maintain an enclosure that securely contained a juvenile lemur, failing to provide disposition records for review, and having two bags of food for primates with a "milling date of over 1 year."

November 6, 1998: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a veterinarian-approved diet for the groundhogs and goats, failing to drain a large area of deep mud in the enclosure housing the goats, failing to drain an area of standing water in the enclosure housing the tiger, and failing to repair several large cracks in the concrete floors of two enclosures.

October 23, 1997: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have the attending veterinarian approve its primate enhancement plan, failing to remove piles of scrap material and an overgrowth of weeds around the outdoor enclosures, failing to have a structurally sound perimeter fence, failing to include the goats and raccoons in its program of veterinary care, failing to have a schedule for veterinary visits in its program of veterinary care, failing to have complete acquisition information for the raccoons, and failing to have disposition records available for

multiple animals.

October 22, 1997: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a responsible adult present to accompany officials during an inspection.

April 12, 1996: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a perimeter fence of at least 8 feet behind the enclosures housing the lion and cougar, failing to clean old feces and food from the floor of the enclosure housing primates, failing to have the veterinarian approve its environmental enhancement plan, failing to remove old feces and soiled bedding from the enclosure housing the cougar, and failing to remove old, soiled, wet bedding from around the enclosure housing the lion.

September 8, 1995: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for failing to have a documented plan of environmental enhancement for the primates and failing to address the primates in its program of veterinary care.

January 11, 1995: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo for keeping too many juvenile bears in one den area to allow for adequate freedom of movement, allowing rainwater to soak food in outer enclosures, failing to drain standing water in a large den, and failing to clean a water receptacle that had a dirty film on the bottom and sides.

June 17, 1994: The USDA cited Cherokee Bear Zoo during a pre-license inspection for having an incomplete artificial shade structure, failing to have a new program of veterinary care written by the attending veterinarian, failing to remove scrap building materials from the area, failing to have artificial heating and cooling for the animals, failing to have proper ventilation, and failing to have a complete perimeter fence at the proper height.