

BLACK AND WHITE RHINO SSPs HOLD JOINT MEETING

The black and white rhino SSP meetings were held jointly in Pittsburgh on September 24, 1989. This was done to allow for the most complete dissemination of information to all those interested in rhinos, and to eliminate the need for duplicate presentations by the Rhino Research Coordinator.

At the African Rhino Workshop held in Cincinnati in 1986, it was decided that a researcher, working within an established research program, was needed to coordinate rhino research, and that the species coordinators for the black and white rhino SSP programs would organize the effort to establish such a position. Recently, a grant was received by the Cincinnati Zoo Center for Reproduction of Endangered Wildlife from the Institute of Museum Services for this position and Dr. Robert W. Godfrey was selected to coordinate the research involving all SSP rhinos.

Dr. Godfrey discussed the need for a coordinated effort in all areas of rhino research. He emphasized that as coordinator of the various projects, his role was to facilitate, not to regulate, research projects. However, he asked that all project proposals

be provided to the species coordinators and the rhino research coordinator to insure that research projects are carefully integrated into the SSP masterplans.

Dr. Eric Miller discussed a number of health concerns, information on which will be distributed to all institutions. He reiterated the need for insuring that investigators be provided with blood and other requested tissues as they become available.

From the Australasian SMP, Paul Garland and Dr. Robert Baker discussed plans for both white and black rhino programs. The participating zoological facilities in Australia and New Zealand are prepared to make a major commitment of resources to the African rhino species.

Finally, it was announced that the first issue of a new newsletter concerning all aspects of rhino conservation will soon be published and distributed. The mailing list includes all rhino holding institutions in North America and Australasia in addition to many other persons and organizations actively involved in rhino conservation.

WHITE RHINO SSP UPDATE

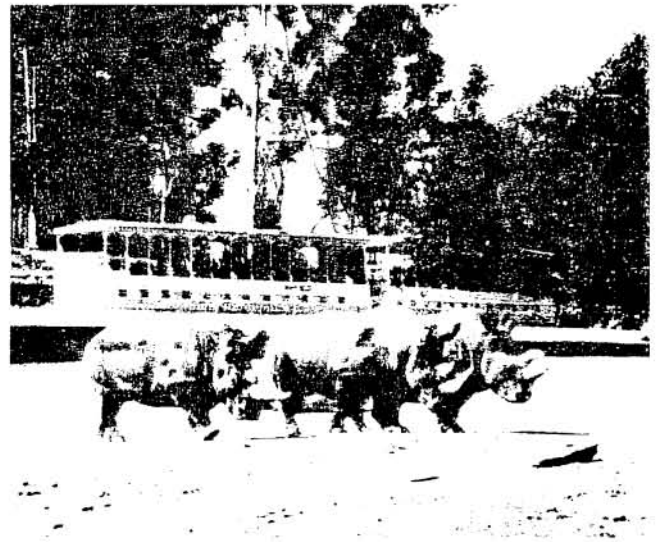
By Robert W. Reece

Larry Killmar announced that in November 1.2 northern white rhino will come to San Diego Wild Animal Park from Dvur Kralove, where the only group of captive northern white rhino exists. (The rhinos have since arrived - see adjacent photo.) These three animals, plus an additional male already at San Diego, will constitute the nucleus of a new captive herd. Drs. Ulysses Seal and David Jones, as well as the people from Dvur Kralove and San Diego, are to be commended for their roles in carrying out this cooperative arrangement.

The species coordinator reviewed the activities of the past 18-20 months, noting the particular emphasis placed on the translocation of animals. Of the 39 translocations recommended in the masterplan, 31 have been accomplished. Four others will be initiated after the three Tulsa animals are moved to South Africa. The remaining four recommended translocations have not been accomplished for a number of reasons and will be reevaluated. The cooperation among the institutions involved was the key to the success of the first phase of the masterplan, and everyone was thanked for their extraordinary efforts.

During 1988-89, there were 1.4 births and 2.4 deaths. Additionally, ten other animals were surplus from the population, resulting in a current SSP population of 58.77=135. However, the anticipated removal of the non-reproductive female #43 from White Oak, the shipment of four animals to Europe by San Diego and the transfer of four animals to the Australasian SMP, will reduce the population to 53.73=126.

It was noted that two of the major objectives of the masterplan were to reduce the population to approximately 100 animals and to attain a minimum of 35 effective founders. In order to achieve these goals, it will be necessary to give the reproduc-



Recent arrivals from Dvur Kralove will form a new breeding nucleus of northern white rhino at San Diego Wild Animal Park.. (Photo by Randy Rieches)

tion of potential founders the highest of priorities over the next few years, while at the same time continuing to emphasize the equalization of founder representation. A new set of institutional recommendations will include some of the unfulfilled translocation recommendations as well as specific guidelines for breeding animals at each institution.

All institutions anticipating exports are asked to notify the species coordinator when permit applications are being submitted. Since the permit office will contact the Chairman of the WCMC for recommendations, it will facilitate the processing of an application if the Chairman knows in advance that the export has been approved by the propagation group.