AZA Board of Directors Announces USFWS Director Dan Ashe As Organization’s Next President and CEO

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Board of Directors today announced the selection of current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Daniel M. Ashe as the next President and Chief Executive Officer of its 233-member organization. In January, Ashe will succeed Jim Maddy, who retired from AZA earlier this year.

Silver Spring, MD (PRWEB) August 19, 2016 -- The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Board of Directors today announced the selection of current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Daniel M. Ashe as the next President and Chief Executive Officer of its 233-member organization. In January, Ashe will succeed Jim Maddy, who retired from AZA earlier this year.

“Leading the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a great honor and privilege, and I look forward to the opportunity to help lead a community of organizations and professionals also known for scientific excellence and dedicated care for wildlife and the wild places where they live: AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums,” said Daniel M. Ashe.

Ashe was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the 16th U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director on June 30, 2011, and has successfully lead the agency and its thousands of employees during a period of great challenges. Following a 13-year career as a professional staff member of the former Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries in the U.S. House of Representatives, he has held positions of increasing responsibility at the Service, including Assistant Director for External Affairs, Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System, Science Advisor to the Director, and Deputy Director.

“The AZA Search Committee has worked to identify and meet with an impressive slate of national candidates. For over 20 years, Director Ashe has been working within and leading the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an important conservation partner of AZA, its members, and those committed to protecting the natural world. We are delighted he will be leading AZA as our next President and CEO,” said Vik Dewan, chair of the AZA Executive Search Committee and President and CEO of Philadelphia Zoo.

Dewan chaired an eight-member search committee of prominent zoo and aquarium leaders from around the country. The committee worked in close partnership with the national executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller, and considered more than 100 applications.

As AZA’s President and CEO, Ashe will manage the day-to-day operations of the Association, coordinating the work of its employees, committees and agents, as well as to conduct and promote all programs of the Association, under the general guidance of the AZA Board of Directors. He will lead AZA and its 233 accredited members in realizing their collective vision of a world in which, as a result of the hard work of AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums in species preservation, education and research, all people will respect, cherish and conserve wildlife and wild habitats.

Ashe will continue to fulfill his commitment to serve through the end of the current administration. In the interim, he is recused from participating personally and substantially in any particular matter that would have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of AZA.
“Hiring someone who understands that zoos and aquariums are centers of conservation was very important to us,” said Steve Burns, Chairman of the AZA Board of Directors and director of Zoo Boise. “His passion and dedication to wildlife are admirable and I know we all look forward to working with him.”

About AZA
Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, animal welfare, education, science, and recreation. AZA is the accrediting body for the top zoos and aquariums in the United States and seven other countries. Look for the AZA accreditation logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are supporting a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. Members of AZA are leaders in saving species and your link to helping animals all over the world. To learn more, visit www.aza.org.
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