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Press Release

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Asia Trail to Open at the National Zoo

Chantilly, VA – October 17, 2006 – The National Zoo is scheduled to open the new Asia Trail today, October 17, 2006. This project, which broke ground in April 2004, is the first to open during the 10-year renovation project currently taking place at the National Zoo, and the first of three planned phases that will highlight Asian animals at the park. The highly awaited Asia Trail spans nearly a third of a mile and makes up nearly a quarter of the Zoo's public exhibit area with new exhibits for giant pandas, sloth bears, clouded leopards, fishing cats, giant salamanders, red pandas, and small-clawed otters. WHGA's design for the Asia Trail included an additional indoor holding area for the pandas, a temperature controlled bamboo storage facility, an ADA accessible bridge linking the Asia Trail to the existing Wetlands/Bird House exhibit, and a redesigned pedestrian walkway from Olmsted Walk to the existing Panda Exhibit to accommodate the new trail.

This project has not only received a great deal of attention from the general public, but it has also received high recognition from local professional organizations. The Asia Trail was recently awarded a 2006 President's Award for Sustainable Design from the American Institute of Architects Washington Chapter. This award honors the project for adhering to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) requirements, and for a design that creates a healthier and more environmentally conscience habitat for it's occupants.

WHGA has provided surveying and civil engineering services for numerous infrastructure improvements taking place at the National Zoo. These improvements have included the Kids Farm Exhibit, renovation of the Mane Restaurant and adjacent Picnic Pavilion, the Tapir and Bongo Yards, the Australia Exhibit, the Duck Ponds, the Giant Pandas' House, and the Elephant House. WHGA has also provided ongoing utility mapping and modeling services in support of the Zoo's development of a comprehensive GIS spanning the entire park.

WHGA is a civil engineering, surveying, landscape architecture, land planning, site security consulting, and GIS firm serving both public and private sector clients. Established in 1976, WHGA has executed engineering studies and assessments, master planning, preliminary design, and final design concepts for thousands of construction plans. Headquartered in Chantilly, Virginia; WHGA branch offices are located in Winchester, Virginia; Leesburg, Virginia; Prince William, Virginia; and Charles Town, West Virginia.