



Contacts:

Kris Sherman: 253-404-3800; 253-226-6718 or kris.sherman@pdza.org

Whitney DalBalcon: 253-404-3637 or whitney.dalbalcon@pdza.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov.3, 2015

HELP OUT FOR HALF OFF: NORTHWEST TREK LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO AID THE HUNGRY

Visitors who bring two or more food items to the wildlife park between Nov. 6 and Nov. 29 will receive half off general admission, and they'll be making a donation to the non-profit Emergency Food Network at the same time

EATONVILLE, Wash. –Each visitor who brings two or more items of non-perishable food to Northwest Trek Wildlife Park during November will receive half off general admission. The special offer applies to adults and children.



All of the food donations collected at the wildlife park's Main Gate during this month of Thanksgiving will benefit the Emergency Food Network, a Pierce County-based nonprofit that serves more than 70 food banks, hot meal sites and shelters.

In 2014, the Emergency Food Network distributed 15.3 million pounds of food.

The need is great. Families and individuals made more than 1.4 million visits to food banks in Pierce County last year, Emergency Food Network statistics show.

"As we conclude the year in which Northwest Trek celebrated its 40th anniversary, we think it's fitting to give back to the community that has supported us for four decades," said Northwest Trek Deputy Director Alan Varsik.

"Help Out for Half Off does that in two ways," he added. "It gives visitors a great discount on admission and it provides much-needed donations of canned goods and other non-perishable items at a time of

year when food banks are stretched to meet the needs in the community.”

Emergency Food Network officials say the agency is experiencing a shortage of shelf-stable food items such as canned tuna, chicken and salmon; canned fruits and vegetables; peanut butter; pasta; low-sugar granola bars and cereal; and baby food.

Giving back to the community is a longstanding tradition at Northwest Trek. In the last four years, wildlife park staff members donated some 3,000 items of food and \$2,790 to the Eatonville Family Agency’s food bank.

Every visit to Northwest Trek comes with a narrated tram ride through the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area, which is home to American bison, Roosevelt elk, bighorn sheep, moose, deer and other animals. Sharp-eyed visitors might get a view of 4-month-old moose calf Willow and her mom Connie. Willow is the first moose born at the wildlife park in 15 years. And as a sweet surprise, she was born on Northwest Trek’s 40th birthday – July 17th.

In addition, visitors can walk forested pathways past natural exhibits inhabited by native Northwest animals such as a grizzly bear, two black bears, wolves, foxes, a cougar, Canada lynx, river otters, a beaver, fishers, owls and others.

Northwest Trek is open Fridays through Sundays during November, with additional special openings for Veterans Appreciation Days (Nov. 11-12), so Help Out for Half Off days are:

- Nov. 6, 7 and 8
- Nov. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15
- Nov. 20, 21 and 22
- Nov. 27, 28, 29

The Help Out for Half Off discount cannot be combined with any other Northwest Trek offers [or promotions](#) and applies to general admission [prices](#).

For more information about Northwest Trek, go to www.nwtrek.org.

To get additional information about Emergency Food Network, go to www.efoodnet.org.

###

Northwest Trek, accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, is a 725-acre zoological park dedicated to conservation, education and recreation by displaying, interpreting and researching native Northwest wildlife and their natural habitats. The wildlife park is a facility of Metro Parks Tacoma and is located 35 miles southeast of Tacoma off State Highway 161.

Photo caption: 4-month-old moose calf Willow and her mother Connie are two of four moose that visitors to Northwest Trek Wildlife Park might spot during a ride in a heated tram through the 435-acre Free-Roaming Area.