

DEP Recognizes Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens for 45 Percent Recycling Rate



DEP Northeast District Director Greg Strong joined by Bob Chabot, Director of Facilities and Horticulture, Brad Walker, Facilities Coordinator and Cullen Richart, Facilities Manager.

On March 27, 2014, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Northeast District recognized [Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens](#) for its superior recycling efforts. In 2013, this Florida attraction recycled 809 tons, achieving a recycling rate of 45.1 percent. The Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens are the only walking safari in northeast Florida with something for everyone with more than 2,000 rare and exotic animals, 1,000 varieties of plants and exhibits such as Range of the Jaguar, Giraffe Overlook and Savanna Blooms garden.

The Zoo's "Green Team" focuses on reuse and composting. On average the Zoo processes 10 cubic yards per week of herbivore manure, plus the leftover hay and straw bedding, from the Zoo's herbivorous animal collection. This waste material is processed into approximately 10 cubic yards of finished compost per week. The finished compost is used onsite to amend the garden soil throughout the property. This finished compost is also offered to local gardeners and community gardens. All funds raised from the composting program are used to support various plant and habitat conservation projects.

“We have developed a very comprehensive program for virtually everything that is recyclable here at the Zoo,” said Bob Chabot, Director of Horticulture and Facilities at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens. “We continuously look for creative new ways to expand our recycling program as well as ways to reuse or repurpose materials such as in our Butterfly Hollow exhibit.”

“Businesses can benefit financially from investing in recycling and that investment benefits Florida's environment,” said DEP Northeast District Director Greg Strong. “I am honored to recognize Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens for its outstanding recycling efforts and for the good environmental stewards they have been in our state.”