



Zoo Wins N.C. Sustainable Energy Award

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By Rod Hackney

Asheboro -

ASHEBORO—The North Carolina Zoo has been named the 2008 recipient of the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Champion Award presented this week at the Fifth Annual N.C. Sustainable Energy Conference held in Raleigh.

The Sustainable Energy Awards are presented annually to agencies and individuals that have made outstanding contributions in helping North Carolina achieve its sustainability goals. The zoo was recognized for nearly 20 years as a state leader in environmental stewardship, energy efficiency, alternative fuels and renewable energy.

Led by its Conservation Captains committee, the zoo has developed a variety of sustainable programs including recycling, water meters, reduced water usage, energy management and composting. Other zoo projects include a biodiesel processor that converts waste cooking oil to diesel fuel, solar picnic shelters that produce enough electricity to run 13 homes and a constructed wetland that filters runoff water from its North America parking lot.

In addition to its sustainable practices the zoo also presents education programs on energy conservation and environmental stewardship for the more than 750,000 visitors that annually attend the park.

In a related development during the Energy Conference, Governor Mike Easley announced that the zoo is among 31 state agencies, universities and community colleges to receive a grant from the state's first Energy Efficiency Reserve Fund. The zoo will be given \$115,000 from the \$5 million fund administered by the State Energy Office to replace more than 600 light fixtures in the park's Stedman Education Center with smaller, more efficient units. It is estimated the project will save \$23,000 per year in energy bills.

The zoo is an agency of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, William G. Ross Jr., Secretary; Michael F. Easley, Governor.