

ALDF Calls For Shut Down of North Carolina's Horrific Roadside Zoos

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LAZY RANCH IN NORTH-CAROLINA

RALEIGH - NC ([RPRN](#))
02/05/14 — Federal Inspection
Records Expose Tar-Heel
State's Law-Breaking Animal
Exhibitor

After thorough review of inspection records, the national nonprofit Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) sent a formal letter this week to the U.S. Department of

Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), singling out the worst roadside zoos in North Carolina, and demanding the agency enforce the law against violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA). ALDF's review shows animal welfare violations routinely go unpunished at two roadside zoos owned by prolific violator Henry Hampton. In its letter, the group urges the USDA to move suffering animals to reputable shelters where they can receive veterinary attention. Furthermore, ALDF's letter calls on the USDA to apply civil penalties and revoke the licenses of Henry Hampton for both Lazy 5 Ranch (in Mooresville, Iredell County) and the Farm at Walnut Creek (in Newton, Holmes County) for violations the AWA on multiple occasions.

Together, the Farm at Walnut Creek and Lazy 5 Ranch house more than 700 exotic animals. In the past two years, owner Henry Hampton has been

repeatedly cited for severe and illegal neglect of these animals, including baboons, giraffes, llamas, camels, sheep, deer, and goats. Hampton was also cited for failing to meet minimum housing structure, shelter, safety, and husbandry requirements by allowing a

13-month old giraffe to get stuck in the metal poles of his cage and die.



The USDA has gone on record saying they plan to enforce these violations of federal animal welfare laws. The agency's own inspection report documents disturbing neglect and danger, both for the confined animals and the more than three million visitors that visit the facilities each year. Yet, to date, the USDA has failed to impose penalties for any of the documented violations. This isn't ALDF's first experience with lax federal regulators in North Carolina. In fact, ALDF, along with PETA, recently called for the permanent removal of the AWA license of the notorious Fayetteville-based roadside zoo Jambbas Ranch (Cumberland County), after the USDA refused to renew the zoo's AWA license.

“North Carolina's animals depend on the USDA to enforce the law,” said Stephen Wells, executive director of the Animal Legal Defense Fund. “Held in such miserable conditions, the animals in these facilities desperately need the USDA to act now.”

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