



Anonymous Gift Of \$1 Million Helps Black-Footed Ferrets

The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo will soon be able to build a new facility to continue black-footed ferret breeding after losing its facility in 2015.

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Via Cheyenne Mountain Zoo/Facebook

The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo has been involved with efforts to save black-footed ferrets since 1990.

Black-footed ferrets have faced the challenges of extinction more than once, and the species is still at risk. So it was a blow in 2015 when the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado, one of only a few places working to conserve black-footed ferrets, suffered damage to a building that housed the black-footed ferret breeding center. A landslide forced evacuation of the center, and the black-footed ferrets, along with endangered Wyoming toads, were relocated to other facilities.

The Gazette of Colorado Springs now reports that an anonymous donor has given a \$1 million dollar gift to the zoo to help construct a new, larger facility that will house the black-footed ferrets and Wyoming toads. "It was great news for us, for black-footed ferrets and Wyoming toads. It's really nice to know someone cared enough to help us out after we had kind of a tragic event this summer," zoo president and CEO Bob Chastain told The Gazette.

He added that the zoo has been active in black-footed ferret conservation since 1990 and Wyoming toad conservation since 2004. The expanded facility will not only feature black-footed ferrets and Wyoming toads, but also the zoo's work with amphibians in Panama and include an education center that's open to the public. It's all in the design and planning stage right now. Chastain told The Gazette he expects the new facility to open by 2020.