



Utah's Hogle Zoo looks to keep more waste out of the landfill

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SALT LAKE CITY (ABC4 Utah) - Utah's Hogle Zoo is the most visited attractions in the state. With over one million visitors a year and 700 animals the zoo certainly creates a lot of waste, but the zoo has a new plan to divert some of that waste away from the landfill.

Conservation is what it's all about. Key to Hogle Zoo's mission is saving species from extinction and protecting wildlife and wild habitat. But that doesn't just mean the plains of Africa or the polar ice caps. That mission is also carried out right here at home by focusing on what's carried out in the trash.

Hogle Zoo's Environmental Coordinator Michelle Brown explained, "We're just under about 25% of a diversion rate, which means 25% of everything we produce as waste here at the Hogle Zoo goes away from the landfill, so it's recycled."

Hogle Zoo has made it easy for visitors to recycle by putting blue bins all over the 42-acre park. But trash isn't the only waste the zoo produces. They send a lot of animal waste off to the landfill.

"We've got Christie over here and then we also have Zuri and combined they weigh over 12,000 pounds, and within one year they'll produce 15 times their combined weight in waste alone," said Brown.

That's roughly 520 pounds of elephant excrement a day. The elephants alone account for 25% of Hogle's waste stream. Soon the zoo will be able to divert that animal waste and their food waste away from the landfill thanks to a new anaerobic digester that's being built at the South Davis Sewer District.

"What's really cool about the anaerobic digester that's currently being built in South Davis is that all of their waste will be converted into natural gas, and obviously natural gas produced through sustainable ways which is awesome, but then also fertilizer that can be used for local farming communities," said Brown.

By diverting the animal waste alone Hogle Zoo's diversion rate will jump from 23% to 37%.

For more on Utah's Hogle Zoo's conservation efforts log on to:

https://www.hoglezoo.org/meet_our_animals/conservation/

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