



## **ASSINIBOINE PARK ZOO WELCOMES NEW POLAR BEAR TO LEATHERDALE INTERNATIONAL POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION CENTRE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Winnipeg, May 30, 2022 – The Assiniboine Park Zoo has welcomed a new polar bear to the Leatherdale International Polar Bear Conservation Centre.

Agee (*pronounced egg-y*), a 26-year-old female polar bear, has spent most of her life with private owners in British Columbia. Her owners, who worked in the entertainment industry, are no longer able to care for her. The Assiniboine Park Zoo was asked to provide Agee with a new home and is happy to do so.

“As leaders in polar bear rescue, transition and care, the Assiniboine Park Zoo is very well-equipped to provide Agee with a new home and high quality of life in human care,” said Grant Furniss, Senior Director, Zoological Operations. “Here at the Zoo, we have a team of experts who will tend to Agee’s needs. She will receive the same attention and high standard of care as the other polar bears at the Zoo.”

Members of the Assiniboine Park Conservancy’s Polar Bear Rescue & Care Team traveled to British Columbia last week to complete a health assessment and supervise Agee’s transfer to Winnipeg. She arrived early on Friday morning and is settling in nicely.

At the Leatherdale International Polar Bear Conservation Centre, Agee will undergo a standard 30-day quarantine period during which she will have access to indoor and outdoor habitats. **She is not visible to Zoo visitors or media at this time.** Members of the Zoo’s animal care team will carefully monitor her health and behaviour as she transitions to life at the Zoo.

“Agee has spent her entire life in human care and has not had contact with other polar bears. For that reason, it is highly unlikely that she will be introduced to others bears here at the Zoo,” added Furniss. “It is our intention that Agee will be visible to the public at some point in the future, but that will be determined by how she adjusts to her new surroundings. Her health and welfare are our highest priorities.”

With the arrival of Agee, the Zoo is now home to 10 polar bears. Eight of the polar bears currently reside in the Journey to Churchill exhibit. The other two, including Agee, reside in the Leatherdale International Polar Bear Conservation Centre. The Zoo’s Journey to Churchill exhibit showcases the animals, landscapes and culture of Manitoba’s north while educating visitors about the impacts of climate change and inspiring them to take personal action.

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