

River Otters of South Florida

ROSF



Otters and People

Otters in NA Zoos & Aquariums

American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA)
Species Survival Plans (SSP's) and What They Are!
(2025)

Species Survival Plan® Programs

The mission of an Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) cooperatively managed Species Survival Plan® (SSP) Program is to manage an *ex situ* species population with the interest and cooperation of AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums, Accredited Related Facilities (ARFs), and Sustainability Partners. An AZA SSP Program is identified through documented demand and potential sustainability within the AZA community; is selected by [Taxon Advisory Groups](#) (TAGs) through the RCP process; and develops a Breeding and Transfer Plan that identifies population goals and recommendations to manage a genetically diverse, demographically varied, and biologically sound population. Success is achieved when SSP animals are able to meet program goals and come from biologically sound populations as a result of a shared commitment to cooperative populations and program management.

There are currently nearly 300 SSP Programs, each managed by their corresponding Taxon Advisory Groups (TAGs), within AZA. Each is responsible for developing a comprehensive population Studbook and a Breeding and Transfer Plan which identifies population management goals and recommendations to ensure the sustainability of a healthy, genetically diverse, and demographically varied AZA population.

Functions

SSP Programs are led by expert advisors who cooperatively work together to maximize genetic diversity, appropriately manage the demographic distribution and long-term sustainability of TAG recommended Animal Programs within AZA member institutions. Each SSP Program manages the breeding of a select species or sub-species by collaborating with the AZA Population Management Center (PMC), Reproductive Management Center (RMC), Program Leaders, and Institutional Representatives (IRs) from each participating institution to develop an SSP Breeding and Transfer Plan. Breeding and Transfer Plans summarize the current demographic and genetic status of the population, describe the Animal Program's management designation, and recommend breeding pairs and transfers. These Plans are designed to maintain a healthy, genetically diverse and demographically stable population for the long-term future. AZA members may log in to the [Animal Program Database](#) to download SSP Breeding and Transfer Plans.

The AZA and its member institutions recognize that cooperative management is critical to the long-term survival of professionally managed Animal Programs and are fully committed to the goals and cooperative spirit of the SSP Program partnerships.

All SSP functional and management processes are specified in the [SSP Program Handbook](#).

This information was copied directly from the American Zoo and Aquarium website at:

<http://www.aza.org/SSP>

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