

Principal Chief Richard Sneed
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
P.O. Box 1927
Cherokee, NC 28719

Dear Principal Chief Richard Sneed,

I am writing in regards to the deplorable state of Cherokee Bear Zoo. After recently visiting this roadside attraction, I was horrified to see bears and primates confined to pits and cages far below national standards for animal care and welfare.

I have stayed updated on the status of animal attractions of Cherokee and was extremely pleased when Chief Saunooke Bear Park was permanently closed and their animals were transferred to sanctuary. But I am extremely disappointed by the fact that both Santa's Land and Cherokee Bear Zoo continue to exploit wild animals. To understand the magnitude of Cherokee Bear Zoo's operation, I needed to visit for myself. Not for my own personal knowledge, but to help educate others make informed choices for wildlife. It pained me to pay the \$6 to enter, but this conversation needed true perspective. I couldn't be an armchair expert on the issue. So, I reluctantly spent nearly two hours silently taking photos and absorbing the experience. After seeing the suffering with my own eyes, I am overcome with the weight of just how deplorable their practices are and the importance of informing others.

I have shared my experience on my website to help spread awareness for others to avoid Cherokee's roadside animal attractions like Cherokee Bear Zoo. I encourage you to read it:
<https://www.miloswildlife.com/2020/12/04/cherokee-bear-zoo-roadside-animal-nightmare/>

Seeing Barry and Collette Coggins' careless design to cram nearly a dozen bears into such a small area, made my stomach flip. Each of the four bear spaces had random rubber mats thrown about, a bathtub size pool, and a few logs –otherwise, there was nothing. From a gawking visitor's perspective these few fixtures might seem satisfactory, but from the bear's perspective these few items added next to nothing to their empty lives. There's no excuse for confining bears to concrete pits, especially when other facilities have found these practices to be "archaic" causing animal suffering.

Wildlife sanctuaries accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries stand ready to take in all the animals at Cherokee Bear Zoo. Once moved, these animals could roam vast natural habitats, forage for their own food, and act on their own wild instincts. I encourage you to please take action for these animals in need and change the course of their lives in natural sanctuaries.

Sincerely,

Milo



Milo Anderson
(he/him/his)