

Cherokee's Archaic Conditions for Caged Bears



Cherokee facilities display neurotic, hungry bears in desolate concrete pits or cramped cages in which they pace back and forth, walk in endless circles, cry and whimper, and beg for tourists to toss them a morsel of food.



Unregulated public feeding prevents the bears from receiving a consistent diet, which can result in the overfeeding of some bears and the underfeeding of others.



“[W]hat a sad life they live, with no access to grass, dirt, trees, woods, etc.” –Visitor from North Carolina



Surrounded by four solid walls that create an environment providing them with little sensory input, the bears in Cherokee's bear pits cannot scan the horizon, gain a perspective on their surroundings, or make use of their acute sense of smell.

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited Cherokee Bear Zoo repeatedly for failure to provide veterinary care to sick and underweight animals; failure to handle animals so that there is minimal risk of harm to the animal and to the public; failure to provide environmental enrichment; and improper feeding and watering.



The USDA has cited Chief Saunooke Bear Park for numerous infractions, including failure to provide veterinary care to sick and extremely thin animals; filthy, unsanitary, and foul-smelling conditions; and failure to provide food and water to hungry and thirsty animals.



The USDA has cited Santa's Land Zoo repeatedly for failure to provide adequate veterinary care to sick, suffering, and dying animals. Santa's Land keeps bears in cramped cages and gets rid of unwanted bears by advertising "free" bears in a trade publication that caters to exotic-animal breeders and dealers, the pet trade, and hunting ranches.