

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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ASIAN ELEPHANTS TO MAKE A SPLASH IN NEW MEGA POOLS

The Allan Labor Government is helping Melbourne's Asian elephant herd make an even bigger splash – delivering two mega pools at Werribee Open Range Zoo.

Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos today visited Melbourne Zoo to see three half-tonne calves – Aiyara, Kati and Roi-Yim – reach their latest developmental milestone and explore the zoo's 2.5-metre-deep pool.

At the Werribee Open Range Zoo, construction is underway to support two new Asian elephant mega pools as part of the Labor Government's \$88 million Werribee Open Range Zoo Expansion project.

The pools will reach a depth of 3.5 metres, and collectively hold two million litres of Class A recycled water – large enough to accommodate the growing herd of elephants and it will also help to improve their skincare, swimming ability and social skills.

The Werribee Open Range Zoo Expansion project will deliver a 21-hectare purpose-built Elephant Trail, new pedestrian pathways, improved amenities and landscapes for priority conservation species such as Asian Wild Horse and American Bison.

The expansion is the same size as the entire Melbourne Zoo, and the equivalent of five MCG stadiums – with the project also set to create more than 100 jobs.

The entire Asian elephant herd is expected to move to Werribee Open Range Zoo in 2024.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

"We are thrilled to support the construction of a new state of the art home for Asian elephants in Melbourne's west."

"These pools will give our growing Asian elephant herd more space to socialise and play – which is vital for their wellbeing and development."

"The Werribee Open Range Zoo Expansion project is set to deliver a world class experience to visitors."

Quote attributable to Zoos Victoria CEO Dr Jenny Gray

"Swimming is a profoundly important social behaviour for Asian elephants and it's exciting to be another step closer to the completion of this purpose-built habitat that will support positive herd welfare."