

**History of the Name Change of the “New York Zoological Society”
to the “Wildlife Conservation Society” and the Impact on
the New York City Department of Parks-Owned
Bronx, Central Park, Prospect Park, and Queens Zoos
and the New York Aquarium**

The [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) [WCS] is an alter ego of the New York Zoological Society [NYZS] **WCS is the NYZS**. Therefore, the City of New York and WCS should operate in accordance with the New York State laws controlling NYZS; namely, [Chapter 435 of the Laws of the State of New York 1895](#), as amended by [Chapter 146 of the Laws of the State of New York of 1902](#), as amended by [Chapter 924 of the Laws of the State of New York of 1969](#) and as amended by [Chapter 383 of the Laws of the State of New York of 1991](#).

In effect, WCS operates in the form of a “doing business as” [see [definition](#)] of NYZS. It is **not** incorporated as a separate entity [see WCS’s “[Name History](#)” section in filings with New York State’s Division of Corporations]. Accordingly, as to each of the entities managed and operated by WCS, namely: the Bronx Zoo [BZ/NHYS-WHC], Central Park Zoo [CPZ/NYSZ-WCS], Prospect Park Zoo [PPZ/NYSZ-WCS], Queens Zoo [QZ/NYSZ-WCS] and the New York Aquarium [NYA/NYSZ-WCS], the terms of New Yorkers’ rights are spelled out in each entity’s page in [PARK INSTITUTIONS](#).

New York City’s [Department of Parks and Recreation](#) [DPR] reports on its [Zoos/Aquariums website page](#) that it **owns** these five WCS facilities and that **these facilities are “managed and administered” by WCS**. Yet, [Section 18-127 of the NYC Administrative Code](#), authorized DPR to enter Agreements **only with NYZS** and **not** the WCS regarding PPZ, QZ and CPZ.

Important to WCS being NYZS is the conclusion that New York State laws supersede New York City’s Administrative Code and/or contracts the City entered with NYZS which **disavow** New Yorkers’ right to three days a week free access, as provided by New York State law. Further, [Chapter 924 of the Laws of the State of New York of 1969](#) **significantly amended NYZS’s “purpose”** as set forth in [Chapter 435 of the Laws of the State of New York 1895](#), by **eliminating NYZS’s obligation to provide** “instruction and recreation” to New Yorkers **and denied NYZS its authority to do** “zoological research and publication” – the latter being the benchmark of WCS’s mission [see [Incorporating v. Current Purpose](#) chart reported in each of the WCS entities’ page listed in [PARK INSTITUTIONS](#)].

DPR responded to FA’s Freedom of Information Law [FOIL] requests by **producing Agreements** with the **City of New York and NYZS [not WCS]** dated in the 1950s for NYA/NYSZ-WCS and 1980 or 1981 for the CPZ/NYSZ-WCS, PPZ/NYSZ-WCS and QZ/NYSZ-WCS. No Agreement was produced for BZ/NYSZ-WCS, which was the original “zoological garden” [Chapter 435 of the Laws of the State of New York 1895](#) authorized NYZS to establish. In this regard, **DPR produced a copy of a March 24, 1897, Resolution** of a special meeting of the Commissioners of the

Sinking Fund, City of New York, **setting out the parameters under which the NYZS was “to exercise entire control and management over all the affairs of the said Zoological Garden.”** In each of the agreements, DPR **does not refer** to the controlling and amending New York State laws. Yet, **each Agreement requires the City, through the Parks Commissioner, to** secure the approval of New York City’s Corporation Counsel, any other governmental official or entity **whose consent or approval is required by law**, and the State Legislature was to amend NYZS’s corporate charter. **Also, the Agreements authorized NYZS [not WCS] to administer to its admission fee policy, with the approval of the Commissioner.** DPR did **not** produce copies of any documents demonstrating fulfillment of these requisites.

Further, DPR **did not produce evidence that NYZS undertook to** Amend its Agreements with the City to effect either a name change or change in ownership to WCS. **Yet the City** directly and indirectly subsidized WCS in an amount exceeding **\$154 MILLION** in 2018 [with an approximate **\$43 MILLION** committed to WCS for work to restore the NYA/NYZS-WCS after Hurricane Sandy, for a total of **\$197 MILLION.**] In addition, the City has invested more than **\$385 MILLION** of New Yorkers’ tax dollars in WCS’s depreciated physical plant.

Noteworthy, is that PPZ/NYZS-WCS, QZ/NYZS-WCS and CPZ/NYZS-WCS are **not** members of New York City’s [Department of Cultural Affairs](#) [DCA] [Cultural Institutions Group](#) [CIG], which oversees the operation of 34 New York City cultural institutions, including the other 14 PPP/PEC institutions. CIG holds its members accountable to meeting certain prerequisites to qualify for City funding [see DCA’s [“Procedures Manual”](#)]. **DPR did not produce its own version of DCA’s “Procedures Manual,” demonstrating that DPR defined and follows a process and enforces procedures DPR put in place, to hold NYZS-WCS accountable to comply with the provisions of each entity’s Agreement.**

It is imperative that the new **Mayoral administration in collaboration with New York’s City Council remedy** the longstanding breaches by the City **and for New Yorkers to SIGN FA’s PETITION NOW!**