

California moves last two chimps from animal sanctuary that abruptly closed in 2019

December 29 2022, by Noah Goldberg, Los Angeles Times



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

With the move of its last two chimps, a former Los Angeles County animal sanctuary that was abruptly closed in 2019 is now empty of its animal charges, state officials said Wednesday.

There were still 500 animals living at the Wildlife Waystation in Angeles National Forest when the facility closed because of financial issues in 2019. The state's Department of Fish and Wildlife then became responsible for the animals and slowly began the process of moving the many different species into functioning sanctuaries.

After eight [chimpanzees](#) were transferred last month to Chimp Haven, a chimp [sanctuary](#) in Louisiana, there were just two remaining animals at Wildlife Waystation, according to officials.

"It was actually relatively easy to find homes for lions, tigers, bears, jaguars, all sorts of primates, birds and reptiles," said CDFW Regional Manager Ed Pert in a statement. "Chimpanzees are a difficult species to rehome. After it became illegal to do [medical research](#) on chimpanzees in 2015, U.S research facilities have been closing down or rehoming them. There hasn't been enough space at good facilities to take them all in."

Chimp Haven had space too for the last two chimps, who were sent to the Southern state to live among old friends earlier this month, according to the Fish and Wildlife Department.

The 42 [chimps](#) living at Wildlife Waystation had mostly come from a biomedical lab in New York that shut down in the 1990s, according to the agency.

Legal problems and [natural disasters](#) helped lead the once-bustling animal sanctuary in Sylmar to its demise in 2019. Extreme flooding and the Creek fire in 2017 were the last straws, causing severe damage to the facility that the sanctuary could not afford to repair.

When the Wildlife Waystation surrendered its permits in 2019, the Department of Fish and Wildlife took over the sanctuary. The

department became responsible for rehousing hundreds of animals including alligators, wolves, tigers and the 42 chimpanzees living on the premises.

"We had to find unique ways to do things that needed to happen quickly and on an emergency ongoing basis," Pert said, "like buy food for lions, tigers and bears, and get a contract to have water delivered."

2022 Los Angeles Times.

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: California moves last two chimps from animal sanctuary that abruptly closed in 2019 (2022, December 29) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2022-12-california-chimps-animal-sanctuary-abruptly.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.