

The Boston Globe
LOCAL NEWS UPDATES

From the City & Region staff at The Boston Globe

Stone Zoo prepares for 2 new black bears

February 11, 2008 11:03 AM



(Stone Zoo)

An artist's rendering of the new exhibit, which will house the 2-year-old black bear pictured above and his brother.

By Globe Staff

The Stone Zoo is building a \$750,000 habitat to house a pair of 250-pound black bears that will go on exhibit this spring, zoo officials announced today.

The 2-year-old bears are coming to the Stoneham zoo from the Appalachian Bear Rescue in Tennessee, which has raised the animals since they were confiscated as cubs from breeders in Georgia. The new exhibit will be on the site that was previously home to Major, a well-known polar bear who died in 2000.

“New England has a large population of black bears in the wild and the separation between their habitat and ours is shrinking,” John Linehan, president and chief executive officer of Zoo New England, said in a statement. “By building this new

exhibit and giving a much-needed home to these bears, we hope to educate people about these incredible animals and the ecosystem we all share.”

The Appalachian rescue group determined that the bears could not be rehabilitated for release into the wild. The bears would have been euthanized if a home had not been found, according to the zoo.

The new exhibit will be constructed by Commodore Builders in the zoo’s Yukon Creek section, which displays North American animals such as bald eagles, Canada lynx, gray fox, and porcupine.