HOME

35 Circus Elephants Arrive at Florida Sanctuary to Retire in Forest, Grassland & Water

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The White Oak Conservation Center in the northeast of Florida is richer by a dozen of elephants that were part of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey's Circus until they retired in 2016.

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They went through a period of socialization so that they can be brought safely to the sanctuary.

The center is currently finishing up their 2500-acre space and other elephants will also be brought here once it's possible.

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The sanctuary said they've bought 35 elephants from circuses in total to become residents of this impressive sanctuary.

Elephants Back into the Wild: Their Home

The first group of elephants arrived in the sanctuary in early May and are adjusting well to their new lives at a city north of Jacksonville known as Yulee.

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They will have access to nine connected areas with different habitats and vegetation, including wetlands, meadows, and woods.

The center is also in the process of making additional barns and watering holes for the elephants that will be large enough so they can swim in them.

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We Need to Help Elephants Thrive, Say the Owners

The owners of the center, philanthropist Mark and Kimbra Walter explain the sanctuary spreads over 17,000 acres and is also the home of other endangered and threatened species.

Together with wildlife and federal agencies, they collaborate to ensure species recovery. The Asian elephants are endangered in the wild, with only 50,000 or less found in less than 15 percent of their known range throughout history.

The owners say that they're delighted to have the opportunity to give these elephants the retirement they deserve, to explore and wander in the wild, their home.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(133); });
They will now be only elephants and the closest to nature as possible. Elephant care leader Nick Newby explains that it's an amazing moment watching the elephants reassuring and comforting each other like elephants do and to swim for the first time.

The center notes that elephants are amazing animals and providing them with a place where they can thrive is essential.

Sources:

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