



## **Black Bear Hammock Exhibit**

### Introduction

The Black Bear Hammock exhibit sequence includes two habitats (that can be joined into one) flanking the existing carnivore holding building. These habitats are themed to look like a backyard and a more natural bear habitat as described below. New stairs provide access to the roof of the existing holding building to allow for keeper presentations. There is an adjacent service drive that provides maintenance access to the habitats.

### Natural Habitat

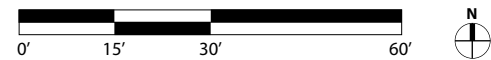
The "Natural Habitat" area would contain native plantings to replicate the local hardwood hammock ecosystem. Plantings around the edge of the habitat (behind electric fencing or "hot grass") hide portions of the chainlink exhibit fence from visitors. The existing oak tree in the center of the habitat would serve as the center of a planting island (behind electric fencing or "hot grass") that would mask cross-views between two public viewing areas. This area contains a water feature that would look like a stream with a small pool themed like a swamp or wetland. Surrounding the water feature would be a remnant railroad trestle, stumps and deadfall trees or logs replicating a landscape that one might see in a cypress swamp that has been logged. The bears would be able to splash in the shallow stream, get totally submerged in the pool, climb on the deadfall or the trestle, or relax in the shade of the porch attached to the cracker shack. The public watches the bears from inside the cracker shack through full height glass and can read interpretive panels discussing the history of the bears' natural habitats in Florida. Two other viewing areas for this habitat are provided where the public is viewing through 14' high chainlink fence.

### Backyard Habitat

The "Backyard Habitat" contrasts the Natural Habitat area with a landscape that has been modified by human development. This area would be themed like a suburban Florida backyard, complete with a lanai where visitors watch the bears through full height glass as they explore things in the backyard. The lanai has glass on three sides and has a small step running lengthwise inside to maximize viewing for visitors further away from the glass. On the other side of the glass the bears are exploring food that has been left on the picnic table on the patio, wading in the plastic kiddie pool near the patio, rummaging through the non-bear-proof trash can, snacking on seeds found in the bird feeder, climbing on the timber play structure, digging in the sand under the play structure, or just sleeping in the shade under the play structure. The accompanying graphics & interpretives in the lanai discuss issues with human development encroaching on bear habitats and how NOT to feed bears from trash cans or bird feeders. All important topics for the survival of black bears in Florida. Two other viewing areas are provided where the public is viewing through 14' high chainlink fence. At scheduled times each day, keepers will access the roof of the holding building to a platform overlooking the backyard where they will engage the animals and visitors in a Meet the Keeper presentation. Plantings around the edge of the habitat (behind electric fencing or "hot grass") hide the holding building and portions of the chainlink exhibit fence from visitors.



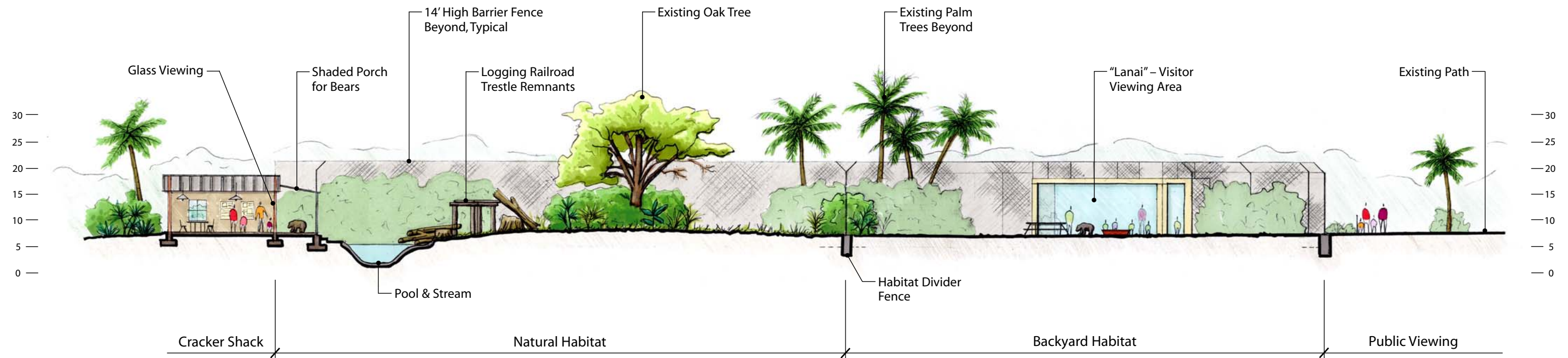
Illustrative Site Plan



# Black Bear Hammock

"BEAR AFFAIR" ■ February 22, 2008





Section A-A

