



For Immediate Release

Zoo welcomes Somali wild asses, new Barriques coffee honoring conservation leadership

MADISON, Wis., June 26, 2015 – The Henry Vilas Zoo today welcomed two Somali wild asses who became zoo residents recently through the community’s generosity last December on Giving Tuesday, a global day dedicated to giving back.

Somali wild asses are critically endangered. The Vilas Zoo is one of only nine institutions that are home to this species. There are 600 or fewer of these animals in the wild and only 60 in captivity in North America. The main threats to the animal are being hunted as food or use in medicine, and competition with livestock for food and water.

In conjunction with the introduction of the Somali wild asses at the zoo, the Friends of the Henry Vilas Zoo announced the launch of Wild Ass Coffee, a new conservation coffee created by Barriques. The Wild Ass Coffee is available at all six of Barriques. Barriques will donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale of Wild Ass Coffee to the Henry Vilas Zoo Animal Welfare Fund. The fund ensures that all the zoo’s animals receive the best possible care.

“We are pleased to welcome the Somali wild asses to the Vilas Zoo after a successful Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign that helped to support their arrival,” said Alison K. Prange, executive director of the Friends of the Henry Vilas Zoo. “This is a powerful example of the zoo’s leadership in conservation. We’re delighted that the Vilas Zoo is one of only nine in the country to host critically endangered Somali wild asses.

“We take pride in Barriques’ creation of Wild Ass Coffee to celebrate the zoo’s leadership in conservation and welcome this unique way for the community to support the Vilas Zoo,” Ms. Prange said. “We are grateful for Barriques partnership and appreciate their dedication to our community supported zoo.”

“Barriques is excited to be a part of supporting the Henry Vilas Zoo and its efforts in animal conservation,” said Finn Berge, co-owner of Barriques. “The coffee blend is 100 percent sustainably grown Heirloom Arabica beans sourced from small family farms primarily in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. It is available at each of our six locations and online through our website.”