

A. Stay in the Elephant Business

Artificially inseminate Nikki immediately, keep Lucy in Edmonton, and commit to the evolving best management practices for elephants.

- Pros**
- Meets Species Survival Plan and CAZA recommendations,
 - Gives the Valley Zoo a baby (potentially),
 - If baby is born the Zoo's attendance will double and provide access to additional capital and operating funds.
- Cons**
- Puts pressure on the Zoo to expand facilities,
 - Cost of artificial insemination, training for AI, and preparation for calf birth,
 - Must expand outside yard to accommodate future herd of 3-to-5 animals,
 - Nikki is not currently trained for AI and is not tractable,
 - The barn will eventually be overcrowded and will need to be expanded.

B. Send Both Elephants Away Now

- Pros**
- Brings risk to zero
 - Provides opportunity to consider the Valley Zoo's elephant future without pressures,
 - Lowers operational costs,
 - Current elephant house can be redeveloped, potentially for another flagship species such as gorilla.
- Cons**
- Lucy is Zoo icon,
 - Elephant is Zoo's logo,
 - Potential union problems,
 - Zoo will lose its cause célèbre for fundraising,
 - Zoo will lose attendance.

C. Send Nikki away for breeding now. Bring in an old Asian as companion for Lucy.

- Pros**
- Meets SSP recommendations
 - Less operational expense
- Cons**
- May not get companion Asian cow for Lucy
 - Will upset Nikki's estrous cycle and put her window of breeding further back.

D. Artificially inseminate Nikki now with a potential birth 22-months later. Relocate mother and baby to another facility when the calf is old enough. Keep Lucy.

- Pros**
- Meets SSP recommendations by getting Nikki pregnant
 - Lowers operational costs long term.
- Cons**
- Zoo loses its fund raising momentum after building it,
 - It will be very difficult politically to send a new calf away
 - Zoo may lose attendance.

E. Send Nikki away for breeding now. Keep Lucy until her eventual death, and bring in elephants and handlers seasonally.

- Pros**
- Avoids strong public disappointment at the loss of elephants,
 - Lowers operational costs somewhat.
- Cons**
- No opportunity for community attachment to an individual elephant (a plus?),
 - May be union problems,
 - Still need to maintain elephant facilities.

Recommendation:

1. Send Nikki on breeding loan ASAP.

It's the right thing for Nikki and her genetic potential; doesn't put the Zoo in an unpopular position of having to send a mother and baby away if there is not the political will or financial capability for expanding the exhibit to accommodate a future social herd.

2. Investigate options for caring for Lucy:

Option 1: Keep Lucy comfortable in existing facility for the rest of her life ... by herself or with a non-elephant companion. (Be ready to address CAZA, AZA and PETA issues in a pro-active manner.)

Option 2: Keep Lucy comfortable in existing facility for the rest of her life and investigate bringing in another older Asian elephant as a companion.

3. A Herd of Elephants in Edmonton?

After Nikki's calf is born, determine if there is the political will and financial capability to bring Nikki and her baby back as the basis for a new social herd of 3 to 5 elephants. Expand the exhibit to accommodate them... or redevelop the Elephant House as a Tropical Walk-through or Gorillas habitat.