

Big cats seized from Tiger King Park taken in by sanctuaries

BY TORI B. POWELL

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All of the big cats that federal authorities recently seized from Jeffrey and Lauren Lowe's Tiger King Park have been accepted by accredited sanctuaries throughout the country, according to the Wildcat Sanctuary in Sandstone, Minnesota. The sanctuary's announcement comes days after the Department of Justice announced the seizure of 46 tigers, 15 lion-tiger hybrids, seven lions and one jaguar from the Thackerville, Oklahoma, park.

The Lowes, who have been accused of mistreating their animals, are best known for their appearance in the popular "Tiger King" docu-series.

"I am thankful for the coordinated effort of several reputable sanctuaries and federal agencies to ensure these cats were safely removed," Tammy

Thies, the founder and executive director of the Wildcat Sanctuary, said on Facebook.

The Minnesota sanctuary said several of the seized animals are being cared for at their rescue facility while the government seeks permanent forfeiture. It also offered to transport and supply a permanent home to each of Tiger King Park's smaller cats if needed.

Carolina Tiger Rescue in Pittsboro, North Carolina, announced Tuesday that four of the 69 seized animals were being cared for at their facility. Two other big cats are being housed under the care of the Lions Tigers & Bears animal sanctuary in Alpine, California.

"With several accredited sanctuary teams working together with the federal officials, it was an efficient and seamless operation," Lions Tigers & Bears Founder and Director Bobbi Brink said in a statement.

For years, the Lowes operated the Greater Wynnewood Exotic Animal Park in Wynnewood, Oklahoma, which was previously owned by the docu-series' star Joseph Maldonado, also known as "Joe Exotic." But Lowe's Animal Welfare Act exhibitor license was suspended in August for "inadequate" and "improper" care and handling of animals, prosecutors said. The couple then relocated to Thackerville, Oklahoma, the home of the 33-acre Tiger King Park.