

Fort Worth's Silver Creek Materials launches partnership with Dallas Zoo for manure

BY JESSIKA HARKAY

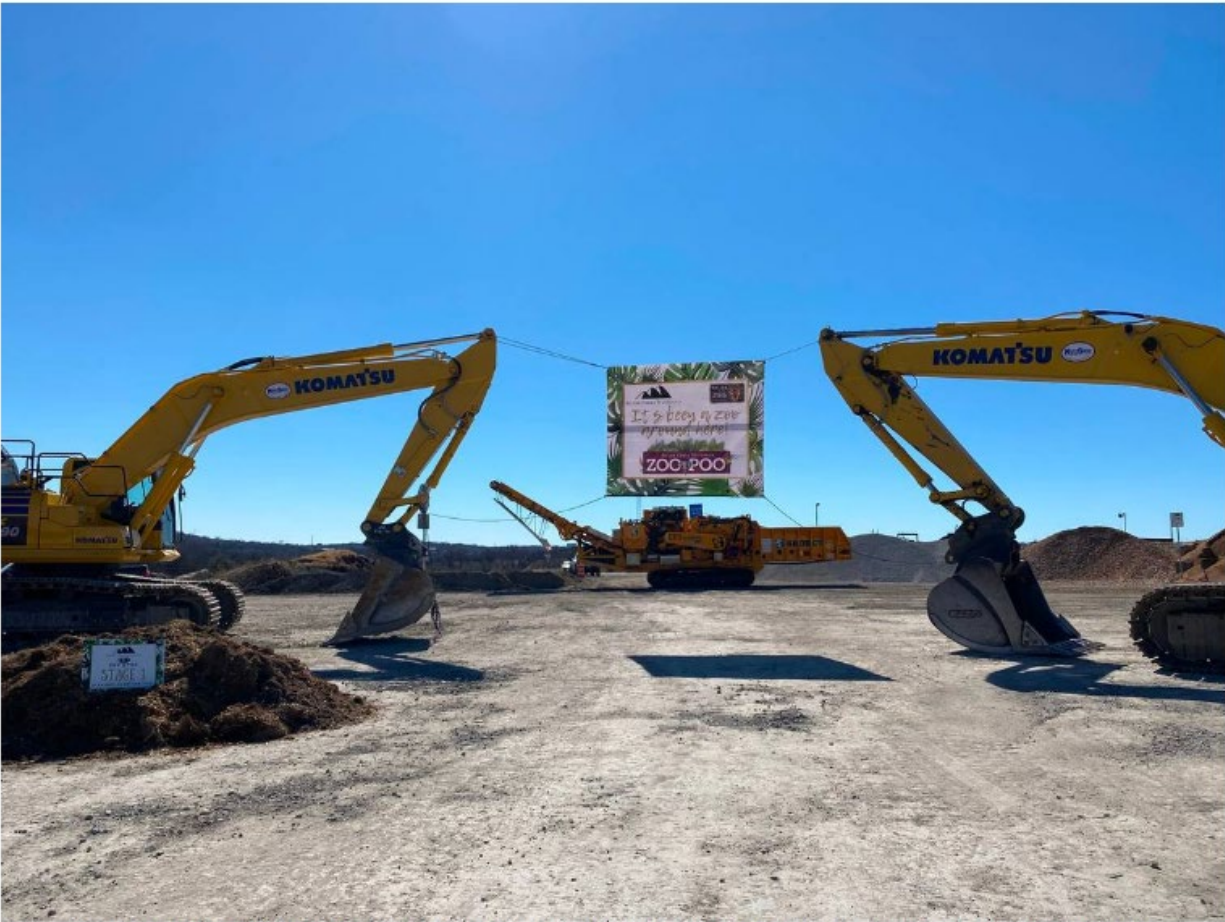
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A two-year-long project between Silver Creek Materials and the Dallas Zoo has finally come to fruition with the launch of “Zoo Poo” — an organic compost made of manure from herbivore animals at the zoo. The partnership launched the compost on Saturday afternoon at the Silver Creek Materials site in Fort Worth with hopes to not only limit landfill waste in the Dallas Fort-Worth area, but also contribute to the zoo’s initiative to divert 90% of its waste from landfills by 2030.

“I’m a fourth generation Fort Worthian, and third generation with Silver Creek. I’m personally excited, of course, for producing less waste in landfills like we talked about, but trying to proceed with a new generation [of recycling],” Silver Creek Materials CEO Marshall Dow said. “[Recycling is] now an unpopular thing to do; it’s ‘I got to get rid of this trash, let me just get rid of this trash’ and you know? The animals in the zoo feel the same way. But, we’re really excited to help them get rid of their waste and be able to compost it. It’s a beautiful material. ... This is an incredible deal to make Texas better one elephant step at a time.”



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The compost, made up of manure from the Dallas Zoo's elephants, giraffes, hippos and other herbivores, mixed with hay and bedding material, will be available at the zoo's gift shop, local specialty stores and Silver Creek Materials for \$9.95 per cubic foot. Part of the Zoo Poo's sales will go toward international wildlife conservation organizations. "It was really hard to envision what was going to happen two years ago when we started having these conversations," Dallas Zoo Board Chair Lois Finkelman said. "I think this is something that's going to have a major impact on our institutions in this area and possibly in other parts of Texas to do away with using the landfill as a location for solid waste. ... And although this may cost more than what you find at Lowes, Home Depot or Walmart, it's a whole lot better for your garden. It's a whole lot purer. It's a whole lot better stuff back to the earth, and it serves us really really well."



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Dow and Finkelman were joined by city councilmen Michael Crain of District 3 and Jared Williams of District 6, who also voiced excitement about the project. "What [this partnership] is doing now is because of the future like [my daughter], which is about sustainable and recyclable growth that we're doing by taking a piece out of our landfills," Crain said, pointing to his grade-school aged daughter in the crowd. Williams, a TCU graduate, recalled working on the Silver Creek Materials property when he studied environmental science. "It was at TCU when I got my hands in a lot of poo that came from Silver Creek Materials," Williams laughed. "I remember shoveling, shoveling, shoveling, and I started getting used to the smell. I would come home and my mom would say 'Man you really stink,' and I'd say 'Yeah, but I love it.' But what I realized at TCU, thanks to my professors and being around the materials, is that conservation is important, whether it's at the zoo, or on the road ... [this is] incredible work for our ecosystem and the people who depend on it."



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