Kuhlman concrete sets the foundation for the Toledo Zoo’s savannah project.

R estoring animals to habitats resembling their natural ones— that’s the goal of the Toledo Zoo’s AFRICA! Project. This ambitious undertaking is the largest exhibit to be constructed at the Toledo Zoo and will cover nearly five acres west of the Anthony Wayne Trail. A savannah-like natural setting is being created where more than 60 species co-existing in Africa— such as zebras, elephants, cheetahs, giraffes, antelopes and ostriches— will enjoy far more freedom to roam than in a conventional zoo setting.

What you’ll hardly notice are the 4,000 cubic yards of Kuhlman concrete, plus drainage and waterproofing materials. Much of the concrete was used to construct a long, winding under-ground retaining wall supporting the project, a tunnel for the train that will encircle the exhibit, plus unobtrusive, but effective walls to permanently contain the animals. Termite mounds, rocks and streambeds— simulated out of concrete — will be visible.

“It’s exciting to work at the zoo and know that this project will be here for the next 100 years with people continuing to go through it,” says Mark McGee, of the A.A. Boos Company, the project’s concrete contractor. CemRock, of Arizona, specializes in zoo exhibits across the United States and used Kuhlman concrete to “create” the concrete rocks for this exhibit and in the Artic Encounter, the zoo’s last major project.

“This is a huge project,” says Stan Delventhal, vice president of A.A. Boos. “We’ve come to rely on Kuhlman Corporation. To build the walls, we used Symon’s new European Logo forming system distributed by Kuhlman. We used this metric forming system with great support from Kuhlman salesman Chuck Naumann. What really helped is that Kuhlman conducted a Saturday seminar just for our people on how to use this system and convert everything to metric. The Logo system is extremely user-friendly, with minimal pieces and minimal ties. We probably could have done it without the seminar, but having it really helped our people know how to use it right away.”

Last summer, grasses similar to those in Africa were planted and construction should be completed within the next few months, explains zoo construction manager Rick Payeff. The animals will be brought over this summer so that they have many months to get adjusted before the exhibit opens in May, 2004.

Kuhlman Corp. helps construct the Zoo’s AFRICA! habitat.

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— Stan Delventhal
Vice President, A.A. Boos

CemRock utilized Kuhlman grout to sculpt rock formations.

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