



Developing an Effective Human-Tiger Conflict Resolution Strategy for Northeast China



Human-tiger conflict education campaign at a township school in northeast China. Photo © HMFB

INTERIM REPORT TO THE WILDCATS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE MARCH 2019

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Executive Summary

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) China program is devoted to protecting the wildlife and natural landscapes of China, and plays an important role in Amur tiger and leopard conservation in the northeast part of the country. As the number of tigers and leopards increases in China, the number of conflict situations with humans increases in tandem. To better understand the needs and issues of local residents, in April 2018, we conducted a questionnaire survey on wildlife, conflict, the depredation compensation policy, and more. We used this information to develop a booklet on how to prevent and mitigate tiger/leopard conflicts, using source material from Russia as a guide, and we submitted our findings and management recommendations to the administration of the Tiger and Leopard National Park (TLNP) for development as park policy. In August and November, we cooperated with the Hunchun Municipal Forestry Bureau (HMFB) to carry out relevant community publicity, and distributed our booklets to help communities understand the sources of conflict and how to keep themselves (and tigers and leopards) safe. We have also been working toward the establishment and training of regional conflict mitigation teams.

Progress against Goals and Objectives

GOAL: Develop an effective human-tiger conflict resolution strategy

Objective 1: Hold technical training session

The Strategic Plan for the Northeast China Tiger and Leopard National Park calls for the establishment of two wildlife rehabilitation stations, which will include dedicated response staff. We plan to develop a “conflict response guide,” and then conduct in-depth training for the conflict team in spring 2019. By working with the TLNP administration to develop a conflict contingency plan, relevant staff and a conflict response team will be trained (including team composition and division, emergency procedures, etc.). In addition, relevant field anesthesia training (including drug preparation, capture, anesthesia, immobilization, measurement, etc.) will be conducted for the conflict response team, so they can work independently and effectively to address human-tiger conflict events.

Objective 2: Conduct public education campaign in local communities

Public education of local communities is very important for tiger and wildlife conservation. Through these activities, we promote local awareness of wildlife so that both tigers and humans are safe, and the chances of human-tiger conflicts are reduced. In April 2018, we visited local communities in Hunchun County, and learned how villagers engage in cattle husbandry, gauged their level of knowledge about the wildlife depredation compensation policy, and gathered other relevant information via a questionnaire survey. This effort included feedback from 49 villages within the boundaries of the new TLNP and adjacent areas (7 towns and villages including Chunhua, Hadamen, Jingxin, Yangpao, Ying'an, Mijiang, and Machuanzi). Our strategy was to conduct a few surveys in each settlement across this broad area, rather than many surveys in one settlement, to better understand broad patterns of opinions within the region as a whole (Figures 1 and 2). We collected 175 questionnaires, of which 172 were completed. The results show that most villagers have high awareness of wildlife protection, while some people have a negative view of wildlife, especially wild boars and tigers. Most villagers were familiar with the compensation policy for damages to property caused by wildlife, but they knew little about how to avoid conflict or reduce the threat to themselves or their property.

Based on our surveys, we generated a report and presented it to TLNP Administration and the Forestry Bureau of Jilin Province, which they are currently reviewing for adoption as park policy. In this report,

we recommended that the wildlife depredation compensation policy be modified such that the process is more transparent and based on some accountability. In addition, there should be community education efforts to create public awareness of the issue to reduce future conflicts. We expect to detail how our recommendations were translated to policy in our final report to WCCA.

In August and November 2018, we cooperated with staff from HMFB to organize 10 community education campaigns, involving 4 villages and 6 township schools in the key habitat of Amur tigers and leopards. Approximately 400 people attended in total. In meetings in four villages (Xitumenzi, Zhongtumenzi, Heshan, and Tazigou) we explained sources of human-big cat conflicts, distributed our booklets, and showed inspiring video footage of tigers to allow villagers to better appreciate tigers and wildlife conservation (Figures 3 and 4). These events greatly increased local understanding of conflicts and how to prevent and avoid human-tiger conflicts. Feedback showed that villagers were appreciative of this effort to increase their knowledge and safety. The general consensus was that previous public awareness campaigns had only focused on the protection of tigers and leopards, and not on the safety of people (Figure 5).

In addition, in order to instill an environmental ethic in youth, we designed and conducted an education campaign at six township schools (Hadamen middle and primary schools, Madida primary school, Yangpao primary school, and Chunhua middle and primary schools). We developed materials for students that introduced knowledge about Amur tigers, including their habits, habitats, cultural value, and endangered status. Most importantly, we discussed why children should be proud that Amur tigers live among them. We also played games that deepened student understanding of habitat loss (Figures 6 and 7). Following these activities, staff from HMFB distributed diaries to the children as souvenirs and asked them to write down their impressions from the program and their dreams for the future (Figure 8). We hope that, via schools campaigns, we can increase knowledge of wildlife among youth, and instill love and appreciation for tigers and leopards.

In November 2018, we also cooperated with the administration of Hunchun Nature Reserve to hold a training meeting about anti-poaching patrols and snare removals. A component of this training was ranger safety in tiger habitat, and we introduced the problem of human-tiger encounters, explained how to prevent and avoid human-tiger conflict, and how rangers should behave if they encounter a tiger. Approximately 600 workers from the forest farm community participated in this training and received conflict mitigation booklets (Figures 9 and 10).

Conclusion

The WCS China program has been committed to the protection of the Amur tiger and Amur leopard since 1999. With past support from WildCats Conservation Alliance, we have made significant achievements in population monitoring and conflict research. In the current reporting period we continued to advance our goal of improving human-tiger conflict mitigation in northeast China. We successfully completed our public awareness campaign, and set the groundwork for our upcoming human-tiger conflict mitigation training for TLNP staff. We thank WildCats Conservation Alliance for your support during this important time, the early days of the establishment of TLNP, and look forward to presenting more detail in our final report.

Attachments

- Figures 1-10
- Interim financial report



Figure 1. Conducting a survey with a cattle farmer in northeast China. Photo © WCS China



Figure 2. Conducting a survey of villagers. Photo © WCS China



Figure 3. Residents at one of our human-tiger conflict mitigation public presentations. Photo © WCS China



Figure 4. HMFB staff distributed human-tiger conflict resolution booklets. Photo © WCS China



Figure 5. Community representatives who received human-tiger conflict resolution training. Photo © HMFB



Figure 6. Human-tiger conflict resolution education at a township school. Photo © HMFB



Figure 7. Playing a game about habitat encroachment with children during a human-tiger conflict mitigation exercise. Photo © HMFB



Figure 8. Students writing down their impressions of the human-tiger conflict resolution program. Photo © WCS China



Figure 9. Conducting a human-tiger conflict resolution program for the forest farm community. Photo © WCS China



Figure 10. Farmers and other community members at our human-tiger conflict resolution program. Photo © WCS China



**Interim Financial Report
to the
Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance**

**Developing an Effective Human-Tiger Conflict
Resolution Strategy for Northeast China**

Grant Amount: GBP 20,417
Award Date: April 3, 2018
Grant Period: April 3, 2018 - September 30, 2019
Report Period: April 3, 2018 - January 31, 2019
WCS Reference: 111066 / 2CN10

Budget Item	Proposal Budget (¥)	Proposal Budget (£)	Actual Expenses (USD)
Objective 1: Hold technical training session			
Travel			
Visas for 8 trainees @ ¥ 1000/person/time for 8 people * 1 trip	8,000	952	0
Travel between Hunchun and Russia for 8 trainees @ ¥ 700/person/trip * 1 trip	5,600	667	0
Room and board for 8 trainees @ ¥ 400/person/day for 8 people * 5 days	16,000	1,905	0
Conference and Meetings			0
Meeting room rental: @ ¥ 2000/day * 2 days	4,000	476	0
Food for workshop @ ¥ 2000/meal * 4 meals	8,000	952	0
Purchased services			
Translation for training handbook @ ¥ 6000	6,000	714	1,040
Supplies and Materials			
Printing handbook @ ¥ 30/unit*30	900	107	0
Auxiliary equipment (e.g., pulse oximeter, stethoscope, thermometer) @ ¥ 10,000	10,000	1,190	0
Miscellaneous supplies @ ¥ 1500	1,500	179	0
Objective 2: Conduct public education campaign in local communities			
Travel			
Fuel @ ¥ 150/car/day for 2 cars * 10 days	3,000	357	205
Work meals @ ¥ 100/person/day for 8 people * 10 days	8,000	952	1,550
Purchased services			
Stipend @ ¥ 200/person/day for 6 people * 10 days	12,000	1,429	697
Conference and Meetings			
Food for training @ ¥ 100/person * 10 people	1,000	119	100
Purchased services			0
Translation of Russian conflict-mitigation pamphlet @ ¥ 2000	2,000	238	0
Supplies and Materials			
Printing education material @ ¥ 30/unit* 100 units	3,000	357	358
Miscellaneous supplies @ ¥ 1500	1,500	179	0
Operational Costs			
Staff time (11% salary of China Director for 3 months; 35% salary for Senior project officer for 10 months; 35% salary of Senior project assistant for 10 months)	61,500	7,321	10,250
Operations (25% annual rent of Hunchun office and 45% vehicle maintenance)	19,500	2,321	2,570
Total	¥171,500	£20,415	\$16,770

Approved by:

Robert Calamo
VP/Comptroller WCS & CFO Global Division

3/14/2019

Date