



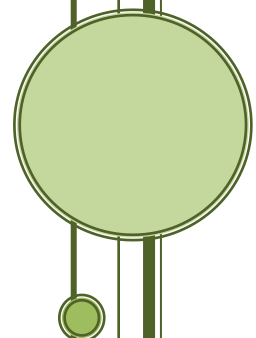
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ANTI-POACHING ACTIVITIES IN LAZOVSKY NATURE RESERVE IN 2010-2011

September 2010 – August 2011



Phoenix Fund
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This is a year progress report that provides an overview of anti-poaching efforts by the guardians of the Lazovsky Nature Reserve from September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2011 and summarizes the results.

The goal of the project is to create conditions to ensure the long-term protection of the Amur / Siberian tiger population, its prey and habitat in Lazovsky Nature Reserve / zapovednik, Primorye, Russian Far East.

Background



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Coastline of Lazovsky Nature Reserve

The Lazovsky Nature Reserve in the southeast of Primorsky region (about 250 km far from Vladivostok city) was established in 1935. On February 12th, 2010 it celebrated its 75th anniversary. This second biggest nature reserve in the region covers 121,000 hectares; its protected buffer zone is 15,000 hectares. Due to its peculiar relief and location, the reserve is home to 2,000 plant species of various geographical zones (e.g. taiga, tundra and even subtropical zone), 57 animal species and 319 birds. The protected area (PA) is famous for such rare animals as Amur tiger (also known as Siberian, Manchurian, Ussuri, North-Eastern Chinese tiger), goral and sika deer, as well as relict yew trees. The general extension of the reserve is 240 km, where included 36 km along the coast of the East Sea / Sea of Japan. The southeastern borders of the reserve are spread along the coast. The Lazovsky Reserve is composed of continental area and two islands in the East Sea / Sea of Japan, namely Petrov and Beltsov ones. The Lazovsky Nature Reserve is one of the most beautiful places in Primorye with its

mountains and waterfalls, taiga forest and islands.

This nature reserve is the most important area for Amur tiger conservation in the southern Sikhote-Alin mountain range. For the last 20 years the reserve has maintained the highest tiger density in southern Primorye and one of the highest in the whole tiger habitat. Nowadays, there are about 10-12 resident or constantly visiting tigers. One to three litters are born to resident tigresses annually. High prey densities and efficient anti-poaching and fire-fighting activities of the reserve promote high density of endangered Amur tigers.

Major and small roads surround the nature reserve. Besides, there are two big villages (Preobrazhenye village – 12,000 people and Lazo village – 2,500 people) close to it. Difficult economic situation and unemployment, especially in remote areas of the region, represent the biggest problems for conservation. Besides, the reserve borders upon numerous hunting leases, and it often happens that animals migrate and fall prey to hunters. The Lazovsky Nature Reserve still manages to hold back poaching in its territory and adjacent areas, but in order to improve its activities and strengthen protection of endangered wildlife of the reserve it is crucial to support the anti-poaching teams and improve their

field equipment. This will allow to decrease the number of poachers/intruders and maintain high densities of the Amur tigers and other animals, as well as conserving the important habitat.

Nature reserves (zapovedniks) are perhaps the most important conservation areas. In Russia, the status of the nature reserve means that nobody can enter the reserve except for the wildlife, scientists, and rangers. All human activities are prohibited. It does not have a fence along its borders, but there are warning boards around it. Since 1995, the Lazovsky Nature Reserve is considered one of the best in Russia on the basis of their protection, education and outreach activities. But it is a state organization and the federal funding is not sufficient for efficient protection of the unique biodiversity there.



Collecting anti-poaching data using GPS

Since 2005 the Dreamworld Conservation Fund has been supporting anti-poaching activities

of one of the Lazovsky Nature Reserve's teams. Thanks to continued support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund and the 21st Century Tiger, the anti-poaching team was provided with fuel, field clothes and necessary equipment. The inspectors who reveal the greatest number of violations were awarded with incentives (supplement to monthly salary).

We present here for your consideration a twelve-month report on the activities carried out from the 1st of September 2010 to the 31st of August 2011.

Project activities

With the support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund and the 21st Century Tiger the anti-poaching team of Lazovsky Nature Reserve continued implementing its activities in 2010-2011.

The four-people rapid response team and subsidiary patrol teams (9 rangers in total) worked to prevent and stop violations in the reserve. They also participated in tiger census. The officers used UAZ all-terrain vehicle, motor boats, photo cameras, authorized arms and other necessary equipment. Most of the time they patrol the territory on foot. The rapid response team worked in shifts, namely the inspectors worked their allotted hours within 10 days, after

which they were given time off. The other patrol teams normally left for the patrol in the morning and returned in the evening. Sometimes the rangers made longer patrols of 2-3 days.



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Taking measurements of tiger tracks

For the period from September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011 the team revealed 53 violations (illegal hunting, trespassing and gathering non-timber forest products), seized five illegal guns, meat of a poached wild boar and initiated four criminal proceedings. *Table in the Attachment* shows the results for the reported period.

Description of the field work

In September – December 2010, the environmental enforcement in Lazovsky Nature Reserve traditionally was carried out by an anti-poaching team in cooperation with patrol teams of local forestry organizations.

In September, the guardians patrolled on foot the periphery of



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Repairing a patrol car in the field

the nature reserve as well as its core area. September is known to be ginseng gatherers' favorite season. They penetrated deep into the protected area and stayed there for 3 to 5 days. Illegal intrusion into the nature reserve for recreational purposes was rife in September.

In September-October, special attention was paid to the coastline of the protected area where rare and endangered species listed in the Russia's Red Book, namely goral and sika deer, live. The coastline was closely observed from the sea during boat patrols and patrolled by guardians during foot patrols. Observation posts were set in bays where poachers were likely to show up and land. Time and again small size vessels were observed near the protected coastline at night. There were even several cases when a ray of light was seen coming from a vessel allegedly to spot and blind wild deer on the land. Poachers landed

only when an animal was killed. It is always difficult for anti-poaching teams to fight this type of poaching due to rugged relief of the coastline which hinders guardians' efforts to reach violators who disembarked from a vessel. Also, it is a challenge to detain poachers on the sea, because they can easily discard their prey and illegal rifle at any moment. According to the chief inspector, the only effective way to eliminate poaching is to conduct combined foot and boat patrols with ambushes in spots where poachers were more likely to pass.



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Examining a spot where poachers allegedly entered the protected area

In November, more attention was paid to foot patrols along the reserve's borders and its core area. November is the most difficult season for revealing violations due to lack of snow and low temperature in the early hours of the morning and at night which makes it impossible to make ambushes. After snowfalls in December, the teams patrolled on

foot or by patrol vehicles. Footprints on the snow left by intruders let the guardians to reveal and prevent wildlife crimes.

In mid-December, special attention was given to patches where coniferous young plants grow, however no cases of illegal logging were recorded.



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Boat patrol

In January-February 2011, the teams continued patrolling the protected area and tracked tigers. Foot and vehicle patrols were conducted along the perimeter of the reserve. Thanks to snow cover it was easy for the guardians to discover footprints left by intruders. During the two months the guardians issued one citation on illegal hunting and one citation on intrusion, and seized an illegal rifle.

On January 26, when patrolling near Mysovaya valley the team found footprints indicating illegal entry to the protected area. After a short foot pursuit, the guardians arrested a violator with a carbine, a backpack and a plastic bag. The man had no gun license. The guardians called the police. Upon arrival to the scene, police officers seized the firearm, examined the scene and gathered all evidences in order to initiate a criminal proceeding against the violator.

In February, the weather was pretty warm and snow began melting on the southern slopes of the hills and along the river valleys. In this regard, the teams patrolled mostly on foot. On February 12, while patrolling Petrovskaya valley, the team found footprints allegedly left by two people. The team chased violators for several hours, but failed to catch them.

On February 21, the guardians patrolled Preobrazhensky pass and discovered footprints indicating illegal entry to the protected area. After a short pursuit, the team arrested a man with a rifle. The violator had a gun license. He was imposed a fine of 2,000 rubles (68 AUD).



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Police officers take footage at the scene where a violator was arrested by the guardians

In March-April 2011, the teams patrolled the protected area to prevent any wildlife crime and forest fires. The guardians mostly patrolled on foot or by all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile. The mobile team worked 10-11 consecutive work days, and then had days-off. Patrol teams worked 24, 48 or 72 hours. Besides prevention and detection of wildlife crimes, the guardians were also involved in creating new fire breaks, clearing and maintaining old ones and removing inflammable material from the forest floor, and setting up warning signs along the periphery of the protected area. All in all, the teams revealed one fact of illegal hunting, detained trespassers four times and seized a rifle.

In March, no violation was revealed in the nature reserve. On March 9, the first forest fire occurred in the protected area. It started on the adjacent territory and spread wide

almost immediately approaching the borders of the Lazovsky Nature Reserve. At once, the forces of Preobrazhensky forestry arrived and put out the fire. In total, the fire burnt an area of 30 ha, including 3 ha of the protected area.



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Forest fire in the reserve

The most complicated situation was in April when forest fires occurred many times nearby the borders of the protected area and threatened to spread out over a large area and enter the nature reserve. Agricultural burnings were the main cause of fires. Fire-fighting crews of three local forestry organizations were dispatched to put out the forest fires. A mobile anti-poaching team continued patrolling the protected area in order to prevent and detect any wildlife crime. Other teams could recommence anti-poaching patrols only after heavy rains. All in all, six fires (193 ha) were extinguished inside the Lazovsky Nature Reserve and 20 forest fires (660 ha) on the

adjacent territory in April. Thanks to prompt response to information about fires and fire prevention measures the guardians could keep fires under control and prevented the burning of large areas in the protected area.



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Foot patrol

On April 1, a local angler was apprehended for illegal presence and attempted fishing.

On April 15, the mobile anti-poaching team detained a man for illegal presence. Since autumn 2010 the guardians have been discovering signs of illegal intrusion from time to time. The violators always entered the protected area near the Svobodyanka spring. Since then, that place was paid special attention and regularly patrolled. Late at night of April 15 the members of the mobile anti-poaching team made an ambush. Shortly, they spotted two men leaving the protected area. The guardians rushed out to detain the

violators. Unfortunately, one man managed to escape. Another man with a carbine and a backpack full of wild boar meat was arrested. The guardians handed over all documents about the revealed violation to local police in order to initiate a criminal proceeding pursuant to article 258 of Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. If convicted, the poacher would face a fine of 200,000 roubles (7,400 AUD) or a six-month imprisonment. After a thorough investigation, the police initiated a criminal proceeding. A genetic examination proved that the meat seized by the inspectors from the poacher came from a wild boar. During an



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Two violators detained in Pashigou bay

interrogation the poacher claimed that there was another person with him hunting illegally in the protected area, which caused some vagueness and uncertainty regarding his guilt. The investigators should determine who killed the animal. The case is still under investigation.

The next morning, April 16, in the Upper Scobodyanka spring a forest fire was detected. With strong wind the fire spread too fast deep into the nature reserve. A team of six guardians went to the scene immediately, but managed to reach the place in an hour and a half. By that time, the fire burnt up to 60 ha. The guardians began creating a fire break in front of a main fire front in order to prepare for back burning. The basic reason for back burning is so that there is little material that can burn when the main fire reaches the burnt area. But two hours later they informed the headquarters that it was impossible to stop the fire because they could not start back burning due to strong gusty wind. A fire crew of Lazovsky forestry was sent to help them put out the fire. Only early the next morning, April 17, the fire was extinguished. During the day some small fires occurred on the flanks of last evening fire but were put out immediately by the guardians. On April 18, only one small fire occurred on the burnt area and it was extinguished at once.

On late evening April 24 during a foot patrol along the coastline in Uglovaya Bay the guardians discovered a small camp with two men inside. The men were in possession of backpacks and hunting knives. No firearm was found in the camp. Early the next morning, April 25, the guardians

visited that place again and spotted a man with a backpack. They stopped the man and asked to show what his backpack contained. There were two hunting knives and an ammunition belt with cartridges in the backpack. No gun was found.

In May, the team paid much attention to natural salt licks visited regularly by ungulates. Also, the guardians watched over artificial salt licks created by hunters on the areas abutting the nature reserve. The coastline area of the reserve was patrolled on a regular basis.



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Spring scenery

On May 26, while patrolling Pashigou bay the team detained two men who had arrived by a motor boat to hunt in the protected area. When searching their tent, the guardians found a smoothbore and a hand-made rifled carbine, and some devices for hunting at night. During detention the violators were defiant towards the guardians. Even the police officers who arrived at the scene

immediately were shocked by their impudence and rudeness. One of the detainees, who possessed the smoothbore and 18 cartridges, turned out to be a police officer from Vladivostok, capital city of Primorsky krai. Pursuant to article 258 part 2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, a criminal proceeding was initiated against the violators.



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Spring patrol

In June-July, the prompt response team worked by shifts 10-11 days long, 20 days each months for each ranger. The patrol teams made regular patrols one day long, sometimes 2-3 days. In total, the team made 11 reports: one on illegal hunting, three on illegal gathering of forest products, and seven on trespassing.

On June 17, during an ambush at the place where trespassers' footprints had been previously observed, the team detained a group of three men, one of them being wanted by the federal police.

He was hiding in the reserve. The rangers called the police to seize the man, and imposed administrative fines for trespassing on the three of them (2,000 rubles/66 AUD).

On July 25, during an ambush in cooperation with the district police at the natural salt lick the team stopped a man who was planning to hunt illegally from a tree. He had a homemade rifled gun and a backpack with plastic bags inside. The rangers made a report on a criminal case. The investigation is in progress.



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Tiger tracks in sand

On July 29, the team stopped a ginseng digger and imposed a fine of 33 AUD on him. On July 30, two more diggers were stopped, equipped with tents and food, and had to pay fines 50 AUD each.

In August, the teams drew a report on illegal hunt in the reserve (the officers imposed a fine of 66 AUD

on the violator and initiated criminal proceedings), 15 administrative reports on trespassing imposing fines in the amount of either 33 AUD or 66 AUD depending on aggravating circumstances, and four reports on gathering wildlife products (fines of 66 AUD were imposed).



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Leg-trapping snares removed

The teams patrolled along the perimeter of the reserve and deep into it, made ambushes, checked natural salt licks and patrolled by boats along the coastline of the reserve. In heavy rains the teams checked the forest huts, in which ginseng diggers could be hiding. As many as 14 people were stopped for penetrating into the reserved area for recreation purposes.

On August 3, the team detained two ginseng diggers. They had a food supply, a tent and sleeping bags with them, though no ginseng roots.

On August 11, during a night patrol the team spotted two men sleeping

by a campfire. They turned to be Ivanov brothers. One of them had an unregistered smoothbore gun. Those violators had been previously detained in the reserve before. The rangers brought them to the district police station, and a decision is now being taken on initiation of a criminal case on illegal hunting.

On August 26, at Petrov Bay the rangers apprehended a former Lavosky reserve staff member, who came to the seacoast to have rest and noticed he was being filmed by a photo camera. While trying to burn it, he was caught. The rangers made an administrative report on the violator, and most likely he will have to reimburse the damage, on his free will or through the courts.

On August 30, the team stopped two ginseng diggers and drew a report on them.

MIST patrol data storage system

In order to improve law enforcement efforts in the nature reserve, Phoenix in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoological Society of London introduced MIST (Management Information System) in autumn 2010. MIST is a system for monitoring poaching pressures and anti-poaching patrol quality. We hope that implementation of MIST, along with additional support for anti-poaching efforts, will produce great improvement in

morale and effectiveness of anti-poaching teams in the protected area.

We are glad to report that the Lazovsky NR have made impressive progress with the implementation of MIST. The system already operates well and has produced good quality data. The overall quality of data collection by inspectors was satisfactory. The quality of the data entry by the protected area staff has been excellent (see examples of maps and tables based on MIST database in the attachment).

To encourage good performance in the ranger teams, an incentive system linked to MIST was developed. The point is that many inspectors in PAs lack motivation due to extremely low salaries, and it is hard to ensure them to work with MIST without incentives. However, some of them are interested in improving protection, but hesitant to use new procedures that substantially increase the workload of inspectors. We agreed with the protected area management to finance an incentive system that will be based on quality of MIST work, patrol efforts and patrol results. After the first incentive payments being paid, we noticed more enthusiasm and willingness among the inspectors to carry on the work with MIST.

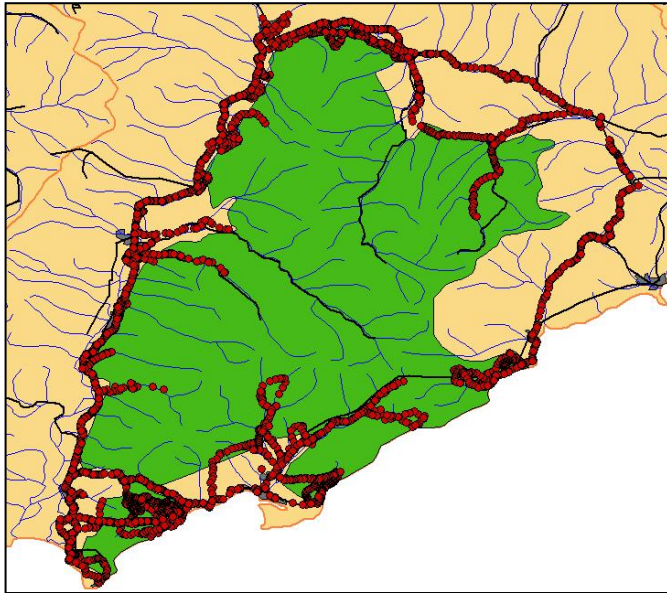
Additionally, refresher training for the inspectors at Lazovsky was held in June to ensure correct and accurate data entry by the protected area staff. During the meeting at Lazovsky NR, their managers were satisfied with the MIST database collected the inspectors and found it very useful to analyse anti-poaching efforts, results and to plan further activities. Such regular meeting with the inspectors provide the opportunity to discuss results and set new patrol targets.

Attachment

Table. Results of anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky Nature Reserve,
September 2010 – August 2011

Activity	Quantity
I. Violations documented:	
1.1. Hunting	6
1.2. Fishing	-
1.3. Trespassing	40
1.4. Gathering wild plants	7
1.5. Logging	-
2. Weapons confiscated and handed over to the police	5
3. Wildlife products confiscated/discovered:	
3.1. Sika deer	-
3.2. Asiatic black bear	-
3.3. Musk deer	-
3.4. Wild boar	1
4. Initiated criminal proceedings	4
5. Protocols forwarded to the police and Prosecutor's office for criminal procedure	-
6. Poaching devices confiscated:	
6.1. Traps	-
6.2. Fishing devices	-
6.3. Snare	-
7. Extinguished fires	8
8. Convicted persons	-
9. Fines imposed	AUD \$1,910
10. Restitution imposed	AUD \$385 for broken camera

Pic. 1. Patrol routes in Lazovsky Nature Reserve (MIST data received during a three-month trial period)



Pic.2. Protected areas of Primorye

