



21ST CENTURY TIGER
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Phoenix Fund

Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve in 2010/2011

Interim report

September 1, 2010 – February 28, 2011



**Vladivostok
Russian Far East
2011**



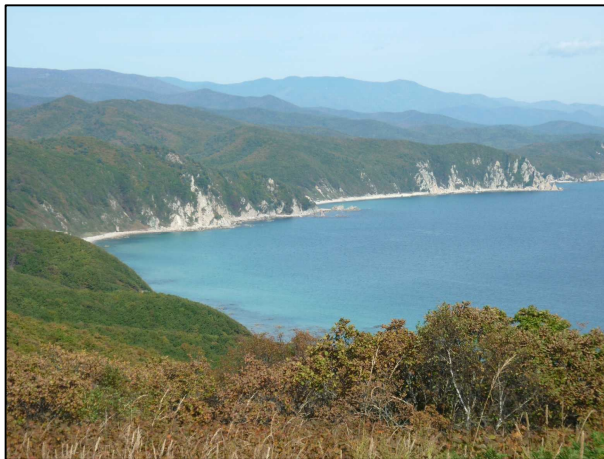
INTERIM REPORT

Grantor: The Dreamworld Conservation Fund / 21 Century Tiger
Project Name: Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve in 2010/2011
Grantee: The Phoenix Fund
Report Period: September 1, 2010 – February 28, 2011
Grant Period: September 1, 2010 – August 31, 2011

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

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.



Lazovsky Nature Reserve

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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.



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Collecting anti-poaching data using a GPS unit

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). 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 present here for your consideration an interim report on the activities carried out from the 1st of September 2010 to the 28th of February 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.



Boat patrol

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Foot patrol along the coastline

the periphery of the nature reserve as well as favorite season. Usually, they penetrate deep into the protected area and stay there for 3 to 5 days. Illegal intrusion into the nature reserve for recreational purposes was rife in September 2010.

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 live, namely goral and sika deer. 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



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Repairing a patrol car in the field

For the period from September 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011 the team revealed 15 violations (illegal hunting and trespassing), seized one illegal gun, and initiated a criminal proceeding. Table in the Attachment I shows the results for the reported period.

Description of the field work

In September –December 2010, environmental enforcement in Lazovsky Nature Reserve traditionally was carried out by a 4-man anti-poaching team in cooperation with patrol teams of local forestry organizations.

In September, the guardians patrolled on foot its core area. September is ginseng gatherers'



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Taking measurements of tiger tracks

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.

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



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Examining a spot where poachers allegedly entered the protected area

in December the teams patrolled on foot or by patrol vehicles. Footprints on the snow left by intruders help the guardians to reveal and prevent wildlife crimes.

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

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 on the scene, police officers seized the firearm, examined the scene and gathered all evidences in order to initiate criminal proceedings 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 indicated 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 68 AUD.



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

**ATTACHMENT I**

Results of anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky Nature Reserve, September 2010 – February 2011

Activity	Quantity
I. Violations documented:	
1.1. Hunting	1
1.2. Fishing	-
1.3. Trespassing	14
1.4. Gathering wild plants	-
1.5. Logging	-
2. Weapons confiscated and handed over to the police	1
3. Wildlife products confiscated/discovered:	
3.1. Dead sika deer	-
3.2. Asiatic black bear	-
3.3. Musk deer	-
3.4. Wild boar	-
4. Initiated criminal proceedings	1
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. Convicted persons	-
9. Fines imposed	AUD \$68 (2,000 roubles)
10. Restitution imposed	-



ATTACHMENT II

