



21ST CENTURY TIGER
giving wild tigers a future

Phoenix Fund Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve in 2007/2008

**Interim report
September 01, 2007 – February 29, 2008**



**Vladivostok
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2008**



INTERIM REPORT

Grantor: The Dreamworld Conservation Fund / 21 Century Tiger
Project Name: Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve in 2007/2008
Grantee: The Phoenix Fund
Report Period: September 01, 2007 – February 29, 2008
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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



Russian Far East represents the only area in the world where both Siberian / Amur tigers and leopards still exist in the wild. Although for the last 10 years Amur tigers have been snatched from the brink of extinction (today there are about 400 of them), they still face many threats. Tigers are still being poached for their skins, bones and other parts that are valued for their medical purposes in Asia. The insatiable demand for tiger ingredients appears to be the main driving force behind this poaching and traffic.

The Lazovsky nature reserve in the south-east of Primorsky region, Southern Russian Far East, on the Sea of Japan, was established in 1935. This second biggest nature reserve in the region covers 121,000 hectares; its protected buffer zone is 15,000 hectares.

Situated on the eastern slopes of the Sikhote-Alin mountain range, this nature reserve is rich in rare and endangered animals and plants. It is home to highly endangered Amur tigers. This nature reserve is the most important area for the Amur tiger conservation in the southern Sikhote-Alin. 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.



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 Lazovsky nature reserve

Nature reserves are perhaps the most important conservation areas. The status of the nature reserve means that nobody can enter the reserve except for the wildlife, scientists, and rangers. All human activity is 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.

Major and small roads surround the nature reserve. Besides, there are two big towns (Preobrazheniye town – 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. The Lazovsky nature reserve still manages to hold back poaching on 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 for decreasing the number of poachers/intruders and maintaining high densities of the Amur tigers



© Lazovsky nature reserve
Mountains of the reserve

and other animals, as well as conserving an important habitat.

Since 2005 the Dreamworld Conservation Fund has been supporting anti-poaching activities of one of the Lazovsky nature reserve teams. From September 2007 to February 2008 the team revealed 5 hunting violations, a violation of fishing regulations, 4 cases of illegal logging, 14 cases of trespassing into the reserve, confiscated 6 illegal weapons and initiated 3 criminal procedures.



© Lazovsky nature reserve
Protection division on a patrol

Project activities

With the support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund the anti-poaching team of Lazovsky nature reserve continues implementing its activities in 2007-2008. Table 1 in the attachment shows its results for the reported period.

For the period September-November 2007 the reserve's guards filed charges on three illegal hunters, an illegal fisherman, six men that intruded onto the reserved territory on foot or by car. The rangers confiscated a homemade rifled gun, two



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Dinner in the field



smoothbore guns and a harpoon. They discovered a poached sika deer and a Himalayan bear. A criminal procedure has been initiated for illegal hunt.

In early October the reserve's protection division got a tip that a certain Mr. Bogach and his friends came to Svobodnoye village to hunt. The rangers already had some information on the man: namely that he had no licensed gun and was not a member of any hunting society.



© Lazovsky nature reserve
Dear found dead

Despite this he penetrated onto the reserved territory with a view to dig out ginseng. Once the team stopped him and filed charges for violation of reserved regime. There was not enough evidence to register ginseng poaching. This time with the help of communicants the officers spotted and detained Mr. Bogach at night near its most recent bag – a sika deer, listed in the Red Book of Russian Federation. He was caught red-handed: with meat, a knife, a double barrel gun with cartridges and an accumulator light. The violator did not deny his guilt. He showed the place where he had hidden a dear head, skin and hooves. The

rangers forwarded the reports and the material evidence to the police.

The rangers discovered a killed bear in the forest; a criminal remained unknown.

In December during a December 08-15 patrol, the law enforcement team of Lazovsky Nature Reserve filed charges against four illegal loggers, two hunters and two men who illegally entered the reserved territory. They withdrew rifles and smoothbore shotguns. Two criminal cases were initiated against poachers. During the holidays season patrols were conducted more intensively, three anti-poaching teams worked all at once on the territory.



© Lazovsky nature reserve
Accident during a patrol



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Tracking violators

On December 01, rangers noticed signs of illegal entrance into the reserve near Sokolovka natural landmark. They laid an ambush by the boundary and several hours later apprehended two armed men.

Special attention was paid to protection of young conifers during the holiday season. Four cases of illegal logging were revealed.

A dead sika deer was found in the reserve. Bloodstains led to the feeding ground of "Medved" (Bear) hunting grounds bordering the reserve. The officers called for the police that



proceed with investigation.

In January – February the protection division of the reserve stopped six trespassers and confiscated a rifled gun. The detainees wanted to hunt within Lazovsky forestry. The work was organized by groups of 3-5 officers. Three teams at a time operated in the field. All the rangers are fitted with field equipment: radio stations, authorized guns, "UAZ" off-road vehicles, and fuel for them. Patrols were done both along the boundaries and deep into the forest. Coastal areas were patrolled on foot. During hunting season more rangers were involved at the same time, and each ten days they spent four-five days in the forest. Their activities on the sanctuary protection proved very efficient. The reserve animal world did not suffer any considerable losses. Compared to results of 2006, we observe fewer cases of poaching and trespassing. It proves that protection regime is well organized in the reserve.



ATTACHMENT

Table 1. Results of anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve, September 2007 – February 2008.

Activity	September 2007 – February 2008
I. Violations documented:	
1.1. Hunting	5
1.2. Fishing	1
1.3. Intrusion	14
1.4. Gathering wild plants	0
1.5. Logging	4
2. Illegal weapons confiscated and handed over to the police	6
3. Wildlife products confiscated/discovered:	
3.1. Dead sika deer	1
3.2. Himalayan black bear	1
4. Initiated criminal proceedings	3
5. Protocols forwarded to the police and Prosecutor's office for criminal procedure	3
6. Poaching devices confiscated:	
6.1. Traps	0
6.2. Fishing devices	1
7. Extinguished fires	-
8. Convicted persons	3



Acknowledgement

Phoenix Fund thanks most sincerely the Dreamworld Conservation Fund/21 Century Tiger for continuous interest in wildlife conservation in the Far East of Russia and invaluable financial support that enables us to make our anti-poaching activities realizable and more efficient.