





## INTERIM REPORT

**Grantor:** The Dreamworld Conservation Fund / 21 Century Tiger  
**Project Name:** Anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve in 2009/2010  
**Grantee:** The Phoenix Fund  
**Report Period:** September 1, 2009 – February 28, 2010  
**Grant Period:** September 1, 2009 – August 31, 2010

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 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010 it celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> 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. 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.



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 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger in 2009-2010, the anti-poaching team of Lazovsky Nature Reserve was provided with fuel and necessary equipment.

We present here for your consideration an interim report on the activities carried out from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2009 to the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2010.

**Project activities**



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Inspector discovered signs of poaching (deer hides and bones) on the area adjacent to the nature reserve

With the support from the Dreamworld Conservation Fund and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tiger the anti-poaching team of Lazovsky Nature Reserve continued implementing its activities in 2009-2010.

For the six months of the grant period the protection division of the Lazovsky nature reserve revealed two facts of ungulates poaching, one case of illegal fishing, made 13 reports on trespassing and two reports on illegal gathering of wild plants inside the reserve. Table in the Attachment I shows the results for the reported period.

The four-people rapid response team and subsidiary patrol teams 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.

During the reported period the inspectors initiated two criminal proceedings and two violators were sentenced.

**Field work**

In September, the team carried out patrols to hinder people from entering the protected area illegally and gathering roots of wild ginseng. The inspectors patrolled on foot, by vehicle and boat, and made ambushes to detect violations. As a result, they revealed one case of illegal fishing, detained two men for gathering ginseng roots and apprehended five people for illegal presence in the reserve.



Patrol on foot

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In October-November, the reserve’s staff members were focused on preventing illegal hunting within the protected area. Special attention was paid on weekends. The inspectors



patrolled on foot, by vehicle and patrol motorboat, and laid ambushes at places of possible poacher intrusion. As a result, a man was detained for illegal presence in the reserve. Once, the reserve's staff participated in extinguishing a forest fire that occurred 2 km far from Lazo town. Due to strong wind it took three days to put out the fire.



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Forest fire on the area adjacent to the nature reserve

In October, two brothers (Andrei and Alexander Bogach), who were detained in June for illegal presence with firearms in the protected area, were charged with illegal hunting. Alexander was given a six-month suspended sentence. Andrei was sentenced to a six-month imprisonment.

In December, it was easier to track violators because of snow coverage. The team patrolled mostly by vehicle and snowmobile. The inspectors patrolled on skies when the area was inaccessible to motorized vehicles. Heavy snowfalls made most part of the protected area totally inaccessible and the staff members could concentrate on places of possible trespassing. Only one person

managed to enter the reserve illegally, but he was apprehended by the inspectors.

In January 2010, the anti-poaching team of four people in cooperation with subsidiary teams of forest organizations conducted regular patrols on the protected area. The teams were equipped with means of communication, digital photo cameras, outfit and other necessary equipment. The patrols were carried out by an UAZ vehicle and a snowmobile.

Due to high snow the inspectors did not patrol deep into the reserve. It was quite easy to discover footprints of intruders left on snow cover. Regular patrols made it possible to minimize illegal intrusion into the protected area. Once, the inspectors detained a man for illegal fishing in the reserve. The violator was made to pay a fine of 1,000 rubles (AUD \$38). The only area of concern was a sector of the reserve's boundaries adjoining a Lazo-Preobrazhenye highway where numerous cases of poaching were recorded. The point is that due to heavy snowfalls ungulates, mostly sika deer that is included in Russia's Endangered Species List, were driven from the reserve towards river valleys and public roads to find food where poachers were waiting patiently for deer to come. Time and again local people informed about discovered signs of poaching, namely deer hide, head, blood spots etc. Therefore, the inspectors kept a close watch on this area and forwarded the information about revealed violations to local police station.



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Snowmobile patrol



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Deer killed in Lazovsky nature reserve

In February, the anti-poaching team of four people and one team of Lazovsky forestry patrolled the protected area and abutting territories and revealed two cases of poaching. The patrols were carried out by an UAZ vehicle, a snowmobile and on foot.

On February 5, while patrolling along Lazo-Preobrazhenye highway close to the reserve's boundaries, the inspectors noted fresh footprints leading inside the protected area. About 150-200 meters away from the road they spotted a violator dragging a carcass of killed female sika deer. When the man saw the inspectors approaching him, he throw down the deer and tried to make away. The inspectors pursued him until the violator reached his car

parked by the roadside. He managed to get in the car, but the inspectors blocked his way and ordered him to get out. The violator refused to leave his car and threatened the inspectors with a traumatic pistol. Then, he snatched a moment and tried to escape driving his jeep. Two reserve's staff members jumped into the poacher's car. The rest team members continued chasing on the patrol vehicle. Near the violator's house the poacher was ultimately blocked and detained. The man turned out to be a local police officer. In this respect, a criminal proceeding was initiated. The violator was dismissed immediately from his post.

On February 20, another case of deer poaching in the reserve was recorded. Poachers allegedly shot a deer right from the public road. The violators drove away from the scene as soon as they noticed the patrol vehicle approaching them. Unfortunately, the inspectors failed to chase the poachers.

**ATTACHMENT I**Results of anti-poaching activities in Lazovsky nature reserve, September 2009 – February 2010

<b>Activity</b>	<b>September 2008 – August 2009</b>
<b>I. Violations documented:</b>	
1.1. Hunting	2
1.2. Fishing	3
1.3. Intrusion	13
1.4. Gathering wild plants	2
1.5. Logging	-
<b>2. Weapons confiscated and handed over to the police</b>	3
<b>3. Wildlife products confiscated/discovered:</b>	
3.1. Dead sika deer	2 (80 kg)
3.2. Himalayan black bear	-
3.3. Musk deer	-
3.4. Wild boar	-
<b>4. Initiated criminal proceedings</b>	2
<b>5. Protocols forwarded to the police and Prosecutor's office for criminal procedure</b>	2
<b>6. Poaching devices confiscated:</b>	
6.1. Traps	-
6.2. Fishing devices	-
6.3. Snare	-
<b>7. Extinguished fires</b>	-
<b>8. Convicted persons</b>	2
<b>9. Fines imposed</b>	AUD \$750 (19,500 roubles)
<b>10. Restitution imposed</b>	AUD \$1,553 (40,400 roubles)



ATTACHMENT II

