

WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
(Khabarovsk, Russia)

FINAL PROGRAMMATIC REPORT

PROJECT TITLE:

SAVE THE AMUR TIGER FOR FUTURE GENERATION

REPORTING PERIOD:

from December 16, 2004 till December 16, 2005

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT:

to increase knowledge of young people by issues of the Amur Tiger conservation and its habitat through implementation of a complex of environmental-educational measures

Chairman
of the Wildlife Foundation

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2. KEY PROJECT EXECUTORS:

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3. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Wildlife Foundation of Khabarovsk expresses sincere gratitude to the 21st Century Tiger Fund, due to which was possible a performance of the given project.

We thank Naomi McClure MSc, Carnivores and People Project Coordinator, 21st Century Tiger Administrator, for operative communication, valuable advises and consultations on performance of the project.

Special gratitude is expressed to Dale Miquelle, director of the Russian Far East Program of the Wildlife Conservation Society, for coordination of the given project, operative communication, valuable advises and consultations on performance of the project.

Finally, our appreciation to the numerous Russian colleagues (teachers, scientists, local administrations, journalists), who helped us in fulfilling the project.

The Wildlife Foundation did utmost in order to fulfill the project successfully.

4. INTRODUCTION

The Amur tiger is a noteworthy animal in all respects. It is the "tsar" of the animal kingdom in the Far Eastern Taiga and an indicator of regional ecosystem health. Thousands of people in Russia and abroad follow the fate of the tiger, and its problems are now an issue of international significance. The way we treat the tiger: an animal included on endangered species lists around the world, the way we treat an animal that is part of world heritage, these will be the basis for the way the world judge us and our environmental protection efforts. The Amur tiger is not just an element in the environment. The tiger also plays a role in thousands of years of human culture, especially the culture of the indigenous peoples of the Russian Far East (RFE).

The tiger is undergoing a process similar to what other, now extinct species have already undergone. The rate of decline in its numbers since the 1990s has been so dramatic that there is more than adequate reason to be concerned about its fate. The decline in numbers must be stopped now and cannot be allowed to reach the critical level beyond which the process is irreversible. The world has witnessed numerous large numbered species go extinct. The tiger's situation is even more critical since it takes a long time to mature and reproduces slowly. A decline in numbers can cause inbreeding, can sharply decrease the survivability of young, and can lead to a loss of genetic diversity. Many people and organizations are working to halt this process and in fact, the process has been slowed somewhat. But will this continue for long? Any discussion of saving the species from total extinction means looking far into the future. People must protect the environment not for themselves alone. They must also think of future generations...

No one questions the need to protect the tiger as a key biodiversity component and for that reason the effort to protect the predator is international in scope. The Amur tiger conservation, at the international level, means compliance with the provisions in various agreements and conventions to which Russia is party and that directly affect the tiger's fate: the International Union for the Conservation of Nature

(IUCN)'s Endangered Species list, the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Russia has also adopted its own laws, normative acts and enabling legislation that aim to protect the Amur tiger. The various documents adopted at the federal and regional levels underscore the importance of environmental education and public awareness campaigns in the effort to protect the Amur tiger and its habitat.

Thanks to grant of the 21st Century Tiger Fund, the Wildlife Foundation has successfully realized a project “Save the Amur tiger for future generation”. The project helped to organize environmental education and public awareness with local community on constant base by the issues of the Amur tiger conservation. The project was realized on the territory of Khabarovskii Krai.

5. RESULTS OF PROJECT FULFILLMENT

Objectives:

To increase knowledge of the young people by issues of the Amur Tiger conservation and its habitat through implementation of a complex of environmental-educational measures.

- Provide young people with information on the current status of the Amur Tiger and its habitat.
- Indicate where additional sources of information on its status and its habitat are available.
- Promote a respectful, solicitous attitude to the Amur tiger and its habitat, to the environment and culture in general, to instill a sense of responsibility to be personally involved in solving environmental and biodiversity problems.
- Teach schoolchildren to systematize their knowledge of the Amur tiger and its habitat into a written form, to effectively defend their positions in public discussions while at the same time respecting the opinions of others.
- Obtain new research data on the historical significance of the tiger in the culture of the indigenous peoples of the Priamurye.
- Teach schoolchildren to understand the ecosystem links and the tiger role in the ecosystem; various kinds of anthropogenic impacts on nature and the Amur Tiger habitat; the principles and techniques of the Amur Tiger and its feeding objects, how to reduce human/tiger conflicts.

Thanks to the project the teachers of biology and ecology, schoolchildren and their parents received theoretical and practical knowledge by the issues of the Amur Tiger conservation and its habitat.

There was conducted a number of environmental activities. First of all the key project executors have established close ties with 25 schools in Bikinsky, Vyazem-

sky, Nanaisky, Lazo and Khabarovskii rural districts. In December, 2004 the executors of the project have made visits to schools in the above mentioned districts and provided them with environmental literature, educational program on the Amur Tiger conservation and leaflets. The schoolteachers received materials thanks to which they have conducted special lessons in tiger's protection and organized 25 broadcasts at schools.

The teachers arranged a decade in tiger's protection. About 10,000 schoolchildren have participated in the decade. The decade included different competitions, lectures, meetings, conversations and broadcasts. As a result the Wildlife Foundation received a number of children works: drawings, placards, essays, compositions. 600 winners were awarded with gifts.

The schoolteachers have worked not only with the pupils but also with their parents. They distributed the leaflets among the parents prepared by the Wildlife Foundation. The total number of disseminated leaflets is about 3000 copies. The following leaflets were disseminated: "Tiger conservation, its fodder resources, habitat", "Precautionary measures and safety tips for people in Amur Tiger habitat", "Humans and the tiger: peaceful coexistence ". The leaflets are enclosed (Enclosure #1).

The most active schoolchildren and their teachers were invited to participate in Environmental Field School, organized by the Wildlife Foundation, to receive practical skills and knowledge.

For Environmental Field School the Wildlife Foundation has prepared the program and developed the field routes. The program and the routes are written in Russian language and enclosed on CD (Enclosure #2 and Enclosure # 3).

Environmental Field School was functioned in summer, autumn and winter. The main objectives of Environmental Field School were to acquaint the schoolchildren with the tiger life and problems of its protection directly in its habitat; to form an active position of the schoolchildren on a tiger and its habitat protection issues basing on development of ecological thinking, ecological culture and ecologically

sound practice. Environmental Field School united schoolchildren at the age of 12-17 years. The classes took place in summer camp “Youth” and in Environment Field School, situated in a picturesque site of the Khekhtsirskii federal Wildlife Refuge, in a tiger habitat. The total number of educated pupils is 123 and 10 schoolteachers. At Environmental Field School the pupils have acquainted with the Amur Tiger’s life and problems of its protection. The schoolchildren had an opportunity to see the unique nature of the krai, its great biodiversity of flora and fauna. High quality specialists and scientists from the Institute for Water and Ecology Problems and the Far Eastern Research Wildlife Institute taught them. The children have acquainted with 70 species of trees, 25 species of flowers, 15 species of grass on the routes. They studied to collect medicinal plants, to form a forest pharmacy, to define wildlife tracks, how to avoid human/tiger conflicts. The children have received special information about the objects of animate and dead nature. Special objects on the routes were natural monuments. In the course of environmental education various techniques were used: lectures, excursions, thematic excursion, talks, collection of materials, work on the environmental route, competitions. The Wildlife Foundation has arranged 8 excursions for children to the zoo and Forest museum. Photos of Environmental Field School’s activities are directed on CD (Enclosure #4).

After studying at Environmental Field School the schoolchildren are able to:

- orient in natural environment by themselves;
- recognize plants and animals;
- recognize tracks of the wildlife including the Amur Tiger;
- avoid human/tiger conflict;
- understand the ecosystem links and the tiger role in the ecosystem;
- understand various kinds of anthropogenic impacts on nature and the Amur Tiger habitat;
- understand the principles and techniques of the Amur Tiger and its feeding objects;
- put out fires in the forest.

After finishing Environmental Field school the children were asked to fill in the questionnaire. An example of filled questionnaire is enclosed (Enclosure #5). From the questionnaires we came to know that children want to participate in Environmental Field School in future. That is why is necessary to say that the work started by this grant should be continued. The Wildlife Foundation received the letters of gratitude for arrangement of Environmental Field School. The examples of letters of gratitude are enclosed (Enclosure #6).

The Wildlife Foundation came in contact with the NGO “Phoenix” (Vladivostok Primorskii Krai) and organized a meeting with the staff. People from “Phoenix” shared experience of organizing the holiday in tiger’s protection. The Wildlife Foundation disseminated placards about the Amur Tiger prepared by NGO “Phoenix”.

At the end of September, 2005 the Wildlife Foundation together with the colleagues from the zoo organized a Holiday in tiger’s protection. The Holiday was conducted simultaneously in two places: in the zoo and in the summer camp “Youth”. There was organized the children’s show in the zoo for guests and small children and the competition for children teams by the issues of the Amur tiger conservation in the summer camp “Youth”. 140 children participated in the competition. The most active children and their teachers from the remote places of Khabarovskii Krai, who lives in neighborhood with tigers, were invited to the Holiday. About 600 children and their parents participated in the Holiday. The children had an opportunity to make an excursion round the zoo. The most active schoolchildren participated in the competition were awarded with gifts. We hope that children will remember the holiday for a long time. Photos of the Holiday are directed on CD (Enclosure #7).

Mass media was involved in the process of public awareness and dissemination of information about the Amur Tiger. There was conducted a press conference with local journalists by the Amur Tiger issues and the last results of tiger monitoring (winter 2004 - spring 2005). There was prepared a press release on tiger monitor-

ing and disseminated among the journalists. The example of press release (Enclosure #8) and the articles devoted to press conference (Enclosure #9) are enclosed. Local TV interpreted this event. There were written some articles about the Amur Tiger in local newspapers and magazines. The examples of articles are enclosed (Enclosure #10). Hard copies of photos are enclosed (Enclosure #11).

All the activities by the project were fulfilled successfully. The project has achieved its goal.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the fulfillment of the project permit us to come to the following conclusion:

Thanks to the project there was conducted a number of environmental activities: established close ties with 25 schools in Bikinsky, Vyazemsky, Nanaisky, Lazo and Khabarovskii rural districts, arranged special lessons and a decade in tiger's protection, organized 25 broadcasts at schools. About 10,000 schoolchildren have participated in the decade. In the frame of the decade the Wildlife Foundation received a number of children works: drawings, placards, essays, compositions. 600 winners were awarded with gifts. The schoolteachers were involved in the process of tiger conservation. They actively worked not only with the pupils but also with their parents. They distributed 3000 copies of tiger conservation leaflets. There was prepared the program for Environmental Field School for schoolchildren at the age of 12-17 years old and developed field routes. Classes at Environmental Field School were conducted in summer, autumn and winter. The teachers and schoolchildren received practical skills and knowledge by the issues of the Amur Tiger conservation. The total number of educated pupils is 123 and 10 schoolteachers. Environmental Field School provided pupils with information about the Amur Tiger's life and problems of its protection. The schoolchildren had an opportunity to see the unique nature of the Far East, its great biodiversity of flora and fauna. Thanks to the guides the children have acquainted with 70 species of trees, 25 species of flowers, 15 species of grass on the routes. In the course of environmental education various techniques were used: lectures, excursions, thematic excursion, talks, collection of materials, work on the environmental route, competitions. The Wildlife Foundation has arranged 8 excursions for children to the zoo and Forest museum.

At the end of September, 2005 the Wildlife Foundation together with the colleagues from the zoo organized a Holiday in tiger's protection. About 600 children

and their parents participated in the Holiday. The most active schoolchildren participated in the competition by the issues of the Amur Tiger conservation were awarded with gifts. We hope that children will remember the holiday for a long time. Mass media was involved in the process of public awareness and dissemination of information about the Amur Tiger. There was conducted a press conference with local journalists by the last results of tiger monitoring (winter 2004 - spring 2005). There was prepared a press release on tiger monitoring and disseminated among the journalists. There were written some articles about the Amur tiger in local newspapers.

In conclusion is necessary to say that the project is realized in full volume. All activities are fulfilled. The project helped to involve a great number of children and grown-ups in tiger conservation process, to increase their knowledge by the above mentioned issues, to decrease poaching, to reveal key directions in the field of environmental education on tiger conservation issues and plan the priority directions for future work.

7. APPENDIX

Enclosure #1 - examples of leaflets.

Enclosure #2 - environmental Field School's program.

Enclosure #3 - routes of field trips.

Enclosure #4 - CD photos of Environmental Field School's activities.

Enclosure #5 - an example of filled questionnaire.

Enclosure #6 - the examples of letters of gratitude.

Enclosure #7 - CD photos of Tiger's Holiday.

Enclosure #8 - an example of press release on tiger monitoring.

Enclosure #9 - the articles devoted to press conference.

Enclosure #10 - articles about the Amur Tiger from local newspapers.

Enclosure #11 - photos about project's activities