

Press Release

Research on Safari Hunting Operators in Tanzania Shows Scope of Unaccounted-for Conservation Benefits – Millions of Dollars in Anti-Poaching and Community Support, Thousands of Poachers Arrested, Most Habitat and Prey Base Protected

October 25, 2016

A new, comprehensive report proves the essential conservation role of safari hunting in Tanzania. This level of “enhancement” has never before been documented on a countrywide scale.

On Friday, Conservation Force submitted Operator Enhancement Reports to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The reports detail the unaccounted-for benefits to lion, and to those who live with lion, generated by licensed, regulated safari hunting. These benefits largely go unmeasured. They represent spending over and above the government fees and taxes previously reported to the FWS.

The reports are from 27 hunting operators in Tanzania holding 121,000 km² of land. The reports detail the operators’ contributions to anti-poaching, community support, habitat protection, job creation, lion monitoring, and the recovery of species in addition to lion. The reports underscore the critical role the U.S. lion hunters play in sustaining the “enhancement” of more than 50% of Africa’s wild lion population.

The reports reveal the following sample of contributions in the 2013-2015 period. These contributions had not been considered by the FWS, but they are crucial to conservation of the lion in its largest remaining stronghold:

- *Over \$6.7 million in anti-poaching and road opening expenditures*
- *Over \$3.1 million in community investment and participation*
- *The arrest of at least 1,409 poachers and the collection of over 6,000 snares and gin traps*
- *Over \$250,000 in healthcare improvements, including construction of numerous clinics, installation of solar lighting and heating for a village maternity ward, treatment of 1,575 eye ailments, and donations of hundreds of wheelchairs*
- *Over \$337,000 contributed to education projects, including over \$60,000 for school fees, over \$50,000 for school libraries and laboratories, and construction of two dozen classrooms*
- *Over 1,200 jobs created, and another 250+ seasonal jobs*
- *Extensive contributions of harvested game meat to dis-incentivize poaching and provide a sustainable protein source for rural communities*

The reports also describe extensive habitat protection efforts including the drilling of boreholes and building of dams, operations against cattle encroachment, and patrols against timber poaching. Hunting areas in Tanzania are five times larger than the country's national parks, and most lion live outside the parks in those areas. These habitat efforts alone demonstrate that, without hunting, the lion and its prey base would be far worse off in Tanzania.

According to John J. Jackson, President of Conservation Force: "This type of countrywide data collection and analysis has never been done. These are 'extra' contributions that are not counted with government fees, and they are essential to conservation." Jackson also said that the report under-represents the unaccounted-for contributions of safari operators and their clients. "We also discovered over \$1 million contributed by U.S.-based safari clubs for lion research and monitoring in Tanzania. And we could not obtain reports from all operators. The Friendkin Conservation Fund is a huge contributor to anti-poaching and rural communities, and their millions of dollars are in addition to what we calculated."

The Operator Enhancement Reports are supported by over 2,700 pages of source documents. Conservation Force also submitted several hundred pages describing the extensive regulation and oversight of lion hunting in Tanzania, including the science-based quota-setting and age-based restriction on legal lion trophies. The documents were submitted in support of the issuance of FWS permits authorizing import of sport-hunted lion trophies. Contrary to a recent statement by the FWS Director, the FWS has received a number of permit applications for import of lion trophies from Tanzania.

Taken together, these documents leave no doubt that licensed, regulated safari hunting in Tanzania enhances the survival of the lion.

Jackson warns, "over-regulation of trophy imports is chipping away the U.S. client base on which the survival of most lion relies. Without clients, these operators will have no capacity to continue or increase the unaccounted-for conservation benefits they provide. The lion and the hunters need each other."

For a summary of the Operator Enhancement Reports, see <http://www.conservationforce.org/tanzania-hunting-operator-report> or contact John J. Jackson III at 504-837-1233.

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About Conservation Force

Conservation Force is a non-profit public foundation on a mission to advance the conservation of wildlife and wild places. Conservation Force is an international leader in the application of user-pay, sustainable use-based programs to enhance the survival and recovery of listed game species. Since 1997, Conservation Force and its partners have invested millions of dollars in programs and legal challenges on behalf of species like



elephant, rhino, lion, and markhor. Conservation Force is based in Louisiana, with an international Board and staff. Find out more at www.conservationforce.org.



Book delivery to school principle.



Appreciative school children.



The normal fate of lion which hunting operators reduce.



Operator's donation of anti-poaching vehicles.