

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of International Conservation
African Elephant Conservation Fund FY2015
Summary of Projects**

In 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provided funding to 17 projects through the African Elephant Conservation Fund, totaling \$1,798,623, which was matched by \$3,087,300 in additional leveraged funds. Field projects in 13 countries were supported, in addition to one project spanning all Africa range states.

BENIN

AFE1521

Grant # F15AP00723

Protecting the African elephants of the Pendjari and W National Parks in Benin: Securing the last stronghold for the species in West Africa. In partnership with Zoological Society of London. The W-Arly-Pendjari complex on the borders of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger may hold as many as 60% of West Africa's remaining elephants. This project aims to improve wildlife protection in the Benin portions of Pendjari and W. Specific activities include (1) establishing a digital security network; (2) equipping and training 60 ecoguards; and (3) implementing the SMART surveillance, monitoring, and protection approach.

USFWS: \$199,529

Leveraged Funds: \$154,898

CHINA

AFE1538

Grant # F15AP01076

The economics of the Chinese ivory trade. In partnership with Wildlife Conservation Society. In May 2015, the Chinese Government announced that it would "strictly control ivory processing and trade until the commercial processing and sale of ivory and its products are eventually halted." A team including economists and other wildlife trade experts will examine how policy changes might affect ivory trade dynamics and poaching pressure. Activities include (1) two workshops in Beijing and one in Guangzhou to assess variables regarding the scope and timing of such a ban; and (2) drafting recommendations on how the policy could best be implemented to maximize effect in a timely manner.

USFWS: \$49,894¹

Leveraged Funds: \$53,053

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

AFE1558

Grant # F15AP01107

Improving capacity of wildlife rangers to protect the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, DRC. In partnership with Wildlife Conservation Global, Inc. Political and civil instability have taken a

¹ Funded by USFWS Combating Wildlife Trafficking funds.

severe toll on this area in the center of DRC in recent years. Core infrastructure was destroyed, park rangers and their families were killed, and elephants, okapis and other wildlife were targeted. In an effort to restore security to the protected area, this grant will support the hiring, training, equipping, and running expenses of 50 additional guards and will repair and rebuild the Zunguluka guard post that was looted and burned by poachers.

USFWS: \$75,254

Leveraged Funds: \$204,820

KENYA

AFE1509

Grant # F15AP00619

Aerial and vehicle support for security and conservation of elephants in the Tsavo

Conservation Area. In partnership with Tsavo Trust. This ongoing project helps support Kenya Wildlife Service in the greater Tsavo ecosystem, home to Kenya's largest remaining population of elephants. It provides funds to conduct regular aerial reconnaissance flights and to respond to emergencies and poaching incidents.

USFWS: \$146,992

Leveraged Funds: \$70,330

AFE1540

Grant # F15AP01071

Mbulia elephant fence to secure dry season habitat within the Tsavo Conservation Area. In partnership with Amara Conservation, Ltd. Due to human-elephant conflict, the Kenya Wildlife Service has decided to fence portions of Tsavo West National Park. People living in Mbulia Group Ranch on the southern boundary with the park have dedicated a portion (46km²) of their land to wildlife habitat and have invested in wildlife-based livelihoods. This project will support the community-led initiative to pay for an 18km extension of the fence so that the Mbulia wildlife habitat will be included within the elephant fence and can continue to be an integral part of the Tsavo complex.

USFWS: \$182,874

Leveraged Funds: \$994,822

MALI

AFE1531

Grant # F15AP00747

The Mali Elephant Project, Phase V: Developing long-term stakeholder capacity for elephant conservation in Mali. In partnership with International Wilderness Leadership Foundation (DBA The WILD Foundation). The northernmost surviving elephants in Africa are threatened by poachers, loss and degradation of habitat, conflict with people over scarce resources, obstruction of their seasonal migration route, and most recently, by political instability. This project works with communities and government in Mali to reduce conflict over resources and to improve local security and security for the elephants. Specific activities for 2015-2016 include (1) support to foresters and local community brigades in anti-poaching operations and natural resources management in ten communes in the wider Banzena area; and (2) a training visit by the foresters to Niokolo-Koba National Park in Senegal.

USFWS: \$49,990

Leveraged Funds: \$719,020

MOZAMBIQUE

AFE1553

Grant # F15AP01079

Protecting an important elephant sub-population in Niassa National Reserve, Mozambique. In partnership with Wildlife Conservation Society. Aerial surveys conducted in 2014 reveal significant declines of Mozambique's elephant numbers. Its most significant population, in Niassa, in northern Mozambique, declined 63% in three years, from 12,000 elephants in 2011 to 4,441 in 2014. In order to reduce poaching and halt the decline of the Niassa elephant population, this project will collar select representatives within significant cohesive herds or concentrations of elephant family groups in order to focus anti-poaching and security efforts around intensive protection zones for the remaining significant herds of elephant in Niassa.
USFWS: \$199,574 Leveraged Funds: \$29,775

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

AFE0851

Grant # F13AP00431

Long term acoustic monitoring of critical elephant populations. In partnership with Cornell University. This ongoing project, supported by USFWS since 2013, has pioneered the use of acoustic recording devices to provide information about imperiled forest elephants that are very difficult or costly to monitor by direct observation or traditional transects. These funds will support (1) training and equipment for a Congolese national to continue acoustic monitoring at critical forest elephant sites in the Republic of Congo; (2) ongoing costs related to refinement of the analysis tools at Cornell; and (3) attendance at an international summit to present the plight of forest elephants and how technology can contribute.
USFWS: \$24,983² Leveraged Funds: \$8,690

SOUTH SUDAN

AFE1543

Grant # F15AP01077

Using innovative ivory anti-trafficking methods to protect elephants of South Sudan. In partnership with Wildlife Conservation Society. To reduce ivory trafficking throughout South Sudan, the grantee will deploy a sniffer dog team to detect ivory, firearms and other wildlife products at key exit points and will establish a national ivory management system for seized ivory. Specific activities include (1) purchasing and training two sniffer dogs from an experienced company; (2) building two dog kennels; (3) training three local handlers from the government wildlife authority; and (4) ongoing operating costs of the dog team to conduct searches and seizures at Jube airport and Nimule border crossing. The project will construct a secure facility to store seized ivory, and engage independent auditors to inventory existing ivory stock, train officers, and develop confiscation and storage procedures.
USFWS: \$173,360³ Leveraged Funds: \$32,772

² Funded by proceeds from sales of the Save Vanishing Species stamp.

³ Of this, \$470 is supported by contributed funds.

TANZANIA

AFE1520

Grant # F15AP00678

Reducing human-elephant conflict near Ruaha National Park, Tanzania. In partnership with Mountain and Plains Institute for Lifelong Learning and Service. In collaboration with USAID-Tanzania, this project aims to generate local support for the protection of elephants in and around Ruaha National Park. The project works to assist local farmers in preventing elephant damage to crops and conducts outreach and park visitation programs to improve understanding of the importance of the park and to promote dialogue between park officials and local residents. Activities include (1) assisting farmers with constructing beehive fences to deter elephants; (2) conducting education and outreach programs in villages; and (3) operating a park visitation program for local residents to visit Ruaha and meet with park officials.

USFWS: \$105,552⁴

Leveraged Funds: \$96,468

THAILAND

AFE1519

Grant # F15AP00621

Siamese ivory trails: Asian market surveys to understand regional ivory flows in CITES action to close the Thai ivory market succeeds. In partnership with TRAFFIC International. This project will analyze ivory markets, ivory trade legislation, and policy and law enforcement capacity in six consumer countries identified by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) as countries of concern (Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and the three southernmost mainland Chinese provinces). Specifically, the grantee will (1) undertake retail ivory market surveys in specific market and urban areas; (2) assess national legislation, policies and law enforcement capabilities and efficacy of actions for ivory trade with regard to the national ivory action plans; (3) draft recommendations to address areas of concern; (4) produce and publish detailed, systematic updated ivory trade studies for the public and for the CITES Secretariat, Standing Committee, and other stakeholders; and (5) integrate market survey data in the Domestic Ivory Market Database of the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS).

USFWS: \$56,775⁵

Leveraged Funds: \$101,709

USA

AFE1539

Grant # F15AP01128

Isotopic Verification of Region & Year (IVORY). In partnership with IsoForensics, Inc. This project aims to develop techniques which will allow forensic investigators to more accurately determine the provenance of seized ivory and the date when the poaching event occurred. Activities include (1) analyzing carbon 14 isotopes on 240 ivory samples from twelve recent seizures that have already been imported to the US for forensic investigation in order to estimate the date when each elephant was poached; and (2) mapping spatial variation in carbon, nitrogen,

⁴ Funded by USAID-Tanzania.

⁵ Funded by FWS Combating Wildlife Trafficking funds.

oxygen, sulfur and strontium from 100 ivory samples of known origin from various sites in Africa (already held by natural history museums and scientific collections in the USA) in order to develop a refined spatial map that could assist in pinpointing the origin of seized ivory.

USFWS: \$63,524

Leveraged Funds: \$10,780

ZAMBIA

AFE0829

Grant # F13AP00989

Law enforcement and field support for African elephant conservation in Nsumbu National Park, Zambia. In partnership with Conservation Lake Tanganyika. This ongoing project, supported by USFWS since 2013, assists with operating costs for patrols to protect elephants and other wildlife in Nsumbu National Park on Lake Tanganyika, Zambia. Specific activities include providing consumable supplies (including fuel and field rations) and equipment for patrols by Zambia's Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) on land and by boat.

USFWS: \$45,384⁶

Leveraged Funds: n/a

AFE1409

Grant # F14AP00804

Developing a wildlife contraband detection dog unit and supporting SLCS's anti-poaching efforts to reduce the escalating ivory and bush meat trade emanating from the Luangwa, Zambia. In partnership with South Luangwa Conservation Society (SLCS). This ongoing project, supported by USFWS since 2014, supports anti-poaching patrols and the development of a detection dog unit to reduce illegal killing of elephants and to disrupt the illegal trade in wildlife. Specific activities include (1) rations for ground patrols to support law enforcement in the South Luangwa National Park and the Lupande Game Management Area; (2) support for game scouts at remote fly camps in the park to provide anti-poaching surveillance in areas targeted by poachers; and (3) development of a detection dog unit to be deployed at roadblocks, borders, the airport, and other wildlife contraband hotspots to detect ivory, bushmeat, rhino horn, and animal skins. Poaching in the region continues to escalate and funds are essential for operating costs of patrols and the dog teams have been deployed and are yielding results. Additional funds will allow the activities to continue without interruption for an additional seven months.

USFWS: \$48,714

Leveraged Funds: n/a

AFE1522

Grant # F15AP00742

Communication systems for wildlife protection patrols in the Lower Zambezi National Park, Zambia. In partnership with Conservation Lower Zambezi. This project aims to improve elephant protection and reduce poaching of elephants in the Lower Zambezi by providing support to joint patrols conducted by village scouts and wildlife authority police officers from the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA). Specific activities include (1) establishing a secure digital communications system and repeater which will cover the Lower Zambezi Valley and escarpment, Chongwe Open Area and Chiawa, and Rufunsa Game Management Areas; (2)

⁶ Funded by proceeds from sales of the Save Vanishing Species stamp.

deploying digital tracking devices to monitor patrol movements in real time; and (3) supporting operational costs and logistics for 48 ten-day foot patrols.

USFWS: \$129,115 Leveraged Funds: \$260,040

ZIMBABWE

AFE1421

Grant # F14AP00453

Increased security along the Zimbabwean-Mozambique border in Gonarezhou National Park, Zimbabwe. In partnership with Frankfurt Zoological Society. This ongoing project supports park protection activities in Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe, which houses one of Zimbabwe's largest remaining elephant populations. Additional funds will allow (1) ongoing support for ranger patrols to be deployed along the Mozambique border and at other identified poaching hotspots in the Gonarezhou; (2) ongoing recruitment and refresher training for scouts; and (3) support to an adjacent conservancy to equip their security staff and train them in ranger-based monitoring techniques.

USFWS: \$198,000⁷ Leveraged Funds: n/a

MULTIPLE COUNTRIES: ALL RANGE STATES

AFE1526

Grant # F15AP00746

Enhancing the African Elephant Database. In partnership with IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group. In order to provide decision-makers with the most up-to-date information on the status of African elephant populations across 37 range states, funds will support the operating costs of the African Elephant database and the 2016 update to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) African Elephant Status Report. This update will categorize 2015 and 2016 aerial survey data by survey type, quality and reliability of the estimates. Funds also support the online interface where members of the public and experts can access information about elephant populations and distribution.

USFWS: \$49,110 Leveraged Funds: \$350,123

⁷ Of this total, \$34,035 is funded by proceeds from sales of the Save Vanishing Species stamp.