

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of International Conservation
African Elephant Conservation Program
FY 2018 Summary of Projects**

In FY 2018, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) awarded \$3,408,886 to projects through the African Elephant Conservation Fund, which leveraged \$2,450,350 in additional matching funds. In total, Congress appropriated \$2,582,000 to the African Elephant Conservation Fund, and additional funds were provided by other sources, as identified below. These funds supported 18 projects in 13 countries (in alphabetical order below).

BOTSWANA

AFE1836

Award # F18AP00862

Supporting the Government of Botswana to improve the management of their ivory stockpiles.

In partnership with Stop Ivory. This project will improve the management of wildlife product storerooms in Botswana, home to Africa's largest elephant population, through a secure, detailed digital inventory that includes protocols for handling and logging of ivory and other seized illegal wildlife products. Ivory accrued from mortalities and seizures is held in government stockpiles and storerooms across Africa. The illicit demand for ivory means that without proper security and management, stockpiles are vulnerable to leakage onto the black market through corruption and theft. Botswana committed to stopping the illegal trade in ivory and to inventorying and auditing their ivory storeroom prior to this year's wildlife summit in London. Stop Ivory is a non-governmental organization that has developed an inventory and marking procedure that has become the internationally accepted standard for ivory inventory. These funds will be used to catalog the existing stockpile of ivory in Botswana and train Botswana Department of Wildlife and National Parks staff to maintain the inventory of seized items.

USFWS: \$74,058

Leveraged Funds: \$17,160

CAMEROON

AFE1828

Award # F18AP00818

Ensuring the long-term protection of the elephants of Mbam and Djerem National Park,

Cameroon. In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. The purpose of this project is to support anti-poaching and wildlife management operations in and around Mbam and Djerem National Park in the forest-savanna transition zone in central Cameroon. Mbam and Djerem National Park contains the northernmost population of forest elephants in Africa, and is currently experiencing an escalation of elephants illegally killed compared to previous years. These funds will support: (1) development of a co-management agreement with the Cameroonian wildlife authority; (2) frontline protection efforts, including wildlife guards recruited from local communities and collaboration with Cameroonian law enforcement; and (3) assistance to judges and prosecutors in the park's jurisdiction to effectively apply existing wildlife laws.

USFWS: \$300,000

Leveraged Funds: \$506,260

AFE1825

Award # F18AP00918

TRIDOM Cameroon transboundary elephant security project: Phase II. In partnership with the World Wildlife Fund. The purpose of this project is to support a conservation effort in Minkebe National Park in Gabon and the Nki-Messok Dja transboundary complex between Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo by reinforcing multi-agency law enforcement actions and strategic coordination to dismantle transboundary criminal networks. This project is intended to conserve forest elephants by addressing the impacts of ivory poaching and trafficking networks in the core of the Tri-national Dja-Odzala-Minkebe (TRIDOM) forest landscape. Much of the ivory poached in Gabon and the Republic of the Congo is transited by Cameroonian poaching and trafficking networks, and the area is considered a global hotspot for the illegal killing of elephants. These funds will support: (1) frontline logistical and operational support for rangers in Minkebe National Park; (2) transboundary collaboration between the Cameroonian wildlife authority and equivalent wildlife agencies in Gabon and the Republic of the Congo; and (3) intelligence sharing between sites to dismantle the criminal networks that drive the illegal ivory trade.

USFWS: \$250,400 Leveraged Funds: \$0

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

AFE1817

Award # F18AP00923

Enhancing passive acoustic monitoring in the Congo Basin. In partnership with Cornell University. The purpose of this two-year project is to use acoustic recording devices to provide information about imperiled forest elephants that are very costly to monitor by direct observation or traditional transects. These funds will support: (1) a monitoring program at the Dzanga Bai, a forest clearing in the Central African Republic and an important source of wildlife management data as the site of the world's longest-running individual-based study of African forest elephants; and (2) a regional program to link and improve the science of biologists and field technicians using acoustic monitoring for wildlife management in Africa.

USFWS: \$216,910¹ Leveraged Funds: \$77,758

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

AFE1819

Award # F18AP00924

Improving enforcement to protect threatened wildlife in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve, DRC. In partnership with Wildlife Conservation Global. The purpose of this project is to support rangers on the frontlines of wildlife management in the Okapi Faunal Reserve, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Political and civil instability have taken a 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, these funds will support the restoration of infrastructure destroyed at reserve headquarters during a 2012 attack, including a secure storage facility for wildlife contraband.

USFWS: \$91,509 Leveraged Funds: \$0

¹ Of this, \$158,084 was funded by proceeds from sales of the Save Vanishing Species stamp.

AFE1829

Award # F18AP00928

Ensuring more effective protection of DRC's largest remaining forest elephant population: Enhancing law enforcement and management of the Okapi Faunal Reserve. In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. The purpose of this project is to support protected area operations at the Okapi Faunal Reserve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This protected area, a World Heritage Site, has suffered from regional instability and poaching incursions by armed entities. Previous support has allowed the improvement of infrastructure for ranger staff and expansion of patrol intensity and coverage. Because other funds are targeting reconstruction of infrastructure, these funds will support: (1) anti-poaching operations and logistics for wildlife guards from the national wildlife authority (*Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature*, or ICCN); (2) technical assistance to wildlife wardens and judicial authorities; and (3) establishment of a new operational structure to improve the reserve's finance, administration, management, and enforcement systems.

USFWS: \$320,084

Leveraged Funds: \$103,029

KENYA

AFE1810

Award # F18AP00675

Decreasing human-elephant conflict in West Laikipia to manageable levels. In partnership with Space for Giants. This project aims to reduce conflict between humans and elephants in Laikipia County in central Kenya, which is home to Kenya's second largest elephant population. The project will separate elephants from agriculture where possible through the repair and fortification of an elephant-proof fence. Activities will include: (1) conducting outreach with residents to explain the purpose of the fence and to get the buy-in and commitment necessary for long-term upkeep; (2) improving the alignment so that wildlife-friendly properties are on one side (north and east of the fence) and incompatible agriculture is on the other side (south and west); (3) repairing the old fence and fortifying it; and (4) establishing a fence maintenance team to prevent intentional fence destruction by people and to repair breakage where it occurs.

USFWS: \$356,104

Leveraged Funds: \$141,169

LAOS

AFE1827

Award # F18AP00826

Disrupting African elephant ivory markets in Lao PDR. In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. Lao PDR is a major source, transit, and market for Chinese and Vietnamese consumers purchasing endangered and protected wildlife products. This weak governance and a perception of wildlife trafficking as a low-level violation have led to corruption at the highest levels within Lao PDR, preventing traffickers of high-value wildlife from being brought to justice. This has a strong negative impact on governance and security through encouraging corruption, proliferation of other crimes, and reducing overall rule of law. Wildlife criminals operating in Lao PDR undermine the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) throughout the region as drivers of poaching and trafficking, corruption of government officials in neighboring countries, and the

use of fake and illegitimate permits. This project will conduct research in Lao PDR to identify shops, markets, factories, hotels, and online vendors involved in the illegal import and sale of African elephant ivory in Vientiane, Luang Prabang and Vang Vieng; train wildlife enforcement network (WEN) officials in order to improve operation planning and case preparation for prosecution of wildlife traffickers, and build collaborative relationships and formal mechanisms (including legal agreements) to share information and coordinate actions with neighboring consumer nations.

USFWS: \$57,909

Leveraged Funds: \$62,331

MOZAMBIQUE

AFE1809

Award # F18AP00673

Strengthening anti-poaching operations to protect elephant in Chuilexi Conservancy, Niassa Reserve, Mozambique. In partnership with Fauna and Flora International. The purpose of this project is to strengthen protection and anti-poaching for elephants in the Chuilexi area of the wider Niassa Reserve in northern Mozambique. Elephants in the Niassa Reserve are under severe threat and now number fewer than 2,000 (less than ten percent of the population of ten years ago). In addition to protecting elephants, this project also benefits all of the Niassa Reserve's wildlife, including important populations of lions and buffalo. This proposal is for a twelve-month period. Objectives and specific activities include: (1) strengthening anti-poaching efforts through provision of new uniforms and supplies for 62 scouts and by equipping patrol teams with handheld radios; (2) improving the coverage and response rate of anti-poaching patrols during the wet season by procuring a patrol boat and initiating water-based patrols on the Lugenda River; and (3) supporting the canine unit through training for dogs and handlers and operational expenses for deployments.

USFWS: \$110,215

Leveraged Funds: \$122,734

NIGERIA

AFE1820

Award # F18AP00676

Further strengthen the protection of elephants at Yankari Game Reserve, Nigeria, through enhanced law enforcement action and monitoring. In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. This project supports the protection of elephants in Yankari Game Reserve in Nigeria. This small population of 100-150 elephants is one of the few remnant populations surviving in this part of Africa, and is therefore regionally and nationally important. Past funding from USFWS supported the introduction of overnight anti-poaching patrols, the implementation of a ranger-based patrol monitoring system, and the acquisition of patrol vehicles to increase patrol coverage. Although no elephants have been poached since May 2015, continued support is needed to ensure that this population stabilizes and begins to recover. This year's proposal will fund: (1) operational costs of anti-poaching patrols, including rations and equipment; (2) refresher training for rangers; (3) aerial support to detect and respond to any illegal incursions using a plane based in northern Cameroon; and (4) a conservation education

outreach program in order to make local residents aware of the rarity and the importance of these surviving elephants.

USFWS: \$250,000

Leveraged Funds: \$171,355

SOUTH SUDAN

AFE1824

Award # F18AP00798

Using innovative ivory anti-trafficking methods to protect elephants of South Sudan: Phase 2.

In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. This project began with USFWS support in 2015 through the establishment of a national ivory stockpile management system in South Sudan. Prior to 2015, ivory was not collected or secured in a systematic way, and therefore was vulnerable to theft and smuggling out of South Sudan onto the black market. In addition, USFWS supported the establishment of a canine anti-trafficking unit operating in Juba at the airport and road checkpoints, and anti-trafficking sensitization activities targeting the public, foreigners, and government officials including law enforcement departments. This proposal will support activities for a two-year period, including operational support for the canine unit and securing confiscated or otherwise recovered ivory in the National Ivory Store (Objective 2), through: (1) carrying out an ivory trafficking and canine unit awareness program for national agencies operating at checkpoints and airports; (2) conducting detection training for ivory, firearms, and other wildlife products at the Nimule border crossing and various locations in Juba; (3) conducting annual refresher training for the K9 team; (4) continued technical support to the Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism in the management of the ivory in the National Ivory Store; and (5) conducting an annual public ivory stock management event.

USFWS: \$245,901²

Leveraged Funds: \$24,434

TANZANIA

AFE1835

Award # F18AP00855

Enhancing human-elephant coexistence in Selous-Udzungwa, Tanzania. In partnership with the Southern Tanzania Elephant Program. Ten years ago, southern Tanzania was home to the second largest elephant population in Africa: more than 100,000 elephants moved between Mikumi and Udzungwa National Parks and the Selous Game Reserve. Now, they number fewer than 16,000 and the connections between the protected areas are being severed by human settlements, infrastructure development, and agriculture. This project will identify corridors that are still viable for elephant connectivity between the protected areas by mapping elephant movement and land use and working to get protected status for these corridors. Secondly, the grantee will work to alleviate human-elephant conflict in key villages by deploying various methods to minimize crop raiding and conflict and to improve livelihoods through income-generating coexistence interventions.

USFWS: \$170,777

Leveraged Funds: \$34,730

² Of this, \$192,091 was funded by U.S. Agency for International Development – Combating Wildlife Trafficking (USAID-CWT) funds.

UNITED KINGDOM

AFE1833

Award # F18AP00879

Supporting the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) to track the illegal ivory trade for CITES. In partnership with TRAFFIC International. The Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) is the method of tracking trends in ivory trade agreed upon by the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). This grant will support the collection of data necessary to monitor and analyze trends from 2,000 seizures of ivory that have been made worldwide since 2016 (when the last analysis was presented to the CITES Conference of the Parties). Specific activities include collecting data from all countries on ivory seizures, law enforcement effort and effectiveness, rates of reporting, status of domestic ivory markets, and background economic and governance variables. These data will be verified and entered into a database, analyzed for correlations and trends, compared against information on elephant populations and poaching incidents, and integrated into detailed country reports. Results will be produced and disseminated, and findings submitted to the CITES Secretariat and published.

USFWS: \$99,677

Leveraged Funds: \$0

USA

AFE1816

Award # F18AP00819

Determining the provenance of ivory using mitochondrial DNA. In partnership with the University of Illinois. Genetic markers can be used to determine relatedness of elephant populations and to identify the provenance of confiscated illegal ivory. With previous support from USFWS, a system to extract and analyze mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) has been developed to identify the geographic origin of ivory samples more reliably and economically than previous methods. This method has now been applied to recent seizures in Asia, and the grantee proposes to: (1) improve this software by adding mtDNA information from elephant tissue from countries and localities in Africa that have not previously been sampled (to improve resolution and accuracy); (2) create an interface for researchers and investigators to more easily analyze their specimens and to generate tables of provenance reports from the mtDNA sequences; and (3) train law enforcement officials in African elephant range states to use the system.

USFWS: \$110,000

Leveraged Funds: \$48,600

ZAMBIA

AFE1718

Award # F17AP00453

Increased law enforcement operational support for elephant security in the eastern Nsumbu-Mweru ecosystem, Northern Zambia. In partnership with Conservation Lake Tanganyika. The grant aims to strengthen law enforcement to better protect elephant populations throughout Nsumbu National Park and Tondwa Game Management Area. In order to improve mobility of security teams, activities will include the purchase and deployment of a dedicated vehicle for

anti-poaching, ongoing operations of a patrol boat, and operational expenses (including rations, equipment, and uniforms) for scouts and rangers.

USFWS: \$212,000

Leveraged Funds: \$90,048

AFE1803

Award # F18AP00671

Restructuring law enforcement in Kasanka National Park to safeguard the last viable elephant population in the Greater Bangweulu Wetland Area, Zambia. In partnership with the Kasanka Trust. Kasanka National Park in northern Zambia is home to the last viable population of African elephants in the Greater Bangweulu Wetland landscape. Kasanka elephants are no longer connected to other elephant populations. Poaching has decimated the wildlife in this park, reducing some species, such as the puku antelope, by 99 percent in just five years. The objectives are to: (1) develop a new law enforcement strategy focused on safeguarding elephants and in turn delivering conservation benefits to other species; (2) establish a well-trained, well-equipped, and well-motivated ranger team capable of tackling the poaching crisis; (3) improve ranger accommodation and communication infrastructure to enable greater oversight and enhance coordination of anti-poaching operations; and (4) conduct efficient and effective intelligence-based anti-poaching activities to reduce poaching in and around the park.

USFWS: \$189,063

Leveraged Funds: \$345,131

AFE1837

Award # F18AP00679

Enhancing elephant protection in South Luangwa Valley, Zambia, through training new recruits, increasing the effectiveness of anti-poaching patrols and augmenting anti-poaching patrol support. In partnership with Conservation South Luangwa. This project is aimed at urgently addressing the critical shortage of wildlife police officers in and around South Luangwa National Park in eastern Zambia in order to combat an upsurge in elephant poaching. Specific activities include: (1) coordinating and funding the screening, selection, and initial training of fifty new recruits; (2) providing refresher training for existing officers and for local community scouts who patrol with them in adjacent Game Management Areas; and (3) providing much needed patrol equipment for anti-poaching and supporting operational expenses for patrols by vehicle, boat, and on foot. Conservation South Luangwa is a non-governmental organization that has supported Zambia's Department of Wildlife and National Parks for 15 years by providing technical and financial assistance to supplement the inadequate budget provided by the Zambian government for operation of the parks and adjacent wildlife areas.

USFWS: \$172,632

Leveraged Funds: \$318,260

AFE1805

Award # F18AP00683

Strengthening law enforcement efforts in the Lower Zambezi, Zambia. In partnership with Conservation Lower Zambezi. The Lower Zambezi National Park (LZNP) in southern Zambia forms part of the greater Lower Zambezi Valley system, spanning across Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, and was formerly a population stronghold for elephants. In 2016, 107 elephants were poached for their ivory in the LZNP and surrounding hunting blocks. In order to combat poaching, funds are requested to support: (1) the dog unit and special response unit, as well as operational expenses for foot patrols by Department of National Parks and Wildlife and

community scout teams; (2) aerial surveillance by Conservation Lower Zambezi; (3) a technical advisor and a legal assistant to the judiciary (in partnership with Zambia's Wildlife Crime Prevention Project); and (4) meetings between Zambian and Zimbabwean park officials regarding transborder poaching and trafficking of the shared elephants of the Lower Zambezi and Mana Pools.

USFWS: \$181,647

Leveraged Funds: \$387,351