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## **Americans Play Key Role in Conservation of Elephants, Rhinos and Other Imperiled Species by Purchasing Save Vanishing Species Semipostal Stamps**

The *Save Vanishing Species* semipostal stamp continues to provide vital support for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's efforts to fight global wildlife trafficking and poaching. Millions of Americans have purchased these stamps online and at their local post offices in the past two years, generating more than \$2.5 million that has been used in Africa, Asia and Latin America to benefit elephants, rhinoceros, tigers and other rapidly declining wildlife species.

These funds have been leveraged by an additional \$3.6 million in matching contributions to support 47 projects in 31 countries since the stamp went on sale in September, 2011 – making the stamp a key part of the United States' response to the ongoing worldwide epidemic of poaching and wildlife trafficking.

“We are at a crucial point in the fight against poaching and wildlife trafficking. If we can't stop the killing now, elephants, rhinos, tigers and many other imperiled species may vanish entirely from their native habitat,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. “The *Save Vanishing Species* semipostal stamp gives every American a way to provide direct support for vital on-the-ground conservation efforts that are making a difference to the survival of these irreplaceable species.”

Driven by rising affluence in Asia and other parts of the world, demand for elephant ivory, rhinoceros horn and countless other wildlife products continues to rise. This demand is in turn fueling the slaughter of elephants, rhinos, tigers and other species at unprecedented rates.

What was once an isolated problem has become a global scourge, as increasingly sophisticated, violent and ruthless criminal organizations have branched out into wildlife poaching and trafficking. Funds generated by sales of the *Save Vanishing Species* stamp are being used to support a wide range of priority conservation activities, including anti-poaching, law enforcement, capacity building, community engagement and outreach, habitat restoration, disease research, and mitigation of human-wildlife conflict.

The *Save Vanishing Species* semipostal stamp is an integral part of the Service's four-pronged response to this crisis, which at the direction of President Obama is being expanded into a government-wide response. This approach includes:

- **Law enforcement** (both special investigations and inspections at ports of entry);
- **In Country activities** using technical assistance and grants funded by the *Save Vanishing Species* semipostal stamp and other sources to build the capacity of game agencies and protect the species and their native habitats;

- **Working with foreign governments** to ensure sustainable levels of legal trade through CITES; and
- **Measures to reduce the demand** for illegal wildlife products in consumer countries.

As of November 2013, the United States Postal Service has sold more than 24,989,000 *Save Vanishing Species* stamps, providing \$2.52 million toward key wildlife conservation initiatives across the globe. Nine cents from each stamp sale is transferred to the Fish and Wildlife Service to support wildlife conservation through the agency's Wildlife Without Borders grant programs.

Funded projects include:

- *Deployment of a Bloodhound Unit for Elephant Protection in Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo.* In partnership with the Africa Conservation Fund, this project will support the final phase in training and deployment of a team of five bloodhounds and handlers from the national park staff in Virunga National Park. These teams are specifically trained to track poachers and have already been successful in locating poachers, weapons and ivory.
- *Matopos National Park: Darting and Immobilization of Black and White Rhino for Routine Dehorning and Ear-notching to Aid Monitoring and Protection Strategies.* In partnership with Dambari Wildlife Trust, this project will support Zimbabwe rhino management policy, which includes marking or tagging individual rhinos to facilitate regular, frequent individual monitoring for security purposes, and dehorning (removing rhino horns) in regions of perceived threat to reduce the incentive and rewards for poachers.
- *Protecting and monitoring tigers in the Corbett-Rajaji Landscape, India.* This grant will support and enhance law enforcement important to tiger conservation by training and equipping frontline staff and Special Operation Groups to prevent wildlife crimes. Funding will also be used to monitor the density of tigers, co-predators, prey, and disturbance in order to evaluate the effectiveness of protection and management strategies.

The *Save Vanishing Species* stamp is available in U.S. post offices and at USPS.com. To learn more about the Wildlife Without Borders Multinational Species Conservation Funds and the *Save Vanishing Species* stamp, visit: [www.tigerstamp.com](http://www.tigerstamp.com).

Follow the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Without Borders program on the web at <http://www.fws.gov/international>, on Twitter @USFWSInternatl and on Facebook, USFWS\_InternationalAffairs.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov), or connect with us through any of these social media channels:

