



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

For Release: August 2, 1990

Elizabeth Lipscomb 202/208-5634
Ken Stansell 703/358-2095

INITIAL PROJECTS TOTALING \$700,000 APPROVED UNDER AFRICAN ELEPHANT FUND AND MATCHING GRANTS

Almost \$700,000 is available this year in aid for the African elephant, Constance Harriman, Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, announced today. The money will fund the first seven projects approved by Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service under the authority of the African Elephant Conservation Act.

"This money represents \$350,000 from the African Elephant Conservation Fund, and generous matching grants received from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the European Economic Community, and the local governments of Gabon, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Zambia and the Central African Republic," she said.

"I am pleased and heartened that these donations virtually double the money provided by Congress for the African Elephant Conservation Fund. A partnership approach is the most effective and efficient way to ensure the long-term survival of the African Elephant." She added a special thanks to the World Wildlife Fund for providing matching funds for a majority of the projects.

"The World Wildlife Fund is delighted to help support and administer these projects," commented WWF president Kathryn S. Fuller. "We believe this kind of cooperative international action is essential to ensure the survival of the African elephant."

The approved projects were selected from 25 submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for consideration. Five will directly support anti-poaching efforts. The remaining projects involve development of elephant conservation plans for African countries, and the establishment of a TRAFFIC office, a World Wildlife Fund program, in Tanzania to monitor and report on commerce in ivory and other wildlife products in eastern and southern Africa.

As part of a related activity, Harriman and several wildlife experts from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will travel to Zimbabwe and Botswana during the first part of August for a first hand look at elephant conservation efforts underway in those countries. This will include briefings on the anti-

(more)

poaching measures being taken by the two countries, observation of elephant marking and tracking activities, and discussions with governmental and tribal leaders concerning elephant management and conservation efforts.

The elephant grant program is administered by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The agency's director, John Turner, noted that while this is a great first step in assisting elephant conservation on a global scale, the Service hopes to do even more for the African elephant in the future. "Our goal is to continue the valuable work begun with these grants, and to expand as far as funding allows," he said. "The Service believes cooperative efforts with private organizations and other government agencies are still the best way of achieving our mutual goals."

The African Elephant Conservation Fund was established in 1988 under the African Elephant Conservation Act. The Act authorizes appropriations of up to \$5 million per year through 1992 for a grant program to provide financial assistance to support African elephant research, conservation, management, and protection programs. Congress appropriated \$500,000 in fiscal year 1990, and the administration has requested \$1 million for fiscal year 1991.

Of the \$500,000 appropriated in fiscal year 1990, the Congress specified that \$150,000 be directed to law enforcement efforts. This money will fund a law enforcement seminar to be held in Tanzania which will bring together for the first time high-level wildlife and customs officers from all African nations with elephant populations to discuss anti-poaching efforts and other topics concerning the illegal commercialization of wildlife.

The grant program places a high priority on projects directed at anti-poaching efforts because local African governments urgently need this type of assistance. Other priorities include projects that involve local African government agency participation; projects that address key populations of African elephants; and cooperative projects that provide for matching funds. An attempt will be made to fund projects in all regions of the African elephant's historic range in order to restore and maintain healthy populations.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is also currently reviewing applications for future projects. Those who would like to obtain additional information concerning this program should contact:

Ken Stansell
Office of Management Authority
4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 432
Arlington, Virginia 22203
(703) 358-2095



FISH & WILDLIFE

Facts

 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR • FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

AFRICAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION ACT GRANT PROGRAM U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

APPROVED PROJECTS FOR 1990

The following is a brief synopsis of each of the projects to be undertaken as part of the African Elephant Conservation Act.

All projects address areas of concern specified in the African Elephant Action Plan, and were requested by the respective governments involved.

1. Southern Africa: Anti-poaching assistance to Zambia:

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$75,000	\$75,000	\$150,000

Approximately one-third (204,000) of the current continental elephant population is found in Southern African and concentrated in three of the eight Southern African countries of Botswana (68,000), Zimbabwe (52,000) and Zambia (32,000). Of these three, the Zambian populations have experienced significant declines due to poaching.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has pledged to provide matching funds to be used for anti-poaching activities. Zambia still has substantial habitat with low human populations and little conflict with domestic livestock, which will allow for long-term conservation of the elephant if poaching can be brought under control.

FWS- 074

For further information, contact:

Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Please refer to FWS-

202/208-5634
when making inquiries.

2. East Africa: Anti-poaching assistance to Tanzania:

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$75,000	\$40,000	\$115,000

Approximately 20 percent (110,000) of the current continental elephant population is found in East Africa with three countries still having significant populations: Tanzania (61,000), Sudan (22,000) and Kenya (16,000). All have experienced significant declines due to poaching and loss of habitat. Funds will be provided to Tanzania to assist in equipping the government's special anti-poaching operation, a joint venture between the military, the police, and the anti-poaching unit. If poaching can be controlled, the southern habitat of Tanzania provides the best hope in East Africa for the long-term preservation of substantial elephant populations.

3. Central Africa: Anti-poaching assistance to Gabon:

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$30,000	\$15,455	\$45,455

Approximately 45 percent (277,000) of the current continental elephant population is found in Central Africa. Of these, over 30 percent of the continental population is found in two countries, Zaire (112,000) and Gabon (74,000). Only Gabon appears to have a stable population; all others have experienced significant declines, again almost entirely due to poaching. Funds will be provided to Gabon in cooperation with the WWF to fund and equip an anti-poaching effort in the game reserve of Petit Loango. Positive anti-poaching efforts now are critical to protect one of the few remaining substantial, relatively unpoached elephant populations.

4. Anti-poaching assistance to the Central African Republic (CAR):

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$40,000	MATCHING AND TOTAL TO BE DETERMINED	

The elephant population in CAR is estimated to be approximately 23,000. Recent data indicate that significant declines due to poaching have occurred. Efforts are underway to establish preserves in the Dsanga-Sanga forest complex in the tri-country area of CAR, Congo, and Cameroon through the WWF, the European Economic Community, and U.S. AID. Anti-poaching actions are critical to protect elephant populations until these reserves can be established.

5. West Africa: Elephant conservation assistance to Burkina Faso:

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$75,000	\$16,600	\$91,600

While only 3 percent (19,000) of the current continental elephant population is found in West Africa, this area is important to maintain the genetic viability of elephant populations, particularly for forest elephants. Of the six countries with significant populations, Burkina Faso has the highest concentration with approximately 4,500. That country has developed a detailed conservation program, that if implemented, could provide for sustainable resource conservation using the elephant as a model. Funds will be provided to assist in elephant population inventories and provide field equipment for anti-poaching efforts. The success of the Burkina Faso project may well influence the ultimate survival of the African elephant in West Africa.

6. Establishment of a TRAFFIC office for East/Southern Africa:

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$20,000	\$130,000	\$150,000

The international TRAFFIC network exists to monitor wildlife trade and utilization, and to provide assistance to government agencies in implementing wildlife trade controls. While the transfer of the African elephant to Appendix I has significantly diminished legal trade in ivory, there is a critical need for additional monitoring efforts. As a number of countries have taken reservations against the Appendix I listing, and as large ivory stockpiles remain worldwide, some trade continues. This is a joint project with WWF-US and International.

7. Support for the African Elephant Conservation Coordinating Group (AECCG):

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>MATCH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
\$35,000	\$68,000	\$103,000

The AECCG was convened in July 1988 to prepare the African Elephant Action Plan, which establishes the basic principles and priorities required to conserve the African elephant. To support the overall Action Plan, this group is coordinating the development of country plans which step the Action Plan down to country priorities and is assisting in the development of specific project proposals for funding. An additional role of the group is the coordination of priority projects for funding with potential governmental and nongovernmental donors. The United States became an active member of the group in 1989.