



FROM THE FIELD

LATEST IMPACT UPDATES FROM OUR GREAT PLAINS INITIATIVES

Q1 IMPACT REPORT | JANUARY - MARCH 2023

The first quarter of 2023 has been busy across the continent for habitat protection, biodiversity conservation and community investment. Our grants through Project Ranger and Big Cats Initiative supporting endangered species conservation across Africa continue, as well as our direct Great Plains programs in Kenya, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Our Female Rangers are making strides in both training and out in the field monitoring natural resources. Our indigenous tree planting for ecosystem restoration program Conservation Roots has out-grown it's boundaries and officially started in Botswana this quarter. And education in rural Kenya is experiencing considerable improvement with 11,632 school children receiving nutritious meals at school to boost attendance and progress in the regions through our School Food Program.

CONSERVATION

Biodiversity • Healthy Ecosystems • Endangered Species



REWILD ZAMBEZI

Restoring the 290,000-acre Sapi Reserve, Zimbabwe

The Great Plains Biodiversity Monitors continue to monitor the 23 herds of elephant they have collared in the area (both resident and translocated), using both ground patrol and satellite collar monitoring to ensure well-being and build herd profiles. We have PhD students conducting research projects on the relatability between the resident and translocated herds, stress levels, impact on vegetation etc. We currently use Earth Ranger in Sapi to monitor collared elephants, our monitoring and research assets and geofences established for our human-elephant conflict protocol. By using Earth Ranger, we are able to collect, integrate, and display all historical and remote sensing data available and combine it with reports from the field to provide one unified view of collared wildlife, rangers, enforcement assets, and infrastructure within our area.




Monitoring of keystone species continued, as well as the processing of images received by WildCRUs Camera Trap Survey conducted in 2022. The survey consisted of 6 weeks' worth of sampling with 50 camera traps in total. This allows us to build our database for ongoing predator monitoring within the region. Images we have received so far have identified 17 lions, 61 leopards, a ranging pack of 6 wild dogs and 1 cheetah.

The biodiversity monitoring team also underwent advanced vegetation sampling training to continue to develop our detailed, vegetation map for the area. The training included further upskilling in the use of ArcGIS, a geographic information systems software used by our teams to provide maps and analyse data.

Alongside ongoing biodiversity monitoring by our team on the ground, this quarter also saw progress on development and construction of a Monitoring Camp, a Research Camp and ZimParks regional base G-Camp renovations in Sapi.

50 **PREDATOR CAMERA TRAPS CREATING A DATABASE**

487  **HOURS AND 1,990KMS OF BIODIVERSITY MONITORING PATROLS**

RHINO PROJECT

Protecting endangered rhinoceros through security and monitoring

As always, the monitoring of rhinos continues to be our priority, with our teams working around the clock patrolling and checking on their wards. During this quarter we welcomed three new calves to the herd, 2 males and 1 FEMALE! We are always happy about all Rhino Calves arrivals but female calves are extra special to us signifying hope for another day to an endangered species. We are expecting another calf any day!



In collaboration with specialists, our team performed a nutritional value survey of the habitat. This data alongside rhino feeding and annual flood water fluctuations data is used to assess approximate ecological carrying capacity for the region.

Part of the rhino monitor team participated in a First Aid Level 3 course this quarter. All excelling and enjoying the opportunity to develop their skills and learn more.

3 **NEW RHINO CALVES**
born in the wild!

5,540KM  **PATROLLED BY THE**
RHINO MONITORS

3,150 HOURS
ON PATROL 



FEMALE RANGERS

Training and hiring Female Wildlife Rangers from local communities

The training and development of our 16 female rangers continues with the ladies undergoing training and extended time in the field to boost exposure and experience. During their field time we have been able to observe those that we have identified as leaders, providing opportunities for them to develop and show us their skills in the roles that we have identified for them.

The Female Rangers were lucky enough to also participate in a training by an expert arborist from South Africa, Riaan, in the care for specific trees. The teams learnt how to make The Tree Paste (used to treat tree wounds and prevent pathogen infections causing wood rot). The Tree Paste protects remaining cambium which redevelops the vascular system and outer bark on trees, stimulating wound wood and providing fertility and increased vitality to trees. The Female Rangers who were unable to participate in First Aid Training last year joined the Rhino Monitors to undergo their Level 3 training.



April signifies the end of the year-long training programme of our first cohort, with lessons and learnings improving the second cohort and their cohort we are welcoming later in the year.

2 TRAINING COURSES **385** 
16 FEMALE RANGERS **HOURS OF BIODIVERSITY MONITORING PATROL**
 

CONSERVATION ROOTS

Planting indigenous tree species for ecosystem restoration, food security and carbon sequestration

Conservation Roots has expanded into Botswana this quarter with the first 467 indigenous trees planted in the communities on the fringe of the Okavango Delta. The tree species chosen for distribution and planting were primarily fruit trees, to improve food security in the region.



The planting of indigenous trees in Kenya continues in both ecosystems and community areas with 689 planted in this quarter, despite our horticulturalist leader, Paul, suffering from a broken leg.

“We sincerely appreciate the great seedling donations and support we receive from Great Plain Foundation. Our seedlings are doing so well even with the little rainfall we have just received. This demonstration phase has attracted the attention of many community members who are asking if they can get the same seedlings”.

- Nelson Kirrokor, CEO Nkoilale Community Development Organization



PROJECT RANGER

Granting funding to NGOs across Africa specialising in anti-poaching

Project Ranger Grantee

ANTIPOACHING & TRACKING SERVICES, ZIMBABWE



In March 2023 ATS was recognized by The First Lady of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Her Excellency, Dr. Auxillia Mnangagwa, for their efforts on ranger principals and custodian practices in conservation. The First Lady, through her role as Wildlife and Environment Patron of Zimbabwe, has an active and valuable role in conservation for African wildlife and ATS was honored to be recognized. The team was also busy on the ground this quarter recording over 251 patrols. They are proud to say they are seeing a decrease in the snares being laid in the area, a testament to the ability of their dogs and patrol teams to act as a deterrent to poaching. They are also pleased to say their 4 young pups are doing well their training and are already showing promise and high motivation for reward.



“Rangers are the frontline custodians of our country’s wildlife, working in difficult and dangerous conditions, against poachers and also wild animals. We rely on their courage and dedication to maintain a healthy ecosystem, supporting species, habitat, communities and ecosystems.”

– Dr Auxillia Mnangagwa, First Lady of the Republic of Zimbabwe, at a ceremony Mushandike Wildlife College in Masvingo in March

Project Ranger Grantee

GIRAFFE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION AND THE WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE, KENYA

This grant was released in December of 2022 to provide support to the Kenya Wildlife Forensic and Genetics Laboratory. The Laboratory was established in part to examine seized bushmeat samples from across Kenya using modern DNA techniques for the accurate identification of species when they cannot be identified visually. This can provide substantial evidence against suspects, hopefully leading to convictions and acting as a deterrent to bushmeat poaching. In the first quarter of 2023 forensic analysts at the Laboratory performed DNA analysis on 184 samples.



The Project Ranger grant is directly supporting the laboratory to enhance its analytical capacity through the procurement of sequencing services, basic equipment, and laboratory, to support field enforcement teams by providing evidence bags to ensure evidence integrity and capacity building for first responders at the scene of a crime.



BIG CATS INITIATIVE

Granting funding to NGOs across Africa specialising in big cat conservation



Big Cats Initiative Grantee

UGANDA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION, UGANDA

Uganda Conservation Foundation (UCF) received a grant from the Big Cats Initiative (which was matched by Global Conservation) to support their work with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in Kidepo National Park with a focus on studying the park's small lion population. While they await formal permission to begin the essential health survey of the lions in the park, the UCF team was hard at work during the first quarter. They have nearly completed construction on a joint UWA-UCF operations center and the UCF Community Scouts are conducting regular snare sweeps. They were particularly proud to have worked with UWA to rescue Lokiru, one of the parks few male lions, from a wheel-trap.

Big Cats Initiative Grantee

LUCRECIA AGUILAR, KENYA

In January 2023, Lucrecia Aguilar was awarded a Great Plains Big Cats Initiative Grant for her research "Exploring individuality and identity in human-lion dynamics to promote socioecological coexistence across Laikipia, Kenya." This grant partially funded recent trip to Kenya during which she met with stakeholders (including collaborators at Lion Landscapes), organized project logistics, and prepared for a longer fieldwork season beginning around June 2023. This trip proved essential for gaining a deeper understanding of the socioecological landscape of Laikipia and determining where/with whom to focus her efforts.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Education • Empowerment • Welfare



SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM

Supplying nutritious meals to rural schools to boost education performance and attendance

This year we have boosted our Impact Through Education: School Food Program in Kenya to now ensure 11,632 children across 45 schools in rural Kenya receive a nutritious meal a day. Impact Through Education is a core focus of the Great Plains Foundation community upliftment work. One of the reasons rural schools in Kenya are seeing low attendance in schools is due to the lack of food. The Great Plains School Food Program is supplying nutritious meals to Pre-schools, Primary and Secondary schools across Kenya. The aim of the program is to encourage kids to attend school and to provide nutrition to boost their performance.



“We have an issue with malnutrition in this area so this food is improving the kids nutrition and improving of performance. When there is no food the children cannot concentrate, they won’t listen and some of them are sleeping because they have no food. Thank you Great Plains Foundation for supplying the food”

– Peter Lekanaiya, Chairman of Mbirikani Group Ranch Teachers Association

11,632 

SCHOOL CHILDREN PROVIDED WITH A DAILY NUTRITIOUS MEALS

NABOISHO WOMEN'S GROUP

Generating an income for women in rural communities

The Naboisho Women's Group continue to make beaded items for Great Plains safari camps and we are working closely with them on building a brand and a product line for the curio stores in our safari camps, creating a market for their products. The ladies are continuing to work on the soap-making and bee-keeping projects also.

**85 WOMEN
SUPPORTED**

**75,000 KENYA SHILLINGS
OF INCOME GENERATED**

TEACHERS SALARY SUPPORT

Supporting extra teachers in schools to reduce class sizes and improve education progress

Impact Through Education remains at the forefront of Great Plains' focus in rural communities in Kenya, Botswana & Zimbabwe. Teachers are essential to progress in education and Great Plains continues to fund the salaries of 23 teachers in the Mbirikani Group Ranch in the Amboseli region of Kenya to boost the opportunities for the young students and their education.

23  **TEACHERS SALARIES
FUNDED ACROSS
16 SCHOOLS, SUPPORTING**

6,490  **SCHOOL CHILDREN'S
EDUCATION**

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

A partnership with the celestielle charitable trust

Exploring Africa's wild spaces and immersing yourself in the sights, sounds, and cultures of the continent can be a life-changing experience. We're privileged to play a part in igniting sparks of passion for the natural world and nurturing conservationists of the future.

The Rising Foundation students played their part supporting Great Plains' community efforts by carrying five checked-bags of goods for the communities. Everything from schools shoes to menstrual hygiene products to yarn for knitting. They even did their own fundraising drives to raise the money to purchase the donated items!

Student Arasi Tuiolomotu described the trip as
"the greatest experience of my life."

– a sentiment that was shared by the whole group.

We're thrilled to play a role in shaping perspectives of the natural world and gladly welcome Arasi, Ashanti, Orlando, Viliami and their group leader Tiare into the Great Plains family.

