



“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

“Hunting provides the principal incentive and revenue for conservation. Hence it is a force for conservation.”

Special To The Hunting Report World Conservation Force Bulletin

by John J. Jackson, III

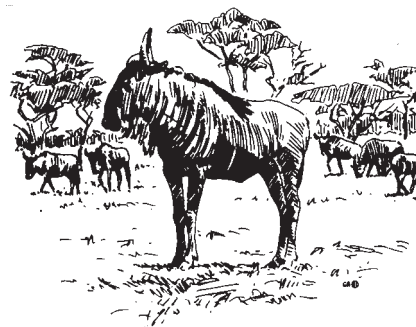
□ Insights From Wildlife Conflict Studies

A Different Perspective For Problem Solving

Concern for human-wildlife conflict has increased in Africa in the last few years. The focus on conflict provides a different prospective for problem solving. The survival of ecosystems as a whole and wildlife in particular are vitally dependent upon the coexistence of local people with wildlife. The conflicts threaten the very existence of wildlife. Those conflicts take many forms. Three forms have recently been studied in the Masai Mara area of Kenya. They provide interesting insight to those who care about Africa, its people and its wildlife.

The studies were done in the Mara region of Kenya, which is the north, or Kenya, side of the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem. The Masai Mara National Reserve (MMNR) is within the area. Its visitor numbers peaked at over 200,000 in the early and mid-1960s. However, due to competition from Southern Africa and security concerns,

visitation today has fallen to 100,000 visitors per year. It is especially famous for its concentration of migratory herbivores, including 100,000 zebra and over one million wildebeest. The sight of hundreds of thou-



sands of these animals moving together through the grasslands has been described as one of the greatest wildlife spectacles on earth. It is also famous for its other large mammals, such as the “Big Five” made famous by safari hunting before it

was closed in the 1960s. The “Big Five” did much to promote the Kenya tourist economy in the 1960s, but today that mentality is reported to be “doing more harm than good” because of “traffic jams . . . around prides of lions and other conflicts.”

The British Government’s Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs funded conflict studies in the area that were conducted by graduate students of the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. A workshop was conducted to develop management recommendations from the findings which were published in March 2003 and entitled, “Wildlife and People: Conflict and Conservation in Masai Mara, Kenya, Wildlife and Development Series No. 14, International Institute for Environment and Development, London.”

Three kinds of human-wildlife conflicts were researched. Each contains some jewels of interest. First, the impact of tourism on wildlife within the Reserve (MMNR). Second,

the impact of tourists and the local community on the endangered black rhinoceros population within the Reserve. And third, human-elephant conflict in the district beside the Reserve.

The primary impact of tourism within the Reserve was caused by uncontrollable off-road driving. The number of roads and tracks increased by approximately thirty percent between 1991 and 1999. Although that disturbed the animals, it did not significantly affect the distribution of seven herbivores selected for study – namely, the waterbuck, kongoni, impala, giraffe, zebra, warthog and topi. The location of streams and rivers controlled the location of the animals regardless of the increase in number and location of the roads and tracks. “Among all the explanatory variables that were tested it was only

“The primary impact of tourism within the Reserve was caused by uncontrollable off-road driving.”

the mean distance from all rivers that had a significant relationship with species richness. Vegetation, visitor presence and distance from roads were insignificant for those seven species.”

There was a positive correlation between the visible disturbance of wildlife and tourist vehicle speed. That was measured for five species - warthog, wildebeest, impala, zebra and topi. Each of these animals reacted at different distances upon the approach of a tourist vehicle, and the disturbance to each increased with an increase in the speed of the vehicle. “Analysis indicated that there were significant differences in response distance among the different species studied.” We note that the same is likely to be true if one was hunting instead of viewing. Topi were the least timid to vehicle approach, while warthogs were the most timid. Of course, the “animals

responded at shorter distances (slower to be disturbed) in areas with high visitation levels than those with low visitation levels,” indicating “that most animals have become habituated to vehicles in highly visited areas.”

The warthog was the most sensitive animal to the approach of a vehicle. It was the first to be disturbed at the greatest distance and also responded sooner and more greatly the faster the vehicle speed. The sensitivity of the others in descending order were the wildebeest, impala, zebra, and the topi. The topi being the least sensitive. This means that the slower you go the closer you can get without disturbing the animals.

“Too many vehicles around animals (more than five at a viewing) and driving too close to the animals (closer than 20 meters) were the most frequently broken visitor regulations. These were broken during 66 percent of lion-viewing events, and 57 percent . . . of cheetah viewing events The other most frequently broken regulations were visitors remaining too long viewing animals (more than 10 minutes when other vehicles were waiting), and driving off-road. These infringements occurred in 40 percent and 36 percent of lion-viewing events, and 36 percent and 52 percent of cheetah-viewing events. . . .” Though the regulations appear reasonable, they are broken in 90 percent of the viewing cases, despite the drivers and tourists knowing the regulations.

The black rhino in the Masai Mara are disbursing to other areas when the population should be building to its former density in the Reserve. The mystery was where are they going and what is the cause of their disbursal? The research demonstrated that all of the animals studied in the system are declining except the elephants. The elephants are increasing. The Reserve “is becoming less valuable for browsers such as rhinos, partly due to elephant-induced habitat changes.”

Cattle were found to be the primary culprit. “Neither tourism pres-

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sure, expressed either as road density, vehicle density, or distance from lodges, nor elevation had any effect on rhino distribution.” “Whilst cattle do not compete directly with black rhinos for resources, they appear to disturb rhinos so that they do not make use of areas where cattle reside. This disturbance is probably a result of cattle bells, and the pres-

ence of herders and dogs with the cattle, the noise from which prevents rhinos from resting in thickets in areas where cattle occur.” A high density of elephants are closing down day schools, causing the abandonment of farms and farming, reducing woody vegetation and reducing practically all other animals, including endangered ones such as the

black rhino.

For a copy of the studies, contact the International Institute for Environment and Development, 3 Endsleigh Street, London, WC1H 0DD. Tel. +44(0)207-388-2117. Fax +044(0) 207-388-2826. Email: mailbox@iied.org. Ask for 11ED Wildlife and Development Series No. 14.

Briefly Noted

Moose Rebound: The moose is one more big game animal that has been restored by the hunters of North America through its sustainable use in America’s hunters-funded wildlife conservation system. The North American moose population was thought to be 341,700 in 1948 (Peterson). Kelsall placed the number at 888,000 in 1987. By 1990, Gill estimated the number to be one million. Today, the population is thought to be 938,350 to 1,064,130, or about one million, and to range over 17 states and 11 Canadian Provinces and Territories. Like the pronghorn, elk and black bear, it is one more game animal restored to the one million mark.

The North American Moose Foundation was formed a little more than two years ago to shepherd moose conservation. The Foundation is partnering with Conservation Force to add moose to the Unendangered and America’s Abundant Game posters and education and waterfowl that were not on it before. We also welcome the North American Moose Foundation to the sportsmen’s conservation community. May they become for moose what DU has been for waterfowl, RMEF has been for elk, NWTf has been for wild turkeys, and FNAWS has been for wild sheep.

The North American Moose Foundation is hosting its annual fund-raiser in Sun Valley, Idaho, on December 5 and 6, 2003. For more information about the Foundation, see their web site at: moose

foundation.org. E-mail: moose@atcnet.net. Tel. 209-588-2939.

Attack on BC Grizzly Bear Hunting Continues: In 2001, the antis persuaded the European Union’s Scientific Review Group to recommend to EU member nations that Grizzly bear trophy imports not be imported. Though the EU Scientific Review Group later overturned



its recommendation on the basis of an information campaign that a select few of us participated in, the antis are at it again. The Environmental Investigative Agency (EIA) had asked that the EU stop imports until BC’s independent panel’s review was completed. Now, the EIA has asked the EU Scientific Review Group to ban imports until all the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel in British Columbia are implemented in years to come.

British Columbia’s own Independent Review Panel approved of British Columbia’s Grizzly Management and the basis of BC’s quota, yet made precautionary recommendations to improve upon management over the

course of time. The EIA has twisted those recommendations to turn them into a mandate in an effort to ban imports and to get the Canadian Wildlife Service to stop the issuance of CITES export permits from British Columbia. The unofficial report, as I write this, is that the EU has rejected the new EIA suggestion. Now even Germany, the last holdout, is allowing the importation of grizzly bear trophies from British Columbia. Thanks is due to Eugene Lapointe of IWMC (International Wildlife Management Consortium) for timely notifying us of the latest sneak attack by the EIA and to FACE (Federation of Associations For Hunting and Conservation in the EU) for verifying that Germany is permitting grizzly trophy imports once again.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has responded in its own way to the British Columbia Independent Review Panel’s positive report on the Province’s grizzly bear. IFAW issued a press release in April condemning the British Columbian Government for killing 10,000 Black bears, plus 800 grizzlies, as problem animals over the past decade. That is 1,000 Black bear per annum. It wants the province to divert management revenue to “proper humane traps, trained Karelian Bear Dogs” and the purchase and employment of “aversive conditioning materials.” It semantically stated that “everyone agrees that the killing of problem bears is a waste...yet the B.C. government continues with a failed policy that has

done nothing to lower problem bear complaints or the number of people hurt by bears.” To the contrary, the only waste is that more of those bear are not taken in licensed, regulated hunts by those who are bearing the costs of the management system.

Bart O’Gara Passes: Dr. Bart O’Gara passed away on May 21, 2003. Bart was a Founding Board Member of Conservation Force and an inspiration to all who worked with him. Bart was a Wildlife Professor Emeritus at the University of Montana, where he received his Ph.D. in Zoology in 1968. He had an office at the University, where I have communicated with him regularly over the past 12 years and daily over the past seven years. As well as serving Conservation Force directly, he was one of the intervenors in the pending Argali suit in the Federal District Court of Washington, DC.

Bart gave his life to public service. He first served his nation as an enlisted man in the US Navy. He retired from the Navy after 20 years of service and began his undergraduate studies at Montana State University. Upon graduation, he became a research wildlife biologist with the US F&WS as Assistant Leader of the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. Later, he was promoted to Leader of that Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. He held the Leader position for 12 years before retiring from the Extension Service with 25 years of service. He was a respected teacher, prolific author and consummate big game hunter.

This past year he finished a definitive work on pronghorn antelope and completed three chapters of a book entitled *North American Elk, Ecology and Management*. Chapter 1 was entitled “Taxonomy;” Chapter 2, “Distribution: Past and Present;” and Chapter 16, “Hunting Red Deer and Elk: Old and New Worlds.” He also completed a book on his hunting adventures, soon to be published by Safari Press. That well written book is entitled *Seventy-Five Years Afield*.

Bart was an expert on the management of big game in developing

countries. His awards, fellowships, grants, work in foreign countries and publications are incomparable. We searched the world over for members of the Conservation Force Board. Bart was recognized as “Conservationist of the Year” by SCI and received many other honors. He conducted the Wildlife and Conservation and Management Training Program



for Pakistan in 1985-86 that is the foundation of that country’s world-renown success today. He was the expert I chose in SCI’s Argali suit against the USF&WS in 1993, and he did a phenomenal critical analysis of the Argali Rule and “special” trophy import regulations. He even assisted me in the early stages of the BC grizzly fight in the middle 1990s.

Conservation Force Sponsor

The Hunting Report and Conservation Force would like to thank International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife (IGF) for generously agreeing to pay all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. IGF was created by Weatherby Award Winner H.I.H Prince Abdorreza of Iran 25 years ago. Initially called The International Foundation for the Conservation of Game, IGF was already promoting sustainable use of wildlife and conservation of biodiversity 15 years before the UN Rio Conference, which brought these matters to widespread public attention. The foundation has agreed to sponsor *Conservation Force Bulletin* in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. Conservation Force’s John J. Jackson, III, is a member of the board of IGF and Bertrand des Clers, its director, is a member of the Board of Directors of Conservation Force.



International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife

Conservation Force deeply regrets this irreplaceable loss. There will never be another Bart O’Gara. We are fortunate to have truly great men on Conservation Force’s Board, but upon the passing of one who contributed so very much, we also know the measure of truly great loss. Thank you Bart for everything!

Shorts

•**Montana Bison Hunting to Reopen:** The Governor of Montana signed new legislation to reopen bison hunting. An environmental impact statement must still be complete before the hunt is actually conducted. It is not clear if that can be completed before this Fall.

•**Another UN conference on Small Arms:** Another UN Conference is scheduled for the second week of July 2003 in New York. The last conference focused on unlawful use of small arms, but there is a growing clamor to control ownership of all small arms. The World Forum on the Future of Sport Shooting Activities (WFSA) will be in attendance representing the interest of firearms owners and manufacturers.

•**Canadian Firearm Registry:** By early June six Canadian provinces declared that they had no intent to enforce Canada’s firearm registration laws. They are Ontario, Nova Scotia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and British Columbia. Nevertheless, the law will still be in effect. The Canadian authorities such as Customs and Canadian police will be enforcing the registry law. Proof of registration is required to purchase ammunition.

•**African Elephant Import Permits Issued to Two Zoos:** For the first time in over a decade the USF&WS granted import permits for African elephant destined for Tampa and San Diego zoos. It was short lived because the antis sued and the zoos voluntarily surrendered their permits for the time being because of errors in the applications. The import permit applications are being corrected and resubmitted. - *John J. Jackson, III.*