



“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

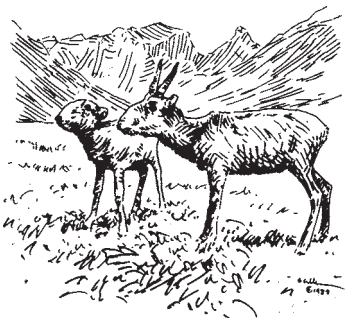
● The Saga of the Saiga ●

(Introductory Note: Conservation Force has played a large role over the past one-half decade in the conservation and management of Saiga antelope in Russia and Asia. Saiga have potential as a game animal, but the animal rights organizations have been pushing to have them listed on Appendix 1 of CITES. They have made their attack through the CITES “significant trade review process” (SIG) to force an uplisting. If they succeed, it will be the first species that the process has failed to protect, but the antis will perceive the listing as the first success of the SIG process. Under the SIG process, Appendix II species are selected for close oversight by the CITES Animals Committee to ensure the species doesn’t become an Appendix I species through detrimental trade. Houston Safari Club, International Game Foundation and Conservation Force stalled its uplisting at the last Conference of the Parties by doing an up-to-date review of its status, as well as its fecundity. We have also been doing our best to hold a management workshop of all the range nations that have Saiga. We have finally succeeded. The workshop is being held this month in Kalmykia, Russia, perhaps as you read this. Houston Safari Club and Conservation Force have contributed to its costs and the travel expenses of attendees. We have been at the forefront of conserving this species while the antis have contributed nothing but a constant drumbeat to list it. The following is the presentation of Dr. James Teer, Board member of Conservation Force, at that conference. His presentation is entitled “The Saiga Antelope In Kalmykia At Risk: Needs For Its Future.” - John J. Jackson, III.)

The saiga antelope has been an important species in Kalmykia for centuries. It has benefited local people and the State through use and sale of meat, hides, horns for medicinal products and recreational hunting. Local people have used it for their tables, and its horns and meat have been marketed by the State in the Orient and elsewhere. It has generated millions of rubles over the years, and the cropping and marketing industry has employed many rural peoples. As a living, renewable resource, it has demonstrated the efficacy of management and social worth of a migratory population of large mammals in desert

and steppe environments.

As regards the status of the species



in Kalmykia, Saiga numbers have fluctuated rather widely over the years. Its

future has been threatened by one factor or another, but its future has been considered largely secure as it recovered its numbers as management steps were taken. Now, in recent years, decreases in its numbers in Kalmykia have been enormous and the long-term outlook is not so bright (Bannikov et al 1961, Sokolov and Zhirnov 1998; Teer et al 1996, Lushchekina and Struchkov 2001). From peak populations in Kalmykia estimated at 750,000 followed by low numbers in the mid-1950s and again in the late 1970s, they are now once again reduced to about 17,000 animals (*Lushchekina and Struchkov 2001) in Kalmykia. The

adult sex ratio is now so disparate that sufficient males for breeding may be lacking.

Records of similar earlier declines have been recorded by Soviet scientists, but records show only one decline so precipitous and so low as occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Only a few hundred animals remained in the European population in the early 20th century (Sokolov and Zhirnov 1998). Its status and future prospects are indeed alarming.

Concern for the status of the species in Kazakhstan and elsewhere north of the Volga is now being expressed by field studies by several scientist/conservationists. The species is more widespread in four populations in Kazakhstan and thus appears not to be in such danger as the species in Kalmykia (Millner-Guilland et al). Nonetheless, its state is one of continued decline.

Causes Of The Decline

Reasons for the decrease in Saiga numbers have varied from time to time and place to place. Because the species has a high “r” value in its reproductive habits, given protection, it can recover rather quickly as it did in the 1950s and 1970s. Adults are polygamous in mating habits, breed at an early age, and females over two years customarily have twin calves – one of the few antelopes that do.

Five factors are involved in the species’ decline:

- 1.) Overuse and degradation of habitat from livestock, mainly sheep.
- 2.) Poaching of males for their horns for export and meat for the locals.
- 3.) Predation by wolves and foxes, especially on lambs.
- 4.) Human intrusions and contrivances – fences, power lines, canals and human habitations, row-crop and animal agriculture and roads.
- 5.) Over-exploitation through commercial hunting.

Of the five, habitat loss, poaching and excessive commercial hunting have been and currently are the most serious threats to the species’ future. Obviously, recommendations for protecting the species must include management of these threats. To do so in

the face of serious shortages of resources (men and money) is a daunting task. Nonetheless, it can be done if the global conservation community will organize to “save the Saiga.”

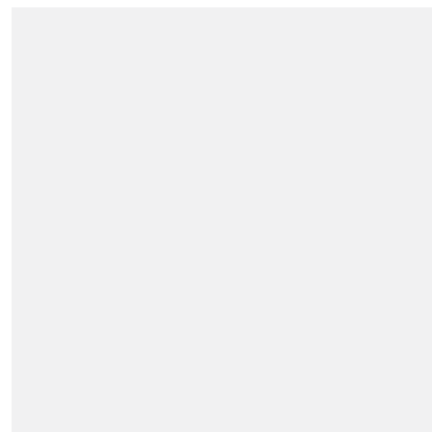
Recommendations

I do not offer these recommendations as original or new. They are factors that most of you have declared inimical to the species’ welfare and future. They address the root problems of need for recovery and use of the species. They are repeated here simply for review and discussion in this forum.

- 1.) Start with the locals. Develop an educational program in ecology, land-use management strategies that show how the locals can benefit from managed stock. Develop a community-based project in which the locals share in benefits and demonstrate how resources can be used sustainable.
- 2.) Develop international interest in “saving the Saiga.” Mount a campaign to obtain financial and ethical support for the species from government and non-government conservation organizations and from a concerned global society.
- 3.) Develop a central marketing system for sale of products – horns, hides, and meat – through which legal sales can be made and contraband sales controlled.
- 4.) Put more game wardens in the field and equip them with reliable technological gear – vehicles, firearms, red lights, owl eyes and binoculars.
- 5.) Control wolves and foxes in areas where they are important predators on Saiga.
- 6.) Maintain the philosophical tenet of sustainable use of the species because societal values are conditioned to save that which is useful. Protection alone is not enough.
- 7.) Explore captive breeding to produce valuable products from the Saiga.

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JOHN J. JACKSON, III
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rael Program For Scientific Studies, Jerusalem, 1967.

- Lushchekina, A., and A. Struchkov 2001. The Saiga antelope in Europe: once again on the brink. Pages 11-24. In *The Open County*, Anton Struchkov, Editor. Biodiversity Conservation Center, Moscow and Sibe-

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Briefly Noted

The Farm Bill's Trojan Horse: The renewed and improved Farm/CRP Bill (properly titled the Agriculture, Conservation and Rural Enhancement Act, S.1731) has finally been passed by the US Senate. It now goes to a conference committee because it differs substantially from the House version. One important difference has hardly been noticed. The antis succeeded in inserting the HSUS's entire Bear Viscera Bill into the Senate version as an amendment. HSUS is an acronym for Humane Society of the United States. The language was lifted directly from S.1125, the Bear Protection Act, and is virtually identical to H.R. 397 in the House that has not even been through a hearing. That is the bill that gives the federal government law enforcement authority over interstate and international trade of bear parts by banning bear viscera movement. It creates federal jurisdiction over a state game animal even though it is not endangered or a migratory species. It is an infringement of a traditional state realm that will take on a life of its own if enacted. It is based upon the antis' misinformation campaign alleging that our bears and Asian bears are jeopardized by the bear viscera trade. If enacted it would be a precedent for establishing federal jurisdiction of any and all animals that have any body part of use or value in any medicinal trade. There is no real difference between deer horn and black bear gall for they are both medicinal products in international trade except deer horn use is wider spread and more common than bear gall in medicinal trade! Congressmen Don Young and James Hansen, the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and

Ron Marlenee of SCI are fighting tooth and nail to delete the bear viscera amendment from the Farm Bill as I write this.

Flaunting Terrorism: Animal rights terrorists issued a report about themselves to the media in January. They not only bragged about the damage they have inflicted, they provided a detailed list of their recent criminal acts. The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) are the perpetrators. Though one is an eco-terrorist and the other an animal rights-terrorist group, they are joint conspirators. Their own released report



brags about their 137 crimes in 2001 alone causing \$17.3 million in damages. Even on September 11, 2001 the ELF and ALF publicly took joint credit for firebombing a McDonald's restaurant in Tucson, Arizona. The FBI estimates the damage in the US since 1996 to be \$43 million in 600 criminal acts by animal rights-eco terrorists and confirms that the ALF and ELF are operating together. The released report also states that an action was taken by the extremists every 2½ days. The report is at <http://www.animalliberation.net/library/2001DirectActions.pdf>.

A more elaborate version can be

found at <http://www.animalliberation.net/news/02/020116ml.html>.

The press report was released by the North American Animal Liberation Front press office that serves as the “repository for illegal direct actions” taken by the Animal Liberation Front perpetrators. It is located in Courtenoy, B.C., and its report is 47 pages in length. The report is dedicated “to Barry Horne, a UK animal rights activist who died November 5, 2001 as a result of his fourth hunger strike in prison” where he “was serving an 18 year sentence for a series of fires . . . which caused tens of millions of dollars in damages”. It claims no “physical connection” with the terrorists but all pretense stops there. For example, it presented an Award for Most Vehicle Damages in a Single Action for the burning of 36 SUVs in Eugene, Oregon.

A number of congressional bills to track, control and punish domestic terrorism have been filed in recent sessions, and passage now looks more promising. Two bills have been introduced in this Session, H.R. Bill 2795, the Agroterrorism Prevention Act, and H.R. Bill 2583, the Environmental Terrorism Reduction Act. Also, the House Resources subcommittee on Forest and Forest Health held a hearing on domestic terrorism on February 12, 2002. In testimony at the hearing, the FBI expressly classified animal rights-eco-terrorism as “special interest extremism” “characterized” by the ALF and ELF that “have emerged as a serious terrorist threat.” The ALF activity is a “steadily growing campaign of illegal activity. . .”, according to the FBI testimony. The FBI testified that the ALF and ELF have been acting together since 1993. Testimony at the hearing

linked ELF, ALF, PETA (People For The Ethical Treatment of Animals), No Compromise, Earth First, The Ruckus Society and the Rainforest Action Network, as well as criminals such as Rodney Coronado (a convicted arsonist who firebombed a research center at Michigan State University). For an understanding how animal rights terrorism has evolved, I recommend you read the Government’s Sentencing Memorandum for Rodney Coronado at www.cdfc.org/SentencingMemo.htm. His terrorism began with the Greenpeace - Sea Shepards sinking of whaling vessels and continued to the level of arson, bombings and “monkeywrenching”, as the terrorists call it. Despite being portrayed as a Robin Hood, he has been a criminal from the get-go.

All of this activity has boomeranged on one of the extremist groups – namely, PETA. Unlike the ALF and ELF that exist in small cells that are hard to identify even though they strike every two and one-half days, PETA is an identifiable organization. For an expose on PETA, see “Take the PETA Challenge” at the Center for Consumer Freedom’s website, www.consumerfreedom.com. You can actually listen to a PETA representative express a wish that fast-food restaurants, laboratories and even the banks that support them be blown up.

At the aforementioned hearing on domestic terrorism, PETA was repeatedly mentioned. PETA, you’ll recall, is the organization that put hunter orange on deer as a publicity stunt and then continued to do it knowing it was making the deer easier targets to kill. The Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise has done an excellent investigation of the animal rights movement and has documented PETA’s extensive financial support of and connection with advocates of animal rights and environmental terrorism. It is not messing around with PETA. In early March, it filed a formal complaint with the IRS challenging PETA’s tax exempt status on the basis that donors’ “money is being used to help finance domestic terrorism”. It wants PETA’s tax exempt status revoked. The complaint letter

can be viewed at www.cdfc.org/CDFEPetaComplaint.pdf. The list of facts in the petition are must reading for anyone who has to deal with PETA.

Since the hearing, Rep. Scott McInnis (R-CO) of the subcommittee has sent a questionnaire to Ingrid Newkirk, President of PETA, because of its links to and financial support of ALF and ELF. That questionnaire was



also copied to the IRS. With a record of direct domestic terror attacks every 2½ days in the US and Canada, it is not a moment too soon.

Serengeti Lion Explosion: The lion population in Serengeti National Park took a beating in 1997 and 1998 due to an anthrax outbreak. Now, the population has increased by over 1,000 since then (only three years) because

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

of their high fecundity. The Tanzania Director of Parks explained that lionesses can have as many as four to five cubs at a time every two years. They overcame the disease naturally because of that high birth rate. By any measure that is a population explosion. It proves their resiliency.

New Polar Bear Area in Line for Approval: The Gulf of Boothia polar bear population has been found to be twice what it was thought to be. Upon learning of this, Conservation Force filed a petition with the US Fish & Wildlife Service asking them to review and approve polar bear imports from the area. The area had been “deferred” from approval pending the outcome of the survey, as the service did not believe that the prior estimate was reliable enough to permit any imports. Though their caution may have been scientifically justified, we have urged them to now expedite the approval. They have responded that the process can’t be expedited and that it will have to take the normal course of approval. Nevertheless, the process is in motion.

Important People in the News: Doug Pointer was elected President of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) effective March 1. The NSSF hosts the SHOT Show. He will also head the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers’ Institute (SAAMI) and the Hunting and Shooting Sports Heritage Foundation (HSSHF). He has been with the NSSF for 29 years and replaces Bob Delfray who is retiring after 30 years.

Now that Steve Williams has become the director of the USF&WS, others have fallen into position. Marshal Jones who had been acting director while the selection and confirmation of a new director took place, has become the deputy director. Kenneth Stansell, who was acting deputy director, has become the assistant director. Teiko Saito, who was chief of the Division of Management Authority, has moved up to an assistant position in the International Affairs Division. The new chief of the Division of Management Authority is Peter Thomas. - *John J. Jackson, III, Chairman, Conservation Force.*

MEMO

To: Jim Young, Print N Mail
From: Leonardo Mocci, The Hunting Report
Re: April 2002 Issue of Conservation Force Supplement
Date: March 14, 2002

Jim,

Here's the April 2002 issue of the Conservation Force Supplement to be inserted in The Hunting Report. Don't forget to insert John Jackson's picture on page 2. Please fax "blue lines" for approval A.S.A.P.

Print run is 4900 (to be confirmed). Ship overs to us as usual.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Leonardo

P.S. Please make sure that John Jackson gets his 25 copies.