



“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

□ Australia

Giant Saltwater Crocodile Hunting May Open

Giant saltwater crocodile hunting may open in Australia. The authorities in the Northern Territory of Australia have proposed to begin the sustainable utilization of surplus saltwater crocodile through regulated tourist hunting.

This renowned man-eater is the biggest crocodile in the world. It should be particularly suited to safari hunting. They are large, dangerous, alert and wary (challenging). They are one of a kind and the best of their kind in the world. They are found in adventurous and hunter-appealing habitat. They inhabit the whole northern coast of Australia and its maze of rivers and swamps.

Hunting these animals will expose the traveling hunter to intriguing culture and aboriginal people with whom many of us feel a special bond. About 30 percent of the people in the Northern Territory are Aborigines who take great pleasure in

hunting. Many of the people still live a traditional life style. “Hunting and gathering are still the most widespread forms of land use,” according to Graham Web, one of the foremost crocodile authorities in the world and



owner of *Crocodile Park* in Darwin.

The proposal was very smartly done to ensure high quality trophies and a quality safari experience. The initial quota for safari hunting is limited to 25 of the 600 adult crocodiles

to be culled from a population of 60,000 to 70,000 animals. The minimum allowable size (the smallest you can take) is four meters, which is a monster crocodile of any subspecies anywhere else in the world. Each hunting operator is to be carefully qualified, selected and licensed. The number of operators is to be limited, as will be the number of crocodile tags allocated to each.

Only two safari hunting methods are to be permitted: brain shooting with a center fire rifle and harpooning. No fishing, body-shooting or use of rim fire firearms is to be allowed.

The Northern Territory has a world-class crocodile management program. The crocodile has been restored from the brink of extinction in 1971 to capacity in the Northern Territory today. Commercial harvest of the crocs began in 1997, but this is the first proposal for safari hunting. Safari hunting has been and remains illegal at this time.

There is a significant political problem still to be resolved before hunting actually resumes, and that revolves around the role the federal government of Australia can still play in this matter. Although the Northern Territory is responsible for management of wildlife within the Northern Territory, a CITES export permit will be needed from the Federal Government. The Northern Territory is the only Government in Australia that has a conservation-through-sustainable-use strategy. Even though the Federal Government has been approving the export of commercial crocodile skins each year, it is reported to be against safari hunting. A representative of the Department of Environment is reported to have said that the Federal Government is opposed to “hunting wildlife for



pleasure” as a matter of policy. The official reportedly pleaded on television for the people of Australia to send in comments to express their views about safari hunting. Humane Society International issued a press statement against the hunting at the same time. HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) also alerted its activist list to send in comments. The HSUS alert said, “ask that the prohibition on safari hunting remain a condition of any approval to the management plan.” In other words, the commercial harvest of more than 600 adult crocodile and 600 juvenile should be permitted only on the condition that safari hunting of 25 animals not be permitted. HSUS perceives “recreational hunting” that poorly.

That is not all. Television nature

adventure star, Steve Irwin, has a full campaign against any commercial use of the over-abundant crocodiles. “These are the largest reptiles left on our earth, modern day dinosaurs, the most powerful and awesome animal in the world.” He does not like the use at all. “The time has come for me to expose the current ‘Hitlers of Wildlife’.... ‘Sustainable use’ of native wildlife is your camouflage, your disguise and your propaganda. Since when has the slaughter of native animals saved a species? Never has and never will!.... Money and greed is the root of all evil... never purchase native wildlife products....[T]here is no excuse of any inhumane cruel or torturous treatment of any animal. Perhaps free-range chickens are a solution worth researching.... We the human race have evolved beyond cannibalism and slavery. I’m confident we will continue to evolve beyond ‘sustainable use’ and wildlife abuse.... If we don’t eliminate ‘sustainable use’ now it will be too late.” These web site ravings seem to be focused on captive breeding of crocodiles and “commercial” use of any wildlife except for “those species which have been domesticated for centuries.” See www.crocodilehunter.com/crocodile_hunter/about_steve_terri/index.html. Then, click on “Steve’s Say.” Apparently, the HSUS is willing to trade those lives off to stop the hunting of 25 giant “salties” a year.

The draft management plan of the Northern Territory Government’s Parks and Wildlife Service states the following: “The wild harvesting of crocodiles will also include the safari hunting of trophy animals. Benefits to landowners that flow from trophy hunting of crocodiles will be considerable, particularly for Aboriginal landowners, who currently run their own pig and buffalo safari hunting operations. Safari hunting of buffalo and pigs already attracts local and interstate hunters who pay not only trophy fees but also accommodation and other expenses. With the inclusion of crocodile hunting, they are likely to attract greater in-

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terest from international clients. Safari hunting of crocodiles will increase the financial benefits of the current wild harvesting program and will provide a much greater return per animal than wild harvesting. Crocodiles taken by safari hunters will be taken within the current quota for wild harvesting of adult crocodiles.... Safari hunting... is likely to... increase the incentive for land-owners to protect crocodiles and crocodile habitats.

The good news for hunters is saltwater crocodiles will be importable if the hunting plan goes forward. The saltwater crocodile of Australia is only on Appendix II of CITES and is only listed as “threatened” on the Endangered Species Act. There should be no importation problem for hunters in the US or elsewhere who return home with trophies. Under the Endangered Species Act, section 9(c)2 normally exempts Appendix II species listed as “threatened” from US Fish & Wildlife Service regulations in all but exceptional circumstances.

Conservation Force filed a comment in favor of the proposed Northern Territory management plan and its subpart for safari hunting. The Northern Territory comment period ended on February 6, 2004. We will keep you advised of the outcome.

WEST VIRGINIA

News... News... News University To Offer Course On Hunting

This fall, the West Virginia University Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Resources is to commence a course entitled *The Tradition of Hunting*. With animal rights being taught in law schools across the nation as an evolving, cutting edge area of the law, this West Virginia course is welcome news.

The course is to be taught by Dr. John Edwards and Dr. James Anderson. The textbook is *Know Hunting: Truths, Lies and Myths*, by D.E.

Samuel, 1999. The course objectives is to teach the students enrolled in WMAN 100 the following:

1. Appreciate the cultural and spiritual role of hunting in society from both a historical and contemporary perspective.
2. Become familiar with modern hunting weapons and issues related to the gun-control controversy.
3. Understand the role of harvest management as a tool in managing wildlife populations.
4. Appreciate the economics of wildlife management and the role hunters' dollars play in state wildlife conservation programs.
5. Become familiar with the service hunting provides to society and the consequences of an overabundance of wildlife.



6. Become familiar with hunters ethics and animal rights issues and integrate these with respect to the anti-hunting movement.
7. Understand the role of subsistence and recreational hunting in modern society.
8. Obtain meaningful first-hand experience in some aspect of hunting/harvest management firearm use and safety.

Tentative Lecture Topics

1. Cultural and spiritual role of hunting in society – six classes.
2. Demographics of hunters – three classes.
3. Women in hunting – three classes.
4. Hunting dollars and wildlife economics – three classes.
5. Role of harvest management in managing wildlife populations – three classes.
6. Overabundance/animal damage/

- deer vehicle collisions – three classes.
7. Modern hunting weapons and gun control – three classes.
8. Hunting ethics – three classes.
9. Animal rights and the anti-hunting movement – four classes.
10. Subsistence/recreational/trophy hunting/QDM movement – four classes.
11. Nutritional value of wild game – two classes.
12. First-hand experiences shared with the class – three classes.

Conservation Force has been invited “to start a dialogue on how our programs can collaborate” and we intend to do just that. Interestingly, the topics closely match many of those in our library of issues and facts at Conservation Headquarters.

The Mellon Foundation has helped fund this marvelous course. James Mellon was at the Weatherby Award Dinner in Reno, and was also autographing the new *African Hunter II* at Ludo Wurfain's giant Safari Press exhibit booth at the Safari Club International Convention. Ludo also published an interview with James Mellon in the January issue of *Sports Afield* magazine that is very interesting. He states that he still is fascinated with hunting gray squirrel. “It's really a very fun animal to hunt. It's great. I love it.”

James Mellon spoke with me about what argali trophies are importable today. I must admit I felt gratitude to this great hunter for all he has shared with the world in *African Hunter* and for his introduction to the new *African Hunter II* available from Safari Press, (714-894-9080). When you get it, read *The Great Ethiopian Elephant Campaign*, page 274 of 606 pages, about Chrissie Jackson and I, back when we spent more of our time hunting instead of saving hunting.

The new book, like the first *African Hunter*, is awesome and is one of the greatest books ever written about hunting. It is the most in-depth, modern reference work on Africa. It examines all facets and countries, country by country. Every African hunter must have one. It is con-

clusive proof that African hunting is an immeasurable treasure.

SPECIAL REPORT

News... News... News

**Conservation Force
Names Board Members**

Conservation Force has elected two new Board members to its Board of Directors. It has also created a new Board of Advisors and is filling those positions fast. The newly elected members of the Board of Directors are Shane Mahoney of Newfoundland and Gerhard Damm of South Africa. They were selected and elected after a worldwide search of highly qualified candidates following the death of Bart O’Gara in June 2003.

Shane has long been a volunteer advisor and partner to Conservation Force. He heads wildlife research for the Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Divisions and also operates *Conservation Visions*. He is a spell-binding speaker on the spiritual and cultural meaning of hunting. He has been a keynote speaker at many major events over the past five years, including the Outdoor Writers Association, Premier’s Hunting Heritage Symposium, North American Wildlife Conference, three successive SCI Conventions Nights, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, Wild Turkey Federation and many more.

Gerhard Damm has been an important confidant in Southern Africa for a number of years. He is the editor and publisher of the *African INDABA* newsletter, a widely circulated publication that addresses controversial wildlife conservation issues and champions the hunter-conservationist’s point of view. See www.africanindaba.netfirms.com/. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA) as the Education Advisor. He is an avid hunter and Past President of the

African Chapter of SCI. He also authored *The Conservation Game, Saving Africa’s Biodiversity*, a remarkable school aid. He provides a wealth of information on Africa and is a prodigious worker.

These two individuals are icons of the hunting world. They have been great contributors to the team.

Conservation Force has also for-



malized a Board of Advisors with other iconic leaders of hunting today. The members of this new board include Dr. James Swan, Ron Thompson, Don McMillan, Lance Phillips, Don Peay, Raul Valdez, Ph.D., Mike Friscina, Randall Eaton, Ph.D., and Yves Lecocq.

Dr. Swan is the author of *In Defense of Hunting* and pens the *Celeb-*

erity Column in *North American Hunting Magazine*. Ron Thompson is a remarkable biologist with more than 50 years of African experience. He has authored many books including, *The Wildlife Game* and most recently, *A Game Warden’s Report*.

Dr. Don McMillan is a Past President of SCI who helped head that organization’s Governmental Affairs Committee for 25 years and SCI PAC. Today, he operates CONPAC, Conservation Political Action Committee. Lance Phillips is on the Board of Directors of Dallas Safari Club and is their governmental affairs guru.

Don Peay serves on the Board of Directors of FNAWS and is the founder of Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife in the Western United States (www.sfwsfh.org). Raul Valdez, Ph.D., is a professor and renowned sheep biologist. He has authored many books, including *The Wild Sheep of the World*. He is helping Conservation Force with argali research in Tajikistan and markhor research in Pakistan. Raul is an intervenor in the *Argali* case.

Mike Friscino is a biologist with the Wildlife Department in the State of Montana. A consummate field researcher, he is overseeing Conservation Force’s markhor program in Pakistan. Randall Eaton, Ph.D., is the author of the anthology *The Sacred Hunt* and the award-winning video, *The Sacred Hunt*. He is both an authority on animal behavior and an accomplished lecturer on the call of the hunt and its importance.

Yves Lecocq is the Executive Director of FACE, which is the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the European Union. He represents more than eight million hunters in Europe, more than anyone else in the world.

A book could be written about each of these individuals. They are truly great men. The hunting world is fortunate that these committed men are as devoted as they are and Conservation Force is so very glad to have their confidence. They all really care, and their contributions have been enormous.

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