



“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**

DATELINE: WASHINGTON DC

News Analysis

**Polar Bear Imports
Still A Hot Issue**

Polar bear hunters with trophies still held up in Canada may want to know that a Congressional Oversight Hearing was conducted this past June on the implementation of the 1994 amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Those amendments are the ones that authorized the import of polar bear trophies, among other things. The committee noted that the import of trophies taken from unapproved areas (like Baffin Bay) between the time that the 1994 amendments were passed and the issuance of the regulations is an issue that needs to be addressed. Those are the bear trophies that were taken by sportsmen in the mistaken belief that the areas they hunted would be approved. Worse, everyone was led to believe that all trophies taken anywhere in Canada up to the time the regulations were adopted would be

approved. Instead, the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&W) denied the import of bears from most areas and did not grandfather any bears taken in unapproved areas. Congress then passed an act grandfathering all those taken before the 1994 amendment. That still left those aforemen-



tioned trophies up in the air - that is, those taken after the passage of the 1994 amendments but before the adoption of regulations implementing the amendments. It is time this was rectified. Despite the statement by the oversight committee that this matter needs addressing, no one did so during the hearing. Marshal James, serving as the

Acting Deputy Director of the USF&W, avoided the issue and testified as follows: “Section 104(c)(A) - Polar Bear importation - allows US hunters to import polar bear trophies taken from approved populations in Canada. A total of seven populations have been approved to date. A clarifying amendment provided authority for import of trophies taken by the US hunters prior to the 1994 provision. Since the regulations authorizing this action went into effect in April, 1997, approximately 260 bears have been imported. Considerable time was spent by service staff in acquiring scientific information, analyzing data and working with the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Marine Mammal Commission. The service had to resolve a number of complex technical issues concerning the amendments, other sections of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears. Based on congressional and public interest, the service decided that our highest priority was to use available resources to develop the polar bear regulations. As a result, the service has yet to under-

take the development of other sections of the amendments, but expects to pursue this effort in the coming year. Funds from a \$1,000 permit issuance fee are dedicated to support conservation of polar bear stocks shared between the US and Russia. These funds provide significant support for the US/Russia polar bear conservation initiatives, such as: 1) negotiating a bilateral conservation agreement; 2) conducting population surveys; 3) collecting traditional ecological knowledge of polar bear habitat use in Chukotka, Russia; 4) developing a standard protocol to survey polar bear dens on Wrangel and Herald Islands; and 5) developing outreach materials to explain the provisions of the bilateral conservation agreement between the US and Russia, as well as a poster explaining how to prevent adverse human/polar bear encounters in the coastal communities. We will use funds from this account to support a unique opportunity to survey polar bears along the ice-edge in the Chukchi Sea as part of a broader scientific effort on board a Coast Guard ice-breaker. Administration of the fund by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Service provides the opportunity for significant matching contributions by private entities to generate additional funds for polar bear conservation. The amendments also direct the Service to undertake a scientific review of the impact issuing import permits may be having on the polar bear populations in Canada. The service is drafting the report based on an analysis of current information, including data provided by the Canadian Wildlife Service, and anticipates soliciting comments on the draft report later this year....” The use of the sportsmen’s funds to negotiate a bilateral conservation agreement with Russia is of particular interest. The initial draft of the agreement with Russia would have prohibited polar bear hunting! Conservation Force is tracking those Russian negotiations, as well as developments in unapproved areas in the Northwest Territories. It would be ironic if the \$1,000 import

fees paid by US hunters funded negotiations to permanently eliminate any hope of future trophy imports from Russia, or Canadian hunting-type benefits for Russia.

DATELINE: AFRICA

News... News... News
Black Rhino Surplus
Becoming Big Problem

There is a growing problem with surplus black rhino. What to do with them is “...a critical issue in most black rhino conservation areas in South Africa and elsewhere,” according to a recent article in *Pachyderm*, which is published by the IUCN Rhino and Elephant Specialist Groups. For example, in Pilanesberg National Park, South Africa, the annual rhino mortality rate had averaged three to six percent from 1981 to 1995 (mostly from fighting). Since then, as the rhino population has increased, it has increased to an overall average of six percent. Although Pilanesberg’s overall rhino population growth rate is 5.77 percent, the rhino growth rate in other South African populations is reported to be as high as 11.3 percent. The optimum population growth rate is thought to be seven percent per year. Social pressure (fighting) by males has been the principle cause of not achieving that rate at Pilanesberg. Another study up in Kenya is reported in *Pachyderm*. Between 1984 and 1995, 118 black rhinos were translocated into and between rhino sanctuaries in Kenya. Most were surplus animals that were being relocated from existing sanctuaries. Those had a 16 percent mortality rate from non-human causes, of which 53 percent were from fighting. The fighting accounted for 12 of 23 deaths. “In all cases where the combatants were identified (eight of 12), resident adult males killed translocated rhinos.” They killed translocated females they tried to mate with, as well as other males. Overall, 21 (Kenya) to 24 (South Africa) percent of translocated surplus rhino don’t survive. Fighting is the cause of most of those

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deaths. The Rhino Management Group in South Africa reports that the black rhino population in South Africa is about 1,043 animals in 24 different populations. They have increased more than eight-fold since the 1930s. The management of black rhinos has closely followed that of white rhinos. The main difference between the conservation strategies for black and white rhinos today is the black rhino is not hunted. In comparison, trophy hunting of white rhino began when its population was approximately 1,480 in South Africa. White rhino trophy hunting has generated more than \$22 million (US), excluding trophy fees! The hunting of white rhino unquestionably has served the white rhino well and could serve the black rhino even better. Surplus black rhino males are not needed for reproduction, their presence adversely affects the rest of the population and their removal would biologically improve the populations' growth rates and viabilities. Moreover, their sustainable use through sport hunting would provide badly needed revenue for their management and incentives for their conservation.

latory obstacles, infiltration of traditional conservation organizations, litigation, etc. The Fund For Animals has begun “2000: year of the Humane Child” to honor the millennial year. Part of this is a tiered essay contest for children in grades 4 through 12 under the title of “Project Respect.” The three topics are: (1)Is there a link between cruelty to animals and violence against human beings? (2)Is sport hunting a form of cruelty to animals? (3)Why do we love animals called pets and hunt animals called game? The obvious objective is to associate criminal violence with hunting,



dearly loved personal pets with wild game animals and to extend the laws governing cruelty to the hunting of game. On the positive side, “PETA Online” (the web-site for People For The Ethical Treatment of Animals) states that “...hunting creates the ideal conditions for accelerated reproduction. The abrupt drop in population (from the hunting) leads to less competition among survivors, resulting in a higher birth rate.” Thus PETA unwittingly again admits that hunting enhances the productivity of the wildlife resource!... Elsewhere, on “HUMANES lines” (a joint web-site of Hu-

mane Society of the United States and the Fund for Animals), the antis claim that USF&WS's regulations last season on hunting snow geese “...initiated the largest mass slaughter of a native species in US history.” They credit Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) as the “lone force for geese” on the Senate Committee. She is the one, you'll remember, who attacked US funding for CAMPFIRE, African Resources Trust and ZIMTRUST a couple of years ago because the funding allegedly promoted hunting.... On another front, the Fund for Animals was complaining in October about the release of ringneck pheasants on Cape Cod for hunting on the basis they are non-native, exotic species. As I advised last month, we can expect more of this alien-species argument.... On the international scene, HSUS has advised the USF&WS that all species in trade should be listed under CITES. It urges that interpretation of the new listing criteria adopted at the 9th CITES Conference of the Parties in Ft. Lauderdale. This goes hand-in-glove with the rising campaign against the bushmeat trade. Don't be surprised if the antis try to list all the duikers and antelope of Western Africa on the basis they are all threatened by the bushmeat trade. Another possible tack is an attempt to list various species across Africa and around the world under the “look alike” provisions of CITES. The American Black bear was listed on Appendix II of CITES as a “look alike” with Asian bear. No doubt they will try to list these all on Appendix 1 on the basis that importing nations must police the exporting nations, else the bushmeat trade can't be controlled. We will keep a watch on all this as it unfolds.

SPECIAL REPORT

News Analysis

Anti-Hunters Set To Increase Attacks

As we approach the next millennium we can expect the anti-hunting animal extremists to increase their attacks. Their emphasis will be on immunocontraception, re-introduction of predators, greater regu-

Briefly Noted

Congo Leopard Imports: The Office of Scientific Authority (OSA) has reversed its reasons for not allowing the import of any leopard trophies from the Congo. Conservation Force had asked for a “reconsideration” of the denial. A reconsideration is the first

level of appeal administratively. OSA admitted its legal error in denying the initial permit application, but made still another mistake in its haste to still deny the test permit. It has now denied the permit by confusing the Congo Republic with the New Demo-

cratic Republic of the Congo, or Zaire. The Congo has long been thought to have one of the densest populations of leopard in the world, so what is the big deal? Time and tests are putting the good faith and veracity of the Department of Interior in question. De-

spite Secretary Babbit's promise to all the CITES Parties at the 9th Conference of the Parties that he would facilitate the import of trophies during his watch and the representations of other high ranking USF&WS officials, there is far more evidence of broken promises and arbitrary denials of trophy imports. Without elaborating at this time, suffice it to say that a good case can be made that the positive progress made throughout most of this decade is over. There is presently no demonstrable progress by the Service on the importation of cheetah, additional polar bear, wood bison from Canada, elephant from Cameroon, markhor from Pakistan or leopard from the Congo. There may be no better example of foot-dragging than the failure to process permits for the import of cheetah trophies from Namibia.

Canadian Hunting License Revenue:

The British Columbia Wildlife Federation, a supporting organization of Conservation Force, recently completed a study of Canadian hunting license fees. Seems \$70 million (Canadian) is generated per annum from license fees, which is equal to the entire sum the provinces spend on wildlife management. The study covers all provinces and territories in Canada, which has never before been done. In British Columbia the license revenue actually exceeds by 10 percent the provincial budget for wildlife management. In Manitoba, on the other hand, hunting license revenue made up only about 80 percent of the provincial budget for wildlife management in 1998-99. Additionally, Canadian resident hunters spend approximately one billion dollars annually on hunting trips and another one billion outside of the season viewing wildlife and making contributions to habitat restoration. It confirms that sportsmen are a conservation force.

Proposed Roads Policy: More than one-quarter of all Forest Service land (perhaps 50 of 190 million acres in total) may become less accessible and roadless under an announcement by President Clinton and proposed regulations by the Department of Interior. A related Notice to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment and

calling for comments was published on October 19th at 201 FR 56306. Comments are due by December 20, 1999. We at Conservation Force still have this under review. Though we certainly support wilderness, there are concerns. The proposal would not compromise adjacent private landowners much but certainly could reduce general public access. It may reduce the deer and elk



carrying capacity because of the reduction of logging and regular burning. The carrying capacity of older growth forest is far less than thinned, regenerating and logged habitat.

Surprising Markhor Developments:

The Office of Scientific Authority (OSA) is reviewing the classification of all markhor under the Endangered Species Act. OSA made a positive finding in response to a petition to

downlist one Pakistan population, concluding that the downlisting of some markhor in Pakistan “warrants review.” At the same time, it made an unsolicited decision to do a status review of all markhor populations and markhor subspecies everywhere. They are now going to consider listing as endangered more populations of markhor than are currently listed! This development is of concern because the probable result of listing would be the prohibition of trophy imports with little or no benefits. The only trade currently is tourist trophy hunting, so it is a proposed rule against hunting. Notice was published on September 23rd at 184 FR 51499 and comments can be submitted to Susan Lieberman, Chief of OSA, until January 21, 2000.

ESA Priorities: On October 22, at 204 FR 57114, the USF&WS issued new priorities for guidance of Endangered Species Act action for the balance of 1999 and for 2000. Delisting activities are no longer part of the listing program. They have been undertaken by the recovery program since 1999 and are to continue under that program. In addition, all listing and delisting of foreign species are carried out by the Service's International Affairs Program (IAO) and are not covered by the Guidance Notice. The Namibian cheetah and markhor classification reviews fall under the IAO, not the new guidance rule.

GAME COIN: Game Conservation International (GAME COIN) reports that its rhino conservation program is continuing on a grand scale. There are even three GAME COIN rhino in Disney World in Florida in a 600-acre exhibit that opened in early October. GAME COIN has an unmatched record on the birth of rhino in captivity. It has over 50 black rhino and has had 24 births in the US since its effort began. GAME COIN rhino can be seen in the Fort Worth Zoo, Dallas Zoo, Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, Milwaukee Zoo and San Diego Zoo. Though it no longer has an annual hunters' convention, GAME COIN continues to be an exemplary sportsmen's conservation organization - a force for conservation, a conservation force.

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 20 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