



HUNTERS DOING THEIR SHARE

The Rowland Ward Foundation is supporting three community involvement projects near hunting areas.



A group of kids in the Northern Congo, where a hunter-supported community outreach program donates school supplies, supports a health clinic, and equips an anti-poaching team.

With the world's population approaching 8 billion, working with local people to conserve wildlife and protect habitat is an urgent necessity, not an option. There are no wild areas left on our planet that are not impacted by humans; everywhere hunters travel, we meet the local people and almost always they are a vital component to the success of a trip to strange lands. Besides the most visible people, such as guides, trackers, and camp staff, there are also local landowners on whose land we walk, as well as the workers in small villages and rural local industries such as animal and crop farming and forestry. All of these people and many others live immediately around and often inside hunting areas and will be seriously impacted if conservation values are not implemented. Without their good will and cooperation, a sustainable hunting program that conserves habitat, as well as the 96 percent of the animal life that is not hunted but is found in hunting areas, will not thrive. It is critically important that the hunting helps the locals, that they see its benefits, and that they understand that overutilizing the wilderness around their own homes, villages, and towns is not sustainable.

In order to do our part in 2022, the Rowland Ward Foundation has started supporting projects that benefit lo-

cal people, increase wildlife and habitat, and sustain fair-chase hunting opportunities. Rather than start our own projects from scratch, which is a costly and lengthy process, we decided to investigate about a dozen initiatives and select those that stood out as far as management and maximum positive impact for locals is concerned.

Before we list the programs, we would like to point out that the entire board of the Rowland Ward Foundation, including the director, work free of charge.

CONGO

This program is focused on the Northern Congo rainforest and the village of Tal-Tala on the Ngoko River.

Each year the program donates school materials to the village's primary school. This material emphasizes that the local wildlife helps pay for the school. In addition, the local health clinic of Tala-Tala gets donations each year. Finally, the program pays for four local anti-poaching agents by equipping them with motorcycles, clothing, and basic equipment. The pristine rain forest on the Ngoko River that this program targets not only holds iconic game animals such as bongo, sitatunga, and forest buffalo, but also chimpanzees and gorillas as well as elephants, which are not hunted. This program is administered via Congo Forest Safaris.

TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan has a nationwide outreach program to involve local communities in conservation.

Association of Nature Conservation Organizations in Tajikistan (ANCOT) works throughout Tajikistan making local communities aware of the valuable wildlife resources they have in their vast mountain ranges in the form of argali, urial, ibex, and markhor. It advises twelve conservancies on developing infrastructure for tourism and hunting in each conservancy. Throughout the year it conducts surveys in selected conservancies, reports conservation results, and makes suggestions. ANCOT firmly believes in, and focuses on, conservation through sustainable use and community-based wildlife management. This approach motivates locals to refrain from poaching to protect the wildlife populations while receiving benefits from their ecosystems. Also benefiting are several key species that are not hunted, including snow leopards and bearded vultures. This program got a positive writeup

in the British newspaper *The Guardian* recently, which was very pleasing as this publication is not normally a friend of hunting.

CAMEROON

This program focuses on north-eastern Cameroon around Bouba Ndjida National Park.

Near the town of Rey Bouba, a community outreach effort has built a hospital that is being supplied with medical materials from Europe each season. Every year a number of Spanish doctors come over to volunteer their services during the dry season. They perform surgeries, gynecology, and traumatology, among other things. With the help of Paul Bour, director of the park, and cooperating local village chiefs, outreach programs are conducted to inform the population about the damages caused by poachers and ask for their collaboration in anti-poaching efforts.

Presentations in the schools, in the local language, are giving to teach the children about the different animals in the area. Success has come with heads of local schools asking to organize excursions with the children to the hunting camps. Privately employed anti-poaching units are equipped with cars, radios, and other equipment to locate poaching activity and camps, and will call in Eco-Guards and/or the local rapid response force, called BIR, to confront armed poachers. (Private anti-poaching personnel may not carry firearms.) This program is run by a local NGO called Mayo Rey.

You have the ability to impact the work being done at these and other projects with a tax-deductible donation to the Rowland Ward Foundation, a US registered nonprofit. Your financial help provides continued support to the programs listed above. To donate, go to Rowlandward.org and click on the "Donate" button. 



A hospital near Rey Bouba in Cameroon is provided with medical supplies, and doctors are flown in from Spain for part of the year, as a result of hunter-provided funding.



Tajikistan's ANCOT works throughout the country in community conservancies that use hunter funds to provide education, infrastructure, and other benefits to local people.