



“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

African Lion Targeted At CITES Meeting

African lion trade has been challenged. At the recent 20th Animals Committee Meeting of CITES in Johannesburg, South Africa, African lion trade became an issue. Both the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) separately reviewed the status of the African lion. They made contradictory recommendations about the significance of

trade in lion parts. The Significant Trade Working Group, on which I served, passed over the African lion, the caracal cat, Hartmann’s mountain zebra and a number of other game mammals because of other species in more dire need of review due to their status and significant trade. Kenya was not happy and attempted to add the African lion to the list of species selected for special review in the final closing hours of the meeting. The

Committee declined to add it to 10 other species that were selected, but it will be considered at the next Animals Committee Meeting in 2005 in Geneva. Kenya is expected to submit a written paper.

The Significant Trade Review process can lead to the uplisting of Appendix II species to Appendix I and/or a prohibition of trade in the species. The contradictory recommendations of WCMC and IUCN’s

Lion Trophy Trade 1992-2002

		1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Tanzania:	Skins	3	25	26	34	47	35	50	32	25	13	6
	Trophies	202	195	282	230	298	276	264	272	316	230	226
S. Africa:	Skins	26	37	34	82	32	84	71	60	85	55	32
	Trophies	168	137	192	105	102	108	110	107	146	134	147
Zimbabwe:	Skins	13	24	37	82	35	20	31	24	68	20	7
	Trophies	246	189	102	123	100	93	81	123	91	95	104
Zambia:	Skins	9	6	17	19	24	8	15	11	9	4	0
	Trophies	118	36	51	65	50	45	82	74	47	24	3
Botswana:	Skins	8	19	33	94	234	102	64	94	72	0	0
	Trophies	145	151	49	34	9	18	9	22	30	9	2

Chart shows the number of lions skins and trophies shipped from African countries with the highest volumes of trade in lions. Stable numbers suggest trade is not a significant factor in population decline.

Trade Specialist Group were revealing. The WCMC said that lion populations are “declining... due to habitat loss, prey base loss and persecution.... The main threat is currently persecution for pest control,” citing the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, 2001. The lions’ “total effective population size is estimated at below 10,000 mature breeding individuals....” Nevertheless, the WCMC did not recommend the African lion for review because “South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe are the main exporters for this species and show relatively high but stable levels of trade over time. These are countries in which the lion is most abundant,” so the trade is relatively insignificant where it occurs. Tanzania had the highest trophy trade from 1992 through 2002.

The chart on previous page shows the safari hunting countries with the largest lion trade. It makes several things immediately obvious. Tanzania has the highest volume of trophy lion exports by far; South Africa (many captive bred), Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana follow, in that order. Botswana has not had significant lion trophy exportation in a decade because of its excessively restrictive quota, but contrast that lowly figure with the number of skins Botswana was exporting before the closure in 2001. It has had the highest number of skins in international trade, greatly surpassing all other countries. It most certainly documents the waste of what could be a conservation resource if more lions had been on the tourist hunting quota. Of course, lion hunting in Botswana is now closed, but we understand the destruction of lion in problem animal control is worsening, as we would expect.

We think that WCMC’s recommendation that the lion not be reviewed further was sound, but IUCN’s Wildlife Trade Programme contradicted it. IUCN stated that “[g]iven the threats facing lions and new research findings, a review of the sustainability of trophy exports is recommended.”

The threats and new findings are

the false issues that have been dominating media coverage over the past couple of years. First, IUCN quoted sources that the African lion population had declined from “200,000 in the 1980s to around 20,000 today.” We disagree. It is preposterous to claim that there were 200,000 lions in the 1980s without any basis whatsoever. The most up-to-date study does not show a significant decline for the past decade, if any at all. That study, *Conservation of the African Lion: Contribution to a Status Survey*, is a compilation of the opinions of the 50 most authoritative experts on African lion of our time across Africa by Conservation Force and the International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife. It shows a mean estimate of 40,000 African lions and that the number is basically stable.

The second issue raised was the recent claim that Feline AIDS (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus), the feline equivalent of HIV, is killing lions. That is total nonsense. It is a known fact that cats do not succumb to Feline AIDS. For many years, cancer and AIDS researchers have been studying Feline AIDS to better understand why it does not have significant effects on cats, because it does not. The recent presumption in the media that Feline AIDS was suspected when a whole pride of lions was found dead together was wholly unfounded and contrary to decades of research. The probable cause of a whole pride dying simultaneously is poison, not a disease that has not been found to harm cats in decades of study.

Canine Distemper Virus was cited as another reason for concern. That disease has in fact killed thousands of lions in an overpopulated region of Tanzania, but lions reproduce like rabbits, and vice versa. In a few short years, literally thousands of lions have replaced those that died.

Regardless, those are not trade issues at all. Moreover, trophy hunting is not significant, nor could it be of real biological consequence. Most

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male lions are surplus and lions are prolific reproducers as well. The young, nomadic male you shoot is not likely to ever have a pride and the older pride males can't keep a pride. All of the current preoccupation by the hunting industry with trophy quality and lion age fosters a misperception in the media that safari hunting somehow has signifi-

cance to the population status of lion. Safari hunting saves more lions than it takes, which cannot be said for problem animal control, which is a threat to this otherwise robust and resilient species.

The African lion is likely to be added to the Significant Trade Review Process at the next Animals Committee Meeting in 2005 in

Geneva. This will require the selected exporting countries to explain and justify their nondetriment findings and internal quotas. Those countries with lower level trophy trade may not be able to bear the expense of population estimation and documentation. On the other hand, those with lesser levels of trophy exports may not be selected. The

□ News.... News.... News

Suit Filed To Stop Nonresident Hunter Discrimination

■ The State of Minnesota has sued North Dakota to stop it from discriminating against its citizens in hunting licensing and regulations. This is the suit we have long waited for. The suit was filed on March 10, 2004 in the United States District court in the Southwestern Division of North Dakota. The plaintiffs are the State of Minnesota, represented by the State's Attorney General, Mike Hatch; and Congressman Colin Peterson as an individual hunter who represents Minnesota's Seventh Congressional District, represented by private counsel Harry Sieben, Jr., of Minneapolis. The defendants are the Governor of North Dakota, John Hoeven; and the State's Director of the Game and Fish Department, Dean C. Hildebrand.

The complaint cites the USF&WS' 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation for the economic importance of hunting to the United States as a whole and to North Dakota in particular. The total economic contribution of nonresident hunting in North Dakota for 2001-2002 has been estimated to be 78.5 million dollars. In 2001, 52,000 (37 percent) of North Dakota hunters were non-residents. The suit alleges that the North Dakota Legislative Assembly made several dramatic changes in nonresident waterfowl licensing, discriminating against nonresidents "in response to pressure exerted by local hunting interests" to further their own interests even though a "bumper year" for waterfowl was predicted:

i.e., discrimination, not conservation, was the motive.

The State of Minnesota has filed the "suit *parens patriae* to vindicate its interest and that of its citizens in not being discriminatorily denied its rightful status within the federal system. The State has a recognized interest in the removal of barriers to the participation by its residents in the free flow of interstate commerce." We must add that this is the kind of plaintiff that can overcome the threshold "standing" issue that has



defeated such cases in the past, including the Wyoming Outfitters suit yours truly handled a few years back. The court may reach the merits in this case more squarely than in any case to date. It may be the *Commerce Clause* case all nonresidents have been waiting for. Across the nation, one of every seven licensed hunters hunt out-of-state, so far more than Minnesota interests are at stake.

The suit contains five separate counts or claims of discrimination. The first is entitled *Count I: Discriminatory Season Opening Date*. It al-

leges that the proclamation prohibiting nonresidents from waterfowl hunting the first week of the season violates the Commerce Clause of the US Constitution. The second count, entitled *Count II: Discriminatory Geographic Restrictions*, attacks the discriminating restrictions on areas nonresidents are permitted to hunt that are not imposed on residents. This too is a Commerce Clause claim.

The third count is for *Discriminatory Treatment of Nonresident Landowners* for Minnesota residents that own or lease land in North Dakota who are subjected to the discrimination. This claim is the only one brought under the Privileges and Immunities Clause as well as the Commerce Clause of the US Constitution. The fourth claim is for *Discriminatory Access to Public Lands*. It too is a Commerce Clause Claim focused on the prohibition against all nonresident hunting of any kind during the first seven days of the pheasant hunting season on certain state controlled lands. The fifth and final claim is entitled *Discriminatory License Fees*. This, like the four before it, is a Commerce Clause claim for setting nonresident waterfowl licensing fees "at a rate greater than fourteen times that charged to residents."

The suit asks that the discrimination be declared illegal and that defendants be enjoined from the discrimination. The Case Number is A1-04-021 and can be seen on Conservation Force's web site, www.conservationforce.org, under "News."

hunting community must remember that quota setting and nondetriment finding methodology itself is currently undergoing review. It is bound to become more demanding and ex-

pensive to satisfy export permit findings requirements. There can be no doubt that exporting countries are going to be called upon to have documented findings. That will be prob-

lematic when species populations can't be satisfactorily estimated because the species' habits or its habitats make it too expensive or impossible.

Briefly Noted

Two Join Conservation Force's Governmental Advisory Board:

Congressman Pete Sessions, a Republican from Texas, and Ron Marlenee, an Ex-Congressman from Montana, have joined Conservation Force's Governmental Board of Advisors. Congressman Pete Sessions is a prominent member of Dallas Safari Club and serves on the House Rules Committee. Ron Marlenee was a Montana Congressman for 16 years and served as Safari Club International's lobbyist for more than a decade. He has had an uncommon history of success for hunters that commenced with the reform of the Marine Mammal Protection Act that permitted import of polar bear trophies by US hunters. He was one of the founders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus as well. They join Don McMillan, Don Peay, and Lance Phillips on Conservation Force's Governmental Advisory Panel of the Board of Advisors.

Grand Slam Club/OVIS to Hold Convention:

One of Conservation Force's faithful supporting organizations, the Grand Slam Club/OVIS, is expanding its operation. In 2005, Grand Slam/Ovis will host its own convention. It is to be at the Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi. That site promises good food in a great place for lots of sheep hunting camaraderie. The dates are February 17-20, 2005. President Dennis Campbell explains that the independent convention is necessary for the Grand Slam Club/OVIS to generate more revenue to fulfill its sheep conservation mission. The Grand Slam Club/Ovis is very involved in international hunting, which is a growing sector of the hunting community that will call for more attention and project revenue in the future.

Joe Quarto Passes: Joe Quarto, the President of the International Sheep Hunters' Association (ISHA), died in February of complications following a stroke. ISHA has been an intermit-



tent supporter of Conservation Force. What now happens to ISHA without Joe's individualistic leadership remains to be seen.

British Columbia Grizzly Again:

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

The European Union's Scientific Review Group has once again recommended that European Union countries not permit importation of British Columbia grizzly bear trophies. The European Union has special internal regulations that require import permits for CITES Appendix II species as if they were on Appendix I before it issues import permits. Its Scientific Review Group is treating BC's independent review panel's best practices recommendations as minimum requirements before trophy import permits will be granted. Apparently, there is no finding that the hunting is detrimental. It is a failure to find that it is not. The Scientific Review Group is requiring that BC institute drastic changes in habitat practices that are not directly related to the hunting. It appears that the European Union will require BC to create numerous wholly protected (closed) areas throughout the province. Of course, that may be a prohibitive undertaking and cost too much just to be able to import approximately seven grizzly trophies a year into the European Union. In our opinion, more fully protecting grizzly in more parks or sanctuaries, although it may be a desirable ideal, has little to do directly with whether or not the bear quota is sound for the coming Spring hunting season. BC has also already cut its total precautionary quota from a maximum of six percent to five percent in those areas that warrant the maximum harvest. As numbing as this modern form of colonial imperialism is, there is a positive side. Trophy quality should be getting better in BC because fewer grizzlies are being taken from a population that is increasing or stable over most of its range – *John J. Jackson, III.*