



SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVANCY

ANNUAL REPORT - 2004

Transforming Conflict to Coexistence

The Snow Leopard Conservancy's success stems from conservation actions that are rooted firmly in the soil of local culture and tradition. It is, after all, the herders and farmers living with the beautiful, legendary snow leopard who hold the power to ensure the cats' future existence.

Working with mountain communities, SLC reduces livestock loss and generates alternative income for village households. We empower communities to act on their own, through projects that they design.

When we first initiated the Snow Leopard Conservancy, the villagers could not understand why we had chosen for our organization the name of a despised predator. Today, their sentiments are echoed by Tsering Phuntsok of Chilling, "wild animals are like the ornaments of our mountains!" We know our work is effective, but changing attitudes towards snow leopards will not happen overnight; the communities must see social and economic benefits associated with wildlife protection.

- Rinchen Wangchuk, Director SLC-India

To ensure the sustainability of these progressive measures, we form partnerships with in-country organizations and employ bright, passionate conservation and social entrepreneurs who understand local conditions and share our vision and philosophy. We mentor these young people, building their expertise and capacity to lead the conservation effort in their own region.

This approach leads to community-based stewardship of indigenous wildlife, a transformation of the snow

leopard from threat to asset, and the best guarantee that the cats will be protected and conserved for future generations.

Our Ladakh program has grown from a tightly focused partnership between SLC-India (with guidance from SLC-US and The Mountain Institute) and a handful of villages within Hemis National Park to involve 75% of the park's villages, plus local tourism providers, and communities in Zaskar, Spiti and Sikkim. Households have captured



a new source of income from the Himalayan Homestay program that previously would have gone to outside tourism operators.

In far west Nepal, our Junior Ranger program is the only conservation education program functioning in the midst of the Maoist insurgency. Local teachers and the program coordinator have worked for three years to build the strong community ownership and support that have enabled this school-based program to withstand pressure from the insurgent leaders.

We plan to continue building these linkages between SLC-US, our range country partners, and the mountain communities. This will require our on-going close collaboration and guidance in countries where activism, fundraising and leadership are relatively new concepts.

Finally, it is because of our donors, who embrace the concept of holistic thinking in unusual situations, that we are able to celebrate the success stories you will find on the following pages.

Director, Snow Leopard Conservancy



Local coordinator Chhimi Rinzen Gurung holds a village meeting

Snow Leopards on TV

*First comprehensive footage
of snow leopards in the
wild!*

On January 16, 2005, PBS *Nature* aired *Silent Roar: Searching for the Snow Leopard*, the documentary on which the Snow Leopard Conservancy assisted Mitchell Kelly and Hugh Miles. The film contained stunning footage of snow leopards and a glimpse of the Snow Leopard Conservancy's work.

Also airing in 2005, on CNN, will be a UNESCO film on cultural and ecotourism of mountainous regions of Central Asia, containing highlights of the Himalayan Homestay Program in Ladakh.

Measures of Success 2004

No Reported Livestock Losses or Retributive Killing of Snow Leopards Where Corrals Have Been Predator-proofed.

Seventy percent of households in Hemis National Park now have predator-proof winter livestock enclosures, a result of SLC's assistance and community to community sharing of experiences. This is down from as many as 492 animals killed by predators in one valley in one year.

Hushey Herders Win the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund's Conservation Hero Award.

After SLC initiated a conservation program in 2003, the remote village of Hushey in Northern Pakistan released a snow leopard that had entered a livestock pen and killed many sheep and goats. In the past they regularly killed stock-raiding cats. The village's changing attitude won them the Disney Fund's award for all of Asia for 2004.

Junior Rangers in Far Western Nepal take 2nd Place in Conservation Contest.

An environmental conservation contest organized by WWF-Nepal drew participants from all of Nepal's 75 districts. The Dolpa team was entirely comprised of SLC's Junior Ranger students. Despite Dolpa's remoteness, relative government neglect and difficult political circumstances, our team took second place!

Snow Leopard Conservancy's Homestay Program Shortlisted for Responsible Tourism Award.

These awards recognize organizations that are making a significant commitment to responsible tourism – projects which make a positive contribution to conservation and the economies of local communities, while minimizing the negative impacts that tourism can have. Over 700 nominations were received from tourists who were asked to identify organizations that provided an enjoyable and responsible travel experience.



Conservation

In Upper Mustang, Nepal – a biologically and culturally unique area – we partnered with the American Himalayan Foundation and a local organization to provide further training in community-based monitoring of snow leopards, and in corral predator-proofing and solar electric fencing for protecting livestock on the grazing lands.



Setting a camera trap



In Pakistan's Baltistan and Gojal Regions,

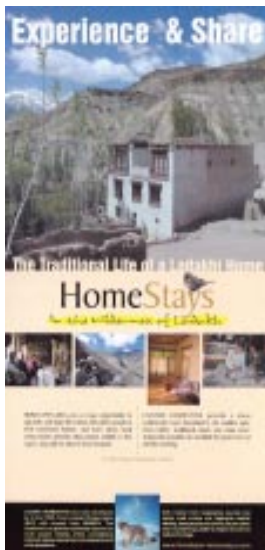
we recruited two new Village Stewards and trained thirteen villagers in sign transect data collection and monitoring of snow leopards using camera traps. We also developed collaborative agreements with three local partners for further conservation activities. A local program coordinator will be recruited in 2005.

In Ladakh, India, we obtained photographic proof that snow leopards are breeding. Our camera traps caught two pairs of cubs, one set seen with their mother over the winter of 2003-4. Our 250 images of wild snow leopards in Hemis National Park indicate a good population of 16-20 cats per 100 sq. miles. Data analysis also indicates no decline in snow leopard numbers since we started monitoring at the beginning of 2002.

Our camera trapping census yielded important data on the snow leopard population, at the same time providing a training ground for local residents. Such improved awareness, expertise, and knowledge of snow leopard status in their area **involves herders as community monitors and gives them a compelling voice** in decisions that affect their destiny.

Dr. Jackson attended the second meeting of the Snow Leopard Network Steering Committee, held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This committee guides the direction and focus of the **Network's seventy-plus membership** devoted to research and conservation of the cats across the range.

We extended the traditional Himalayan Homestay program for sustainable community-based livelihoods, linked to conservation agreements with villagers, to include new areas of Spiti and Ladakh. Initial steps were taken to **turn the program entirely over to local tourism providers**, who produced the poster shown here. UNESCO partnership and funding is being transferred entirely to SLC-India in 2005. **Operators and NGOs have come from other parts of India, Nepal, Bhutan and Tajikistan** to see how the program works and take the model back with them.



Himalayan-Homestays.com

David Tresilian, Cultural Tourism

Project Manager, UNESCO, wrote to the partners:

I should like to say how much I have learned from working on this programme with you over the past several years and how much I have valued the experience, as well as the opportunity it has given me to work with such a dedicated group of professional people.

In June, we held a nature guide training in India's Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary. The training was accomplished through cross-cultural, professional networking with our partners in Sikkim, thus **strengthening in-country capacity.**

In conjunction with UNESCO and the French agency ACTED, we built upon efforts begun earlier in Tajikistan to promote wildlife conservation and community-based monitoring by providing information for the **first tourist map of the Eastern Pamir Mountains.** The map's educational focus serves as a guide for both tourists and local residents.

Education Nepal

Students campaigning for snow leopards

In Kathmandu, Lincoln School students studied snow leopards and created and sold special buttons which raised \$300 for snow leopard education in Nepal.



Budding conservationists



In Dolpa District, our Junior Ranger Program **has reached 351 students in 21 schools** in Shey-Phoksundo National Park and its buffer zone.

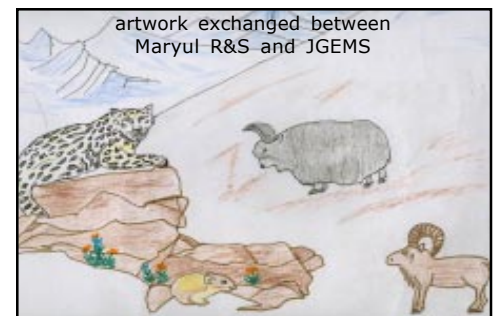
Students teaching students

In Manang Region, students and teachers at the Annapurna Higher Secondary School used a small grant from the Snow Leopard Conservancy to undertake a program at three lower schools, studying wildlife conservation through classroom activities and field trips.

Ladakh

SLC connects students with Jane Goodall School

India's first Roots & Shoots Club, facilitated by SLC, is coordinating an exchange between grammar school kids in Ladakh and England. Maryul R&S is housed in Leh, Ladakh, and is sister schools with the Jane Goodall Magnet School in Oregon.



A ghoral (native ungulate) was about to sink in the river Bheri after poachers chased it. The police guards could not save or put the flowing-away, frightened deer out of its misery. Some expert swimmers, who were also Junior Rangers, dived in and took out the poor live deer. They handed it over to the Park authorities. After some essential treatments it was safely transferred back to the jungle.

- Binod Dhakal, Junior Rangers Coordinator

Pakistan's Northern Areas Adopt Snow Leopard Education

In the Gojal Region, SLC trained teachers to lead a set of interactive conservation activities focused on snow leopards and other wildlife. Ahmad Khan, a dynamic and committed local teacher and head of the Society for Environmental Education, is coordinating a three-school program based on SLC's teachers' guide. On World Literacy Day, celebrations included art contests and debates on the local wildlife, the importance of education and environment in the 21st Century, and **the role of women in conservation education.**



SLC's Good Livestock Management Posters Save Wildlife

These posters are so effective among Buddhist communities because of their traditional style. Herders in remote villages can easily relate to the scenes, and they enjoy studying and learning from them. Besides being excellent class-room teaching tools, the messages **stimulate conversations** during workshops aimed at improving livestock management practices. And the posters, sold at SLC events, help raise money! They can be ordered on SLC's website.

Advisory Board

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Tsedar Bhutia, Coordinator, Nepal
Chhimi Gurung, Mustang Program Coordinator, Nepal
Ghulam Wafi Shah and Ulfat Shah, Village Stewards, Pakistan

Program Partners

Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, Paris
All Spiti Youth Organization, India
American Himalayan Foundation, US
Dolpo Educational, Social and Environmental Reservation Team, Nepal
International Snow Leopard Trust, US
Jammu & Kashmir Dept of Wildlife Protection, India
Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School, US
Jane Goodall Institute, US
King Mahendra Trust For Nature Conservation/Annapurna Conservation Area Program, Nepal
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Overland Escape, India
Project Snow Leopard, Pakistan
Society For Environmental Education, Pakistan
Shimshal Nature Trust, Pakistan
Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh, India
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, France
U.S. Geological Survey's Fort Collins Science Center
U.S. National Park Service, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Wildlife and Environment-Nepal
Wildlife Institute of India
WWF-Nepal



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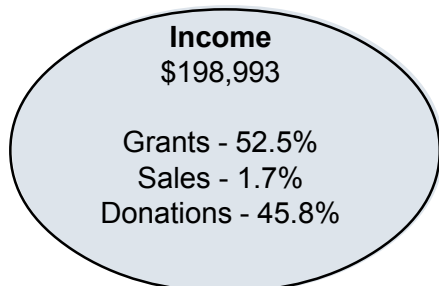
A Project of the Cat Action Treasury (www.felidae.org)

Promoting community-based stewardship of the endangered snow leopard, its prey and habitat

Finances

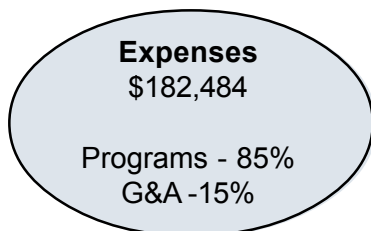
\$50,000 or greater - Jon Vannini

\$10,000 to \$49,000 - Anonymous, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund, Mark Coreth (via International Trust for Nature Conservation), Oracle Giving & Volunteers, UNESCO



\$5,000 to \$9,999 - Nancy Abraham and Arnold Moss, Gibson & Mickie Anderson, Sidney Byers Charitable Trust, CGMK Foundation, Christine Hemrick, Pierre & Pamela Omidyar Fund, Shared Earth Foundation, Skaggs Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Network

\$1,000 to \$4,999 - Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, Donna Allen Taylor, American Himalayan Foundation, Bill & Penny Andrews, Calgary Zoological Society, Jan & Codel Frydendahl, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Goelet, IBM International Foundation, Sabrina Johnston, Dave & Terri Jones, Michael Myers and Judith Brown, Project Survival, Sabine & Rick Stevens, Ed & Sally Supplee, Linda Tabor-Beck, Wild Cat Education & Conservation Fund



\$500 to \$999 - Cameron & Chris Bilger, Latha Colby, Stuart During & Yoshiko Kurihara, Tom Eastman, Inge Gfroerer, Kenneth & Marilyn Lavezzo, John & Kellie Lehr, Dick & Liz Moley

Up to \$499 - Kara Akers-Dziak and Thomas Dziak, Anonymous Donor, Julianna Bauer, Kirk & Louanna Bennett, Brad Blumenthal, Robert Burke, Charlotte Cotter, Jessica Couleur, Jack Cox Jr., Doug & Pat Donaldson, Becky Dunn, Celia Felsher, Bob & Jan Fenwick, Toby Lynn & Barry Fernald, Michael Freedman & Catherine Ching, Laura & Michael Gleeson, Grant Beaudette, Bobby & Suzy Greenberg, Hafner Vineyard, Lois Haime, Patricia & John Hammett, Tom & Mary Herrmann, Carroll Ann Hodges, Kennon and Bob Hudson, Jennifer Hunter, Donna Johnson, Elizabeth Jonca, Dr. Jona Jordan, Eileen Jurkovich, Rafael Liparitovich Kettsyan, Suzanne King, Florence Korbus, David Leland and Ann Howald, Lincoln School, Edwina Lu, Sue Marek, Merryhill School, Kitty Merz, Jo McDowell, Montclair Elementary School, Barbara & Daniel Mount, Robert & Marilyn Moyes, Claudine Mussuto, Irene & Terry Nakamitsu, Mark Oberholz, Aaron & Jennifer Pan, Christine Pasterczyk, Mary Pearl, Pinewood School, Karen and Paul Povey, India Sanjuan, Polly & Robert Savoie, Joseph Sophy, Kristen St. Thomas, Carole Stokes, Tim Straight, Timothy & June Sturm, Chris Tromborg, Holly Tuers, Bill, Terri & Max Unger, Janet Van Swoll, Virginia Van Wolbeck, Charles Villarrubia, Frederick Welk, Bob Wilson, Edward Winn, Linda Wise, John & Cathy Yee



The money from Homestays is very helpful for us. Some of the men go with pack horses during summer, and the money comes only towards the end of the tourist season or the following year. The money from Homestays is instant cash and comes directly to us women at home. We are able to send our children to boarding schools near Leh for a good education.

- Tsering Dolkar, Traditional Himalayan Homestay operator

Snow Leopard Conservancy Volunteers

Andrew Chinn, Namita Dalal, Barbara Palmer, Joyce Robinson, Jerry Roe (camera-trapping census)
Steve Flaherty (computers)
Eva Au, Jessica Couleur, Toni DeMatto, Alicia Falsetto, Nandita Jain, Sabrina Johnston,
Sherry Paul, Carey Peterson, Doug Strauss (fundraising)

Special thanks to Project Survival & their wild ambassadors, Leopards, Etc. & their wild ambassadors,
Terry Hillard, Molly Hillard, Mitchell Kelly, Hugh Miles, David, Mateo & Miguel Willis

Four Critical Challenges in Saving Snow Leopards and How You Can Help

Challenge #1: *Empowering communities to directly benefit from an ecosystem that includes snow leopards, so they can better tolerate occasional livestock losses*

\$100 matches the Traditional Homestay conservation fund

\$300 provides training and equipment for a nature-guide

\$1000 supports school-based Conservation Education

Challenge #2: *Predator-proofing livestock corrals across the range, so snow leopards can't kill an entire herd at once*

\$2,000 builds a predator proof corral and protects as many as five snow leopards from retaliatory killing

Challenge #3: *Zeroing in on the actual population of wild snow leopards, and understanding what makes some cats more likely than others to kill livestock, so villagers can monitor any "problem cats," and take more effective steps to avoid depredation on the open pastures.*

\$900 funds a camera trapping station

Challenge #4: *Building capacity for sustainable snow leopard conservation by range country professionals*

\$5,000 covers the salary and materials for a Country Program Coordinator for one year.

