

# Russia-East Asia Program

WILDLIFE  
WITHOUT BORDERS

Original artwork by Tim Knepp commissioned by FWS AIA

## UPDATE - FALL 2011



*FWS Alaska Regional Director Geoffrey Haskett and Natalia Vavilova of Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment chaired the meeting.*

### U.S. and Russia Agree on Cooperation for 2011-2012

A delegation from Russia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment visited Washington DC June 1-3, 2011, to negotiate activities for cooperation in 2011-2012 under the U.S.-Russian Federation Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources. Since 1972, the Agreement has been a mechanism for cooperative nature conservation efforts between the two countries, including management of shared populations of marine mammals and migratory birds, fisheries, protected natural areas, endangered animal and plant species, invasive species, and wildlife diseases. The Division

of International Conservation coordinates implementation of the wildlife conservation component of the Agreement, and works in partnership with U.S. federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, Native representatives, and university researchers, among others.



*The U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission discusses research and survey results in Moscow.*

### Third Meeting of the U.S. – Russia Polar Bear Commission

In late July 2011, governmental and Native representatives from the United States and Russia met in Moscow to discuss the conservation and management of the shared Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population. The Commission affirmed that Alaska and Chukotka Natives will share a harvest quota of 58 polar bears per year for traditional and subsistence purposes.



*On board the ship shown here, the FWS delegation visited parks and nature reserves to discuss tourism and land management techniques.*

### Baikal's Protected Lands

Six Americans traveled to Russia's Lake Baikal in August 2011 to share expertise on visitor management. The FWS delegation, including staff of the National Wildlife Refuge System, spent five days on the lake, stopping at three nature reserves and two national parks. As development impacts the region, ecotourism projects such as the Great Baikal Trail have the potential to attract funding but also cause environmental disturbance to the area.



## FWS and China Adopt 2011-2013 Work Plan

Teiko Saito, FWS Assistant Director for International Affairs, and Ms. Zhang Hongyan, Deputy Director General for International Cooperation of China's State Forestry Administration, signed a document in April 2011 laying out activities for 2011-2013 under the bilateral Protocol on Cooperation and Exchanges in the Field of Conservation of Nature, which provides for collaboration between FWS and China's State Forestry Administration and Ministry of Agriculture. The Protocol, which marks its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, encourages information exchange and cooperation in wildlife conservation. The Division of International Conservation coordinates implementation of the Protocol in partnership with several other U.S. federal agencies.



The SFA's Zhang Hongyan (front left) and FWS' Teiko Saito (front right) pose for photos after signing the 2011-2013 Work Plan.



Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge Manager Paul Casey discusses public land management techniques with Chinese visitors.

## Chinese Learn from National Wildlife Refuges in New England

A seven-person delegation from China's State Forestry Administration visited federal and state-managed public lands in New England for two weeks in September 2011. The delegation observed firsthand various management philosophies while touring national wildlife refuges, a national park, a national forest, and two state parks. Each stop emphasized government partnerships with public groups and citizens in managing land for wildlife and people. Mr. Zhang Xiwu, Director General of SFA's Department of Wildlife Conservation and Nature Reserve Management, led the Chinese delegation as it traversed 1,500 miles of the Northeast, from highways to winding back roads, from coastal Maine to the mountains of northern New Hampshire. The Division of International Conservation worked with FWS' Northeast Region to coordinate the visit.

## FWS Contributes to Saiga Antelope Conservation

The USFWS Division of International Conservation provided \$80,000 to the Saiga Conservation Alliance in September 2011 to administer a grants competition assisting in the conservation of the critically endangered saiga antelope. Since 1995, the saiga population has decreased 95% throughout its Central Asian range.

## Chinese Visit Bandon Marsh, Oregon

In July-August 2011, two biologists from Beijing Forestry University, Mr. Xu Yingshou and Mr. Jia Yefei, visited Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon at the invitation of Oregon Coast NWR Complex Project Leader Roy Lowe, to take part in coastal wetland habitat restoration efforts. After helping to create future tidal channels, they assisted with wildlife surveys and local students' research studies. China's coastal wetland habitat is diminishing, which impacts bird species breeding in Alaska and migrating to China. The USFWS encourages China to take positive steps for preserving coastal wetlands.



Xu Yingshou and Jia Yefei measure a tree for removal into the tidal channel.

### Did you know?

Activities occurring under the auspices of the U.S. – China Nature Conservation Protocol are reciprocal, meaning that for every Chinese delegation the U.S. hosts, an American delegation visits China for a similarly themed scientific exchange.

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