

Over \$1.5 Million in Conservation Grants to Aid Imperiled International Wildlife

Contacts

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is awarding more than \$1.5 million in international conservation grants under the Marine Turtle, and Great Ape and African Elephant Conservation Funds, to aid recovery of endangered species in thirty countries around the world.

“These grants provide critical support for efforts targeting highly imperiled species and habitats throughout the world,” said Service’s acting Director Rowan Gould. “They enable local communities, partner organizations, universities and governments to conserve and manage their natural heritage.”

The funding is made available through the Service’s Wildlife Without Borders- Multinational Species Programs, using monies designated by Congress for international conservation. These programs were created to provide aid and support the conservation of species and habitats imperiled by a variety of threats, including poaching, illegal trafficking, habitat loss, and disease.

The grants will be used to leverage more than \$2.3 million in matching funds to directly help wildlife. Examples of funded projects include: protecting leatherback sea turtles at one of the few remaining nesting beaches in the eastern Pacific on Costa Rica; providing a 2-month long course in natural resources conservation for 16 wildlife professionals currently working in protected areas in Latin America; and, a variety of field work involving protection, monitoring, and management of these species and their habitats.

The Marine Turtle Conservation Fund (MTCF) will issue funding in the amount of \$413,948, with matching resources from partners totaling \$587,316, that will be used to enhance the conservation of leatherbacks in Indonesia, Gabon, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Sao Tome and Principe, Equatorial Guinea and Vietnam; loggerheads in Oman, Japan, Mexico and Cape Verde; Olive ridley populations in Mexico, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua and India; and hawksbills in Mexico, Barbados, Nicaragua, Panama and Vietnam.

MTCF’s new initiative will support a coalition of non-governmental organizations in Cape Verde to better coordinate and expand efforts to protect and survey nesting loggerheads. The Cape Verde loggerhead nesting population suffers from heavy illegal poaching with up to 25 percent of the nesting females being killed annually. This grant will support a pre-season workshop with non-governmental organizations and government institutions to better coordinate cooperate and identify priority actions and support expanded on the ground efforts to protect nesting females.

The Great Ape Conservation Fund (GACF) will assist with conservation of chimpanzees, western gorillas, and eastern gorillas in Central African Republic, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Nigeria, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Tanzania, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. The Service will award 13 grants in the amount of \$866,133, with matching resources from partners totaling \$1,263,586, benefiting 12 countries across the continent. The GACF will continue to support dawn-to-dusk protection and monitoring of mountain gorillas based at Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda. One project has continued over 30 years of research to collect gorilla demographic and ranging data to assist the Rwandan national park service in managing the park. The award supports anti-poaching patrols to remove snares, record illegal activities, and train park staff to protect gorillas.

Finally, the Service will award four grants totaling \$301,353, with matching resources from partners totaling \$500,741, to conserve African Elephants. These funds will assist in the conservation of elephants in Zambia , Malawi , Uganda , and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These funds will be leveraged to provide a total amount of more than \$1.76 million for these vital conservation efforts. In the northern region of DRC, a grant will provide the funds to rebuild a ranger post for the Congolese national wildlife authority in Kabaraza, so patrols may be established in order to improve security for elephants and other wildlife between Queen Elizabeth Park, Uganda and Virunga National Park, DRC.

For more information about the Service's international grants programs, visit http://www.fws.gov/international/DIC/dic_home.html.

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