The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Rinur Bekmansurov
Project title	Protection of populations of the white-tailed eagle, imperial eagle, and greater spotted eagle in the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan. Russian Federation.
RSG reference	10026-1
Reporting period	July 2011 – November 2012
Amount of grant	£5536
Your email address	rinur@yandex.ru
Date of this report	15th November 2012

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Protection of populations of the white-tailed eagle *(Haliaeetus albicilla),* imperial eagle *(Aquila heliacal*) and greater spotted eagle *(Aquila clanga)* by reducing the rate of bird deaths through electrocution on overhead power lines near their nesting grounds			+	The mitigation activities aimed at bird protection on the medium voltage power lines (6-10 kV) have begun in the Tatarstan Republic.
Establishing the protected forest areas, where nests of these species are located on the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan			+	During the project 43 new breeding territories of eagles were discovered. It was established that 19 sites are in need of establishing the special protected forest sites to prohibit the logging there. These sites are located in the forests belonging to the exploitative category.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

At the beginning of the project on prevention bird electrocution we faced with the problem that the main owner of overhead power lines (PL) hazardous to birds the OAO "Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo", JSC despite the reached agreements did not retrofit PL 6-10 kV with special bird protection devices. So, some PL of 6-10 kV instead of special bird protection devices were retrofitted with devices designed to scare the birds. These devices can't fully protect the birds. They are intended for protection of architectural monuments, eaves, balconies of buildings against dung of birds, but not for prevention bird electrocution. By means of NGO the Russian Bird Conservation Union (RBCU) we expressed our disagreement with the decision of the OAO "Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo", JSC and presented explanation of the reasons why it is impossible to apply such devices. Further it is planned to control the violations on application of devices for bird protection and to settle this question in court.

After revealing the fact of forest logging on a nesting site of the imperial eagle in the Spassky region of the Tatarstan Republic in November 2011, recorded by us during the project we faced with the difficulties regarding protection of this nesting site. We could not completely stop the logging of the

forest. But two nesting trees with nests were saved and two fledglings of the imperial eagle were ringed in that site in July 2012. In response to my missive to the Ministry of Forestry it was reported that the site doesn't recorded in the database of the Red Data Book of the Tatarstan Republic as a nesting site of the Imperial Eagle. In the letter it was promised to organise the commission on this fact with departure into place to be convinced about the fact of nesting of an eagle. The Ecocenter "Dront" (Nizhny Novgorod) also participated in the protection of the nesting site and sent the formal letter to nature protection prosecutor's office. Now the final decision on the issue, which should result in judicial proceedings, has not been taken yet.

The Ministry of Forestry of the Tatarstan Republic carries out wide functions in the sphere of the forest management in the republic territory. Since 2011 the function on maintaining the Red Data Book and conservation of biodiversity on the territories of the Tatarstan Republic has been delegated to the Ministry. Unfortunately, the Ministry has not developed yet the protocol of establishing the special protected forest areas. The Ministry officials offered to us to send the information about location of nesting sites to input it in the Ministry database. But we insist on the establishing of special protected forest areas according to article 102 of the Forest Code of the Russian Federation. It is dictated by our fear of possible deliberate destruction of these nesting sites, which can hinder from the planned logging.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- In the first part of the project, due to surveys carried out, media coverage of the problem and support of the RBCU we managed to organise cooperation to settle the problem of bird electrocution with the main owner of dangerous PL (6-10 kV) the OAO “Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo”, JSC. This organisation (Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo) adopted an important document: “Requirements to bird protection devices (BPD) applied on PL 6-10 kV in distributive networks of the OAO “Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo”, JSC. In 2012, the mitigation actions of high priority began on those sites where the death of eagles through electrocution was possible. The plan for the continuation of the activities in breeding grounds of eagles is preparing for 2013. A positive example of change of public relation and law enforcement agencies to this problem was that for the first time the prosecutor's office of one of administrative regions of Tatarstan (the Agryzsky region) appealed to court with the requirement to establish BPD on 25 power lines of 6-10 kV crossing the territory of the region. Some PL of 6-10-kV were retrofitted with BPD providing complete protection of birds from electrocution in 2012.
- A tendency on the fully reconstruction of PL of 6-10 kV with replacing of structures hazardous to birds to alternative bird-friendly constructions and construction of the new overhead lines designed safe to birds has been outlined. So the second largest owner of dangerous PL OAO Tatneft, JSC in all regions of Tatarstan, where oil is extracted and there are breeding territories of eagles, has begun power lines designed dangerous to birds by bird-friendly constructions with suspended insulators. Also insulated wires have been used. So, for 2011-2012, oil industry workers retrofitted 50 km of PL of 6-10 kV with the insulated wires only in the territory of the National Park «Nizhnya Kama».
- The death of eagles on PL of 6-10 kV (3 individuals per 150 km of PL surveyed) was proved. Real figures in terms of 40 000 km of such PL in Tatarstan are much more. During surveys carried out under the project 43 new breeding territories of eagles were discovered in the territory of the Tatarstan Republic. The most part of them is located at a short distance from PL dangerous for birds demanding the immediate mitigation measures. Part of them has

already proposed to include in the plan on prevention of bird electrocution for 2013. Also 20 white-tailed Eagles, 42 imperial eagles and 1 greater spotted eagle were tagged with colour rings in 35 nests in 2012. Besides, it was revealed that 19 breeding territories of eagles can get under the logging, as they are located in territories of forestry.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

Activity on this project first actively was covered in the local mass media, generally newspapers and an Internet site. After several critical notes and articles in newspapers concerning death of birds on PL, it was necessary to stop to coverage of this topic as the purpose to intensify owners of dangerous PL was reached and more criticism could only spoil the action.

Besides, I read lectures on the implementation of the project for students, pupils and teachers in Kazan, Yelabuga, Naberezhnye Chelny, Almetyevsk. Also, the staff of the OAO "Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo", JSC was being informed on an existing problem of bird deaths through electrocution. It turned out, that many of them have heard about this issue for the first time. For independent participation in the surveys connected with a subject of the project three students were involved. The problem of bird deaths through electrocution was twice presented at the children's environmental conferences, which have been held in Kazan and Yelabuga.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

This project is only the beginning of large serious activity. If it stops, all positive effects that were reached thanks to this project can also stop and there will be no further progress until there will be a new initiative person, able to promote its decision. So, for example, I already have no time to make a pause. During the next few days I should develop plans for 2013 on bird protection from electrocution for branches of the OAO "Electricity Distribution Company Tatenergo", JSC - «Elabuzhsky electric networks» and «Bugulminsky electric networks», for other branches – further and for next years. Besides, it will be necessary to control the implementation of them. And this activity isn't financially supported.

It will be also necessary to develop and use another tactic to promote the establishing of special protected forest areas in the breeding grounds of eagles.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

Some stages of promotion of the project are published on web-sites National Park Nizhnyaya Kama (http://nkama-park.ru/forum/15-98-1) and Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network (http://rrrcn.ru/ru/archives/14163). Also, the detailed information about achieved results will be available there.

I will continue the cycle of lectures on this project till March 2013. Also, participation in a photo exhibition with demonstration of these problems is planned.

Data of surveys obtained under this project have been already submitted to the All-Russia (with the international participation) scientific conference «Questions of bird conservation in Russia», devoted to the 20th anniversary of RBCU, which will be held in February 2013. The part of information has

been already published in the «Raptors Conservation» Journal No. 24 (http://rrrcn.ru/en/archives/12291), 2012 and in the proceedings of the scientific workshop "Problems of bird electrocution and safety on overhead power lines of middle voltage: modern scientific and practice experience", which took place in Ulyanovsk in November 10-11, 2011.
Also, data of surveys will be published in the next issues of the "Raptors Conservation" journal (http://rrrcn.ru/en/zhurnal-pernatyie-hishhniki-i-ih-ohrana-raptors-conservation).

7.Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

Actually, the period of validity of my project is 17 months. But I think that it isn't enough for such project.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

1£ = 47.592 RUR

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Fuel	489	588	+99	To run project, it was needed more fuel than expected
Stipend for team members for living expenses	1968	1968		
Logistical costs	163	289	+126	The costs of this position increased by printing services
Zoom lens Canon EF 100-400 f/4,5-5,6 L IS USM	1026	1078	+52	Prices for this model of lens have increased
Zoom lens Canon EF 24-105 f/4,0 L IS USM	776	686	-90	This model of lens became cheaper
Salary: Project leader (16 months x 20£); Driver (80 days x 10£)	1120	927	-193	A part of salary was spent on additional fuel and printing services
TOTAL	**5536**			

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Looking ahead, I have already planned the following steps. For example, it is necessary to prohibit the design and construction of new bird dangerous PL. If they are initially bird-friendly designed, there is not a need to fight against them afterwards. So currently it is planned to construct two new PL-10 kV near the borders of the National Park «Nyzhnya Kama». These PL should pass by three breeding territories of the White-Tailed Eagles. It is impossible to allow dangerous for bird's constructions.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

At each performance I reported that this project was carried out with the support of the Rufford Fund Small Grants Foundation. Now a photo exhibition is preparing, where a report with use of the logo of the Fund is planned.

11. Any other comments?

I express my gratitude to the Rufford Fund Small Grants Foundation for the support of the project. I thank RBCU, especially the president Zubakin Victor and the coordinator of the project «Birds and Power Lines» of RBCU – Saltykov Andrey for information and methodical help. Also, I express gratitude to my reviewers: Karyakin Igor, Potapov Eugeny, Mike McGrady for the rendered trust.