

Project Update: December 2004

Beginning with August, after we established the working teams and their responsibilities for achieving the project goals, the activities for wolves' inventory were carried out in the mountainous area of the Vrancea County. The inventory was developed based on: tracks count, scats count, signs count, identification of wolves packs by howling. The information was included in the standard data forms and the database. This activity offers scientific data for the local action plan for wolf conservation and information about the areas where conflicts between local people and wolves are possible to appear.

Between August and October 2004 activities for estimation of the depredation level were carried out. A Standard Data Form was established in order to question the people about every event that was investigated. The information on livestock depredation events were obtained from the EPA Vrancea and a team composed of EPA members and Association for Biodiversity Conservation members investigates them.

In order to change the negative image that wolf has into the eyes of Vrancea inhabitants, we designed and printed in December a leaflet entitled "Wolf - Myth and reality" that informs about the species in Vrancea County, how to act in an area populated by wolves, what measures can be implemented for reducing the conflicts between man and wolves, some physical characteristics of this species, how to identify wolves tracks. An important space has been granted for the subject Wolf vs. Man where the evolution or, moreover, the involution of wolf image in the history of mankind is presented, and also some misconceptions about this species. The leaflets will be distributed mainly in schools and will be correlated with school presentations having the same theme.

The draft version of the wolf conservation plan has been also realised, which will be adapted to the local characteristics. The wolf conservation draft plan was discussed with local actors in October 21st, 2004, at a meeting organised by EPA Vrancea.

In November 2004 a member of our team attended the Conference Carnivore 2004 - expanding the partnerships in carnivore conservation, in Santa Fe, USA. A presentation about this Rufford Small Grant Project was presented at this conference.