

Project Update: October 2016

February 2016 – October 2016 (RSG Ref: 18744-2)

(1) Workshops

We completed herder's workshops in seven different herds' camps reaching 20 herders from Manang from April 2016 to October 2016. We aimed to aware the local herders about the importance of Pallas's cat and other endangered wildlife in the valley. The livestock depredation problem by the large carnivores like snow leopard and wolf were discussed and education awareness class was conducted to aware importance of snow leopards and wolf.

(2) Herder Support Programs

During the workshops, 30 branded flashlights and 30 warm jackets were distributed to the herders and their family to support them in such extreme weather in the high-altitude pastures. Besides, we distributed some non-lethal predator deterrent foxlight to the herders in collaboration with Snow Leopard Conservation Program supported by Snow Leopard Conservancy, USA. Such direct support to the herders will help to build the positive attitudes towards the predators and park staffs.

(3) Publication and media

We published a paper on Pallas's cat in the journal of IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group i.e. **CAT NEWS**. I have attached a pdf of this paper in the email.

During our Pallas's cat work, we recorded the return of the wolf after more than 40 years of its extirpation in Manang valley which is one of our great achievements of the project. This news has been published in the national newspaper "The Kathmandu Post", below is the link to the news.<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/printedition/news/2016-09-10/the-wolves-of-manang.html>

(4) Camera trapping and sign survey

Besides conservation activities, we have been continuously monitoring the Pallas's cat and other endangered carnivores for the last 3 years in the valley. This year during the project period, we have set up 32 camera traps in the valley. We hope these camera-traps will help to estimate the population density of Pallas's cat and snow leopard in the valley. Besides camera trapping, we also conducted sign-survey using line transect to estimate the sign abundance and distribution pattern of the cat.

(5) GPS and GIS training to forestry graduate students

We conducted 2 days of training to the BSC Forestry students about handling GPS in the field and to prepare GIS maps. These students have promised to work as volunteers in our future projects.

(6) Camera trapping training to Forestry Graduate Students

Two BSC Forestry students of Tribhuvan University namely Mr. Tenzin Lama and Mr. Sandip Subedi participated in the field project and were trained on sign survey and camera trapping methods to monitor Pallas's cat and other carnivores in Manang. They will help m for monitoring of the cats in the coming years in the valley.

(7) Alternative income source plan for the herders and local people

During the workshops, we discussed with the locals for the alternative of the traditional livestock rearing for income generation. The one best option and possibility we discussed is the trekking for seeing wildlife like the majestic snow leopard and its habitat. Most of the locals are positive for this. We need to explore more on this in the coming days.



Predator deterrent foxlight and herdshed at the background



PI with the herders in Manang handing light



Informal Discussion with Herders



Field team in the Pallas's cat habitat