

## Project Update: October 2016

So far we have achieved:

- i. Identified the areas to focus our awareness activities, where the pressure to capture leopard is high - Narayangaon, Khodad, Aalephata and Belha based on forest department inputs about livestock loss and human attacks information. Identified schools in particular areas, Manjarwadi, Savargaon, Aarvi, Khodad, Yedgon, Nimgaon Sava, Ozer and Narayangaon
- ii. Did awareness activities using art material in 14 schools in Narayangaon, Manjarwadi, Aarvi, Ozer, Savargaon, Hivre tarfe Narayangaon, Khodad, Yedgaon, Vadgaon Kandali, Shirol and Nimgaon sava. We have leopard ambassadors from nine schools in which awareness activities have been done. So far we have worked with 42 ambassadors from six schools. These 42 ambassadors had reached out to 309 villagers regarding safety in leopard area in their respective area. Remaining 73 ambassadors from three schools will work in Diwali (Festival in Maharashtra) vacation after the term exam gets over.
- iii. We distributed art material which includes a cloth bag, a kit of flash cards illustrating safety measures in leopard area, a file, a leopard ambassador badge and a questionnaire to ambassadors and 'Waghobachya Goshti' books to the schools for library use.
- iv. We screened 'Waghobacha Khatala', an awareness short film at 11 different places on the auspicious occasion of Ganesh festival and Navratri (festivals in Maharashtra) where people come together to celebrate. So far approximately 800 people have watched the movie and we got the opportunity to interact with the people.
- v. We identified tribal settlements near Junnar, Tungreshwar Wildlife Sanctuary and Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai and tried to obtain information on the leopard deity Waghoba and traditional methods of dealing with leopard presence that they use.
- vi. On the occasion of Wildlife Week which was celebrated from 1st to 7th October 2016, another forest range officials (Ranjani, Ghodegaon) also invited us to do awareness activities in two schools.
- vii. We participated in a science exhibition which was held on 28th and 29th February 2016 at Khodad, Junnar by Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope Organization. This gave us an opportunity to present about research methods relating to leopard biology in front of 3000-4000 students from schools and colleges in the rural and semi urban areas and districts of Western Maharashtra which are all areas where leopards are present.
- viii. World Forest Day, 21st March 2016 was celebrated in a local school with Social Forestry Department and Forest Department officials and students by introducing research methods related to leopard biology.
- ix. Sangamner wildlife division which neighbouring forest division also asked to come and do awareness activities amongst villagers and schools for Wildlife week celebration. We visited four schools and showed 'Waghobacha Khatala' to villagers.

I would like to inform you that after the above activity (ix) the Assistant Conservator of Forest, Sangamner Wildlife Division has requested me to carry out the same activities related to children ambassadors in his area of jurisdiction which also has the same kind of issues regarding leopard presence as in Junnar where I currently work.

Since the forest department is showing great interest in this and are willing to collaborate and also I have funds remaining, I would also like to target this different area for the same activities as mentioned in the proposal. I have written to ask if I can use the funds to extend the work till February 2017 in this new site as I did earlier.



