



PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Project title:

Studying negative impacts of free-ranging dogs on native threatened wild mammals to develop effective mitigation framework in the Indian trans-Himalaya

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
RASHMI SINGH RANA**

REPORTING PERIOD: JANUARY 2023 - APRIL 2023



**nature
conservation
foundation**



www.rufford.org @ruffordgrants

PROJECT SUMMARY

The field work for the project commenced in February 2023 for the purpose of carrying out the data collection related activities (Activity 1 & 2). There was a delay from the initial plan of beginning field work in January due to delay in fund dispersal as well as weather-induced safety restrictions in entering the study landscape. These activities (1 & 2) are underway and are estimated to be completed by the end of June or early-July. Post the data collection and data analysis, Activity 3 and 4 will be undertaken with consultation workshops with relevant stakeholders from July-end or August onwards.

ACTIVITY PROGRESS

Activity 1. Socio-ecological surveys to document known instances of negative FRD-wildlife interactions around village forests.

So far, we have surveyed 28 villages (56% of target) through xx FGDs and 8 key-informant interviews with knowledgeable individuals like livestock herders and forest guards. The rest of the village level-surveys will be completed by mid-June.



Image 1. Field team conducting Focus Group Discussion with community members.

Activity 2. Dog population assessment surveys to establish reliable estimates of abundance and density of dogs. Preliminary garbage site assessment surveys to determine if this is a driver for dog population.

Dog population surveys have been conducted in 28 villages and 3 additional market hotspots following the distance sampling line-transect method using a combination of mobile applications like Kobo Collect and OsmAnd Maps. Owing to the delay in commencement of fieldwork, we were able to survey only 10 villages in peak winter season of February. Additionally, to account for the daily temporal variation in dog sighting and activity around villages, we have also been conducting dog population surveys in late evenings (post-5:30 pm) in a subset of the sample villages.

In all survey villages and areas/hotspots where we are conducting dog population surveys, we have also been conducting garbage disposal site assessments to record the composition of garbage disposed, the size of the disposal site and geo-location.



Image 2. Field team conducting dog population assessment survey.



Image 3. Principal Investigator conducting garbage disposal site assessment survey.

Activity 3. Developing dog threat mitigation framework for conservation of threatened wildlife through stakeholder consultations workshops.

This activity will begin post the completion of the above two data collection activities from July-end or August onwards.

Activity 4. Awareness and findings dissemination meetings with communities and relevant government department.

This activity will begin post the completion of the above two data collection activities from July-end or August onwards.

RISKS & ISSUES

Inclement weather proclivities such as untimely heavy snowfall and resultant road blockages and avalanche alerts in the month of March and April caused unforeseen delay in field work as public transport services were ceased due to safety concerns.

