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Dear Friends,

Since the creation of the Chiredzi River Black Rhino Charitable Trust (CRBRCT) in 2008, numerous hunters and friends of Buffalo Range Safaris, Barry and Rob Style, have come to our aid with generous cash and equipment donations to get this project off the ground. The results are as follows:

The female rhino calf, Carla that was recovered after the poaching of her mother during Dr. Bill Bannister's safari in 2007 has completely recovered from her wounds and is growing quite well. The female rhino calf, Lisa Marie, has recovered from the wound on her rear leg caused by a poacher's snare. The attending Vet did not expect her to recover. The credit for her recovery goes to the efforts of the Style family and the donations of Veterinary medicines and supplies from the donors to the CRBRCT.

The CRBRCT presently has five game scouts and a director of scouts employed at the Chiredzi River Conservancy under the direction of Barry Style. These scouts are all experienced field personnel. They have shown their commitment to the protection of the Black Rhino, along with the other wildlife on the Chiredzi River Conservancy, by removing miles of wire snares, responding to poaching activity and making their presence known to the re-settlement people now living in the area. The bravery of these scouts has been proven in at least three separate occasions when they came under fire from poacher's guns. Our scouts, accompanied by the local police, have captured several poachers and chased other poachers out of the area.

With all of the fine work done since the inception of this conservation project, we must report that we have had four Black Rhino poached since 2008. Although the Chiredzi River Conservancy has lost the least number of Black Rhino compared to the other conservancies reporting Black Rhino losses, we are committed to a goal of a zero loss due to poaching. Our plan to attain this goal may seem unreachable to some, but without the efforts of the CRBRCT during the last two years we feel we would have lost the entire Black Rhino population.

Mark Magee, CRBRCT Trustee, has just returned from a 30-day visit to the Chiredzi River Conservancy and reports that the total wildlife population is growing at a rate greater than our expectations. For Example, the current wildlife count shows 180 Buffalo, 80 Eland, 350 Impala, 100 Wildebeest, etc. The Black Rhino population has at least 8 mature animals with the females starting to calve. These numbers indicate that as the poaching activity decreases and/or is eliminated, the game will return and repopulate the Chiredzi River Conservancy.

While in Zimbabwe, Mark was allowed to accompany Barry Style to meetings with Zimbabwe's Director of Parks and Wildlife. He also attended a workshop on "The Implementation of Wildlife Based Land Reform" conducted by the Minister of Higher Education. During these meetings, Mark was asked if the CRBRCT is planning to continue support in Zimbabwe? He reiterated our commitment to the approval of all present. Mark also reports that Zimbabwe has declared poaching Black Rhino carries a sentence of 20 years imprisonment if captured alive and convicted.

Zimbabwe officials have noted the efforts of the Chiredzi River Conservancy, Buffalo Range Safaris and the Chiredzi River Black Rhino Charitable Trust. I have been told that with the proper training, our game scouts will qualify to become assistants to the police allowing them to be armed. Until now, the CRBRCT has paid for the game scout wages, food allotment, uniforms and boots, communication equipment, cameras, vehicle expense on a loaner vehicle from Buffalo Range Safaris, Veterinary supplies and equipment and a limited amount of medicine. The Board of Trustees of the CRBRCT is committed to increase this level of support to our game scouts with personal donations and the donations received through fund raising efforts. We thank those of you who have donated in the past and hope that you will continue to help us fund this conservation effort.

As of this date, many of you have asked if we will be having a get-together at SCI in Reno in 2010. We are and you are invited. This year Buffalo Range Safaris and the CRBRCT we will be hosting a reception on Friday January 22, 2010 at 7:30 – 9:30 PM. Beverages and heavy appetizers will be available. A short presentation will be made at 8:00 PM reporting the 2009 activities on the Chiredzi and our expected budget needs for 2010. Please stop by the Buffalo Range Safaris booth at the SCI Convention to pick up your invitation and location details. (It will be at one of the hotels near the Convention Center).

During 2009, Dr. Davis Martin purchased a large number of hand made knitted cotton ladies sweaters from Zimbabwe women trying to earn money to survive. Dr Martin then donated the sweaters to Hogan MacCarty, Trustee, to sell with the proceeds going to the CRBRCT. This donation netted over \$3,000.00 to the CRBRCT. We may have some of these beautiful sweaters available at the reception in Reno this year. Also, some personal friends made a sizable donation to the CRBRCT for the purchase of T-Shirts and Caps with the CRBRCT logo. Their intentions are that these shirts and caps be used for fund raising. These shirts and caps will be available to those of you wishing to make a donation to the CRBRCT. All donations go directly to this conservation effort without any administrative expenses deducted. Donation from United States citizens to the Chiredzi River Black Rhino Charitable Trust are tax deductible.

Respectfully,
Nick Ohanesian, President
Board of Trustees
Chiredzi River Black Rhino Charitable Trust
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