

Transitions **at the** Trust

Rutherford New ISLT Executive Director

ISLT has chosen Brad Rutherford as the Trust's new Executive Director, succeeding Jeff Demestrescu who left ISLT last year. Brad comes to the Trust after an extensive and varied background including significant achievements in private, public, and nonprofit sectors. He joined the Trust on May 1.

Brad received his B.A. in Communication Studies from Northwestern University. After six years with Procter and Gamble in the marketing field, he left to work on issues closer to his personal interests, and served for two years as a U.S. Peace Corps

Message from ISLT Founder Helen Freeman and President Charles Morse

To Friends and Supporters of the Trust: We are delighted to tell you that, after a long and careful search, Brad Rutherford has joined the Trust as our new Executive Director. As you will see from the accompanying profile, he comes to us with a record of substantial achievement in the business, government, and nonprofit sectors.

Brad also brings some exceptional personal qualities to the Trust: energy, imagination, management skills, and a deep commitment to international development and conser

vation issues over many years. Brad is familiar with the nonprofit environment, from doorbelling to program management-but perhaps his most impressive achievements have been in developing and managing grassroots, people-oriented programs in Asia and elsewhere.

We think he brings just the right mix of abilities and qualities to the Trust as it reaffirms its commitment to our mission-and to strong programs in the snow leopard range countries which make the mission a reality.

We also want to say a special word of appreciation to Dr. Rod Jackson and to Daria Hillard, who after many years as our Conservation Director and Conservation Education Director, will be leaving the Trust in June for new pursuits. Anyone familiar with snow leopard conservation is aware of the leading role they have played in the fields of research, conservation and education.

We wish them well as they undertake new projects, and look forward to the possibility of working with them in the future.

*Helen Freeman, Founder
Charles Morse, President*

Jackson, **Hillard** to
Leave ISLT for New
Pursuits

Effective June 1, Rodney Jackson and Daria Hillard will be leaving their positions as Conservation Director and Conservation Education Director of the International Snow Leopard Trust. Rod and Daria are stepping aside in order to initiate a much-needed, long-term field study aimed at developing and testing innovative models for linking snow leopard conservation and people-wildlife conflict resolution. Securing the funding necessary to establish and carry out such a project will require Rod's full-time attention, thus making it impossible for him to continue as Conservation Director of the Trust. Daria will likewise be devoting her efforts to moving this program forward. We are sure that our paths will meet again in the future.

News and Notes

Changes in the field: Snow Leopard Conservationist (SLC) Ahmad Khan (Pakistan) has left to pursue graduate studies in the U.S. He has been replaced by new SLC Abdul Haleem Siddiqi, an experienced researcher.

In India, Dr. Yash Veer Bhatnagar has taken a position with the Wildlife Institute of India. His work is being carried on by Field Associate Rinchen Wangchuk Stakrey. Dr. Zou Hongfei and Mr. Bariushaagin Munkhtsog continue their important work as SLCs for China and Mongolia.

Anne Edgerton, Director of Administration, left the Trust for new pursuits in October. We are grateful to Anne, and to Jeff Demetrescu who left last spring, for their long-term and substantial contributions to the Trust.

Jay Singh, ISLT's Program Officer is currently studying transboundary conservation issues in Zimbabwe on a Rotary International SCholarship.

Todd Jennings, the Trust's Administrative Assistant during much of last year, is now in Oregon.

Jon Campbell, who came to ISLT as a graduate Intern, is now ably serving as the Trust's Office Administrator.

The Trust's Natural Partnerships Program keeps growing. We are pleased to welcome to NPP Parco Natura Viva, Verona, Italy our sixth international partner-and

ProjectSurvival/Cat Conservation Group of Squaw Valley, CA.

The Trust always welcomes new members to the Founder's Circle. Latest new members are Bob Pennell and Addi Brooks, and Alicia Falsetto and Doug Strauss.

Congratulations to Board Member Norma Cole, elected Chair of the National Association of Zoo and Aquarium Docents (AZAD). She will hold this position concurrently with the position of AZAD Conference Chair.

E-Communications. For ISLT members and supporters with email, we are considering a periodic e-letter or bulletin which will provide updates on snow leopard topics. If you would like to receive such future updates, send us an email at: islt@serv.net. Two words of reassurance: we will not make your email address available to anyone else. And, to those who don't have email and don't want to, don't worry-this will not affect our commitment to send other publications and mailings.

We have begun the difficult task of trying to fill the shoes of Rod and Daria. We are currently seeking qualified applicants for a full-time Conservation Director to be based in Seattle. If you or a colleague are interested in more information about the position please contact us at islt@serv.net or call 206.632.2421.

ISLT'S NATURAL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

1999, the second full year of the Natural Partnerships Program, as one of active and effective cooperation between ISLT and its partner zoos in the US and around the world. End-of-year reports to participating zoos documented the exceptional range of conservation and conservation education activities which they had supported in many of the snow leopard range countries. The following is a list of the important snow leopard conservation work funded by the program:

- Grant to cover annual salary of Pakistan Snow Leopard Conservationist (SLC) Ahmad Khan, allowing him to conduct SLIMS training, snow leopard status surveys, and other conservation programs (Woodland Park Zoo)

- Training of 10 Wildlife Professionals, Kalam, Pakistan; SLIMS training and support of six high altitude snow leopard surveys; plus additional monitoring in Chitral Gol National Park (Calgary Zoo)

- Support of Hemis National Park People-Wildlife Conflict Resolution Workshop and associated

conservation/ conservation education programs (Utica Zoo, San Diego Zoo, Colchester Zoo)

- Support of joint ISLT /Wildlife Institute of India Wildlife Conservation Planning Project in Leh and Kargil Districts of Ladakh, Jammu, and Kashmir (Tulsa Zoo)

- Support of corral predator-proofing program and action plan, Hemis National Park, India (Zoo New England)

- Support of survey of depredation and associated human-wildlife conflicts in Hemis National Park (Blank Park Zoo, Jardin Zoologique de Granby, Oregon Zoo)

- Purchase of GPS Units to support remote area field work (Blank Park Zoo)

- Support of field research on snow leopards in Uzbekistan's Gissar Nature Reserve and neighboring areas (Pare Zoologique de Thoiry)

- Distribution of Mongolian lan

guage Web of Life Poster and support of associated educational programs in partnership with U.S. Peace Corps (Great Plains Zoo)

- Production and distribution of Nepali language Web of Life Poster and support of associated interactive educational programs in Sikkim (San Antonio Zoo, Cleveland Zoo)

- Development of Snow Leopard Management Plan for Qomolangma National Nature Preserve, Tibet (Columbus Zoo)

- Distribution of Ladakhi Web of Life Poster and support of educational programs in Hemis National Park and Leh, Ladakh (Milwaukee Zoo, Utica Zoo)

- Distribution of Urdu lan guage version of Web of Life poster to Pakistani officials and community groups (Mill Mountain Zoo).

A Snow Leopard Legacy

In recent months, two supporters of ISLT have passed on, leaving a personal conservation legacy through planned gifts from their estates. More and more, people are discovering the many ways in which planned giving can benefit the nonprofit causes they believe in. As you think about estate planning, please keep ISLT in mind and do contact us if you need more information.

Excerpted from "The Snow Leopard Talking About Its Life,"
 an article by Bariushaagin Munkhtsog that appeared in
 Baigal Magazine in Mongolia. Translation from Mongolian
 by B. Munkhtsog.

Snow Leopards, Local People, and Livestock Losses: Solutions Through Participation

THOUGHTS FROM A SNOW LEOPARD

(Concluded)

Just like humans, we need food to survive—each one of us needs a ton of meat or 10-20 ibexes per year. If humans look after conservation of my prey species and habitat space, I have no reason to attack domestic livestock. Many herders now understand why every species is important, but there are still many more who want to kill us and "clear" the land of snow leopards. And my prey species—ibex, argali (wild sheep) and marmot—are having a harder and harder time as their habitat gets smaller.

Things are better today than in the 1970s or 1980s, when herders and trophy hunters could hunt us with government permits. As an endangered animal, I've been helped by NGOs like MACNE, World Wildlife Fund, and the International Snow Leopard Trust, and people like Dr. Tom McCarthy who has been doing snow leopard surveys in Mongolia for years. The government is paying more attention now, but should also have more programs to protect us and educate Mongolians about us.

Mongolia, since ancient times, has had good hunters who lived off the land and truly understood conservation. They passed this understanding on to following generations. It's up to Mongolians, once again, to learn to take care of their country and their wildlife. There are only about 1000 of us in Mongolia compared to over 32 million head of livestock. There should be room enough for us all.

A serious threat to the snow leopard comes from herders who suffer economic losses from livestock-raiding cats. Because of the ease with which snow leopards can hunt livestock, combined with human encroachment and the thinning population of natural prey species, snow leopards often turn to hunting the livestock of mountain villagers. One place where this is a serious problem is Hemis National Park (HNP) in Ladakh, where villagers claim to have lost nearly 500 animals to snow leopard and wolf attacks between January 1998 and March 1999.

To address the problem creatively, a People-Wildlife Planning Workshop was convened in Markha Village of HNP in October 1999. Markha was selected after a March-April survey of depredation and related wildlife-human conflicts showed this valley as suffering the greatest number of losses.

Sponsored by ISLT, in collaboration with the Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG), the workshop's goals were to prepare an action plan to identify and implement cost-effective and ecologically sound methods to reduce livestock losses, train local NGO staff in People-Wildlife management techniques, and promote wildlife stewardship in ways that involve local people. The Mountain Institute (TMI)

provided training in Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA).

It was decided that in order to reduce livestock depredation, existing corrals needed to be replaced by new predator-proof structures. Markha villagers agreed to supply the labor and on-site materials (stone and mud), and ISLT agreed to supply off-site materials (wire mesh, roofing poles, doors, hardware) plus technical assistance and oversight. Corrals were being constructed in late winter 1999

00, with monitoring to continue through next winter.

The results of this participatory model, which shows great promise of applicability throughout the snow leopard's range, will be reported soon.

World Population Estimate of Snow Leopards

Afghanistan	- Unknown
Bhutan	- 100
China	- 2,000 - 2,500
India	- 500
Mongolia	- 1,000
Nepal	- 300 - 500
Pakistan	- 300
Russia	- 100 - 200
Kazakhstan	- 100 - 150
Kyrgyzstan	- 650
Tajikistan	- 150 - 300
Uzbekistan	- 50
TOTAL ESTIMATES - 4,500 - 7,500	

U.S. Peace Corps and ISLT Team Up in Mongolia

In early 1999, US Peace Corps volunteer Jonna Swanson dropped a line to ISLT to tell us about her posting in the Mongol Altai Nuruu protected areas of northwestern Mongolia home to a population of snow leopards.

Jonna's note led to discussions between ISLT and Peace Corps and, in April 1999, a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations. This has led to some exciting new joint programs.

The Peace Corps has 11 volunteers working in the environment sector in Mongolia. In the far west

ern part of the country in snow leopard habitat. One of the main goals of these volunteers is to work with and build the skills of their counterparts,

who are park wildlife biologists serving the nomadic herding population in snow leopard habitat. In early 1999, park staff attended a World Wildlife

Peace Corps volunteers at work in

Fund-sponsored snow leopard workshop led by Tom McCarthy (who sits on ISLT's Conservation Program Planning Board) and supported by Snow

Leopard Conservationist B. Munkhtsog. Jonna then translated ISLT's Snow Leopard Information Management System (SLIMS) manual for use by park staff, and has been working with them to gather data on snow leopard and prey species in their region. ISLT, through the Natural Partnerships Program, provided scientific equipment for this fieldwork.

Peace Corps volunteers have also been active in conservation education. ISLT grants have funded environmental education and outreach programs, including teacher training, building student awareness through in-class training, a summer camp featuring interactive conservation games, and other activities.

The Peace Corps-ISLT partnership built quickly in 1999 and by the end of the year had produced impressive results-which will be the foundation for further programs in 2000.

Transitions *continued from page 1*

responsible positions with Winrock International, a leading nonprofit organization focusing on agriculture and natural resources management. With Winrock, he has worked with foreign governments and NGOs, and has represented Winrock at conferences and workshops in the U.S. and around the world-including most of the snow leopard range countries. As Program Leader for Winrock's Rural Employ

ment and Enterprise Development Team, he helped design programs to increase rural incomes and job opportunities. In the past year, as Senior Program Officer for Winrock, he has divided his time between managing Special Projects for the President and Vice President of Programs, and managing Winrock's Central Asia Farmer to-Farmer Program.

Please join us in welcoming Brad Rutherford to ISLT!

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