

October 2004



Dear Everybody,

*From Delia:* Mpika village lies in the remote reaches of northern Zambia on the western edge of the Muchinga Escarpment whose tumbledown mountains fall head over hill into the Luangwa Valley. The quaint village of reed huts and open-air markets is where we located the hub for our *North Luangwa Conservation*

*Project* back in 1985. The hub itself was a hut. It was small and round with a thatch roof. But from there we started the programs to offer jobs to poachers, loans and training to villagers and supplies to schools and clinics.

**Nineteen years later, as the work continues, the people of North Luangwa voted our project as number one.** Recently the local *Zambian Community Resource Board* held a meeting in Mpika. Delegates from many villages assembled to rank projects in the region. Hammer Simwinga, who now directs the community work we began, sent the message that - in terms of community livelihood support - our project, and its continuation under Hammer and his team, was chosen as the model for future wildlife based community development.

This was one of the most rewarding moments of our lives. It ranks up there with sleeping with lions and walking with elephants. We knew we had reduced the poaching by improving the living standards of the people, but to have their resounding endorsement of our project was the realization that the dream was reality. Thank you for all you did throughout the years to make this happen. Together we have built and outfitted schools, trained medical personnel, provided training, loans, jobs, tools, equipment, sunflowers, fish farms, bee keeping, and improved farming. In the process we have given hope to people and elephants. Author Alexandra Fuller grew up in Africa and recently toured some of our project villages with Hammer. She saw fat, healthy babies delivered by *Traditional Birth Attendants* that we trained. She saw that these villagers were prosperous and did not beg her for handouts; instead, some even gave gifts. She did not find this in other parts of Zambia.

We have mentioned Hammer to you several times. But who is he really? In short, he is a hero. He is the first born of a family of eight, who joined our project in 1995. His brother Martine died of AIDS. Hammer and his wife, Kasonde, have 3 children of their own, and are also raising two AIDS orphans. He is amazing.

When we stopped the elephant poaching we put powerful, corrupt people out of the illegal bushmeat and ivory business. Of course, they wanted to get rid of us anyway they could, and as a result it became unsafe for us to work in Zambia. Now those corrupt people have lost their government jobs - some are in jail.

In 1997, *Frankfurt Zoological Society*, our former funding partner for NLCP, agreed to continue the project. However, FZS found that they could not afford our village projects. That next year as we struggled to communicate with Mpika, Hammer and his friends continued the work by establishing their own non-governmental organization. For many months, without funding,

transportation, or even salaries, they kept the mills, schools and farmers going, walking village to village when they could not catch a ride. As soon as we could, we re-established support of the project, which has soared under the direction of Hammer and his team. Also, UK based *Harvest Help* supports agriculture and FZS's Elsabe and Hugo van der Westhuizen are making great advances carrying on research and anti-poaching while assisting village work in many ways. As a result - because the people are better off - so are the elephants.

Helping villagers has undercut poaching and relieved human suffering, but that is no excuse to rest. There is still much to do: more beekeepers, more sunflower-oil press operators, more fish farmers and Traditional Birth Attendants and definitely more schools, desks and school supplies. We know you are inundated with pleas for donations, but North Luangwa is a model for a community-based conservation that has *really worked* - so much so that the concept is being duplicated in other areas of Zambia. We need to help even more villagers and in so



*Hammer displays crops at Mukungule Field Day*

doing assure that elephants can drink at the river in peace for generations to come. Please help us help Hammer and the people and the elephants - anyway you can. We truly cannot do it without your help.

*From Mark:* Whiskey, my young horse, didn't seem happy one morning not long ago. He had already been at this trailhead two weeks earlier and probably knew that I was about to load my 200 plus pounds onto his back and make him climb several thousand feet into the Cabinet Mountains of Montana. And maybe too he sensed that Delia and I would again be looking for signs of grizzly bears along the untouched and staggeringly beautiful slopes and ridgelines still above us. I had just cinched up and was stuffing my saddlebags when I

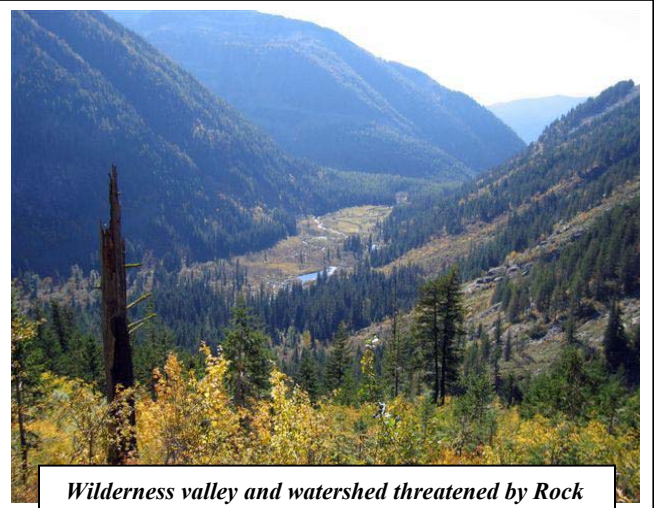


*Delia and Mark ride in a pristine alpine meadow that will be destroyed if the Rock Creek Mine is developed.*

heard a 4-wheeler approaching. Whiskey began to dance at the end of his lead. My favorite binoculars fell to the ground where they were about to be crushed by a thousand pounds of horse. I quickly bent over to pick them up. At that moment, deciding that I was the threat, Whiskey lunged forward, swung his hind end toward me, and kicked. His hoof with its steel shoe flashed passed my face so close the wind tickled my cheek. A nano-second later it smashed into my left leg and sent me sprawling. Nauseating pain doubled me like a jackknife. Don't let anyone tell you that the Old West cowboys carried six-shooters to defend themselves against outlaws - they probably kept them handy to deal with horses like Whiskey!

The threat to the bears and Cabinets is simple: Since it was enacted, the antiquated *General Mining Law of 1872* handed over, for next to nothing, huge tracts of **public** land to miners. Now Revett Silver Company of Spokane,

Washington plans to spend the next thirty years digging a huge silver mine in the Cabinet Mountains near Noxon, Montana. The mine – **the first ever to be allowed in one of our nation's wilderness areas --** will discharge 3 million gallons of effluent a day into Lake Pend Oreille and the Clark Fork River, one of the most pristine watersheds left in the west. It will kill one of the last 5 grizzly populations left, endangered bull trout, and other threatened species not to mention its affect on human water resources. For 16 years environmentalists have worked to stop the charge of trucks up the mountain, but now the US Forest Service, which claims its hands are tied by the *General Mining Law*, gave the project the go-ahead. According to Dave Ward, Vice President of Revett Silver, ***“There shouldn't be anything sacred about this spot. Plenty of mines are built in prettier places. A wilderness area is nothing but a line on a map.”***



*Wilderness valley and watershed threatened by Rock Creek Silver Mine in western Montana*

It is not too late to help stop Revett and other mining companies from plundering the Cabinet wilderness. A reform bill before Congress would grant the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior veto power over mining projects, and exhort these officials to protect sanctuaries like the Cabinets. Please contact your Congressman and the White House immediately. (See page 3)

*The last word from Delia:* “What’s that?” I bolted upright from a deep sleep on the edge of the marsh. From the darkness only twenty yards away came mewing, squalling sounds.

“Cougars.” Mark whispered, grabbing a flashlight and switching it on. Two tawny bodies with long fat tails streaked into the thick bush. Who says you can't hear cats run? Their paws pounded the ground as they dissolved into the wilderness.

“Sounded like they were mating.” Mark suggested.



We studied the tracks in a patch of damp clay, but could not be certain what the cats had been up to. "Well they weren't hunting. No cat makes that much noise stalking its prey," I said. So we went back to sleep.

The next morning a veil of silvery fog lay over the wetland. Moving through the mist was the dark form of a young female moose we had named Mugs. She had been orphaned several years ago, captured by Fish & Game, and released into the marsh we had restored. Mugs and the new wetland are growing up together. Seemingly overnight, in less than three years, aquatic vegetation has sprung up everywhere in the infant streams and ponds -- a moose smorgasbord. We counted five different moose in two days, as well as elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, coyotes, bears, turkeys, geese, herons, and two noisy cougars.

All around us are threatened animals, wildernesses and people crying for help. One population of bears seems too small to hold on; some countries want to sell elephant tusks again; people want to mine diamonds in the Kalahari, or silver in the Cabinets. It seems overwhelming. But remember Gift, the orphaned elephant with her three calves; or Mugs the orphaned moose snooping around a wetland that only three years ago was a trampled pasture. All you have to do is get up everyday and take one small step in the right direction, and over the years you save a lot of hallowed ground.

We thank you with all our hearts!

Cheers,

*Delia and Mark*

Delia and Mark

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#### **ADVOCACY INFORMATION**

**LETTERS COUNT AND *DO* MAKE A DIFFERENCE:**

**For more information on the items below, please see our website ([owens-foundation.org](http://owens-foundation.org)) or call our office.**



**'Gift' and her baby 'Georgia' in North Luangwa**

1. **IVORY BAN:** The UN *Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species* (CITES) votes in October on whether to allow ivory trade and trophy hunting of black rhino in Namibia and South Africa. Any trade or ***proposed*** trade in ivory or hunting of rhino will stimulate poaching, as it has every time in the past. Please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or your home country CITES representative, and the CITES secretariat (address below) and ask for a complete ban on ivory trade and rhino hunting.
2. **CITES Secretariat:** 15, Chemin des Anemones -- Case Postale 456, CH-1219 -- Chatelaine -- Geneva, Switzerland. PHONE: 4122-979-9139-40, FAX: 4122-797-3417, EMAIL: [cites@unep.ch](mailto:cites@unep.ch)
  - **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** -- 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 432 -- Arlington, Virginia 22203
3. **DIAMOND MINES/LIONS/BUSHMEN/ IVORY TRADE - IN THE KALAHARI:** Write Botswana stating that you cannot visit Botswana until it stops the hunting of threatened populations of Kalahari lions, diamond mining in the *Central Kalahari Game Reserve*, trading elephant ivory, and dislocating Bushmen.
  - **The Honorable FG Mogae**, President of the Republic, Private Bag 001, Gaborone, Botswana
4. **ROCK CREEK:** Write your Congressman & the White House requesting no mining be allowed in or under designated wilderness areas such as the Cabinet Mtns, and that the *General Mining Law of 1872* be revised.
  - **For Address Info:** Write - *The Office of the Clerk of the US House of Representatives/US Capitol* -- Room H154 - Washington, DC 20515 -- PH: 202-225-7000, or email for info [www.clerkweb.houses.gov](http://www.clerkweb.houses.gov) or email directly through the following link: [www.house.gov/writerep](http://www.house.gov/writerep)
  - **President George Bush**, The White House - Washington, DC 20500 Email: [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)
5. **ROADLESS AREAS:** The *2001 Roadless Initiative* is being reconsidered. Please contact the Forest Service and express your support for the protection of 58.5 million wilderness acres (only 2% of the US land base) from road construction and reconstruction. For more details see: [www.owens-foundation.org](http://www.owens-foundation.org).
  - **Content Analysis Team/ATTN:** Roadless State Petitions/USDA Forest Service, P.O. Box 21090, Salt Lake City, UT 84122 - Email [statepetitionroadless@fs.fed.us](mailto:statepetitionroadless@fs.fed.us)

6. **SNOWMOBILES IN YELLOWSTONE:** Write the US Park Service and voice your support for a phase out of winter snowmobiles in Yellowstone in favor of environmentally safer snowcoaches rather than the currently proposed increase in snowmobile traffic from 320 a day to 720. **Write:** *Temporary Winter Use Plan/Management Assistant's Office/Yellowstone Nat Park, Box 168 Yellowstone Nat Park, WY 82190*
5. **FULAZA SCHOOL:** We built a 2-room school in Fulaza village in the 90's. It needs expanding to provide education above 4th grade, plus a brick house for an upper level teacher. The villagers provide labor but need \$15,000 for concrete, roofing, windows and doors. Some of these villagers used to shoot elephants but stopped after we assisted them with jobs and a school. Help us educate their children to be conservationists.



## HOW TO HELP

Your donations are **greatly needed** and appreciated. There are no small donations. Every penny is a plus in protecting wildlife, their habitat and the people who live near them. Here are additional ways you can help:

**MATCHING DONATIONS:** Some companies match employee and retiree donations to accredited 501(c)(3) non-profits such as the Owens Foundation. Matching donations multiply your giving and empower conservation. Contact me for more information. Thanks to those who already have!

**LEGACY PLANNING:** You can touch the future by including the Owens Foundation in your Estate Planning. Because of your caring, generosity and forethought, you can continue your advocacy for conservation far beyond your lifetime. Thanks to those who have already made this important pledge. ***Contact me for more information on Legacy Planning through:***

- **Will, Living Trust or other plan:** A simple bequest can name the OFWC as recipient of a fixed amount or a percentage of your estate just as you can designate specific family and friends.
- **Annuity or Life Insurance Policy:** Designated as payable to the OFWC.
- **Retirement Plans:** Designate OFWC as a beneficiary of all or a percent of your Retirement Plan.

**RECOMMEND A FRIEND:** If you know someone who shares our passion for conservation, please introduce them to Delia and Mark's work. Send me their contact details and I will forward information to them. **Our database is confidential.** We do NOT share our donor information with anyone...EVER.

**SPONSOR A LECTURE:** **The Song of the Winterthorn**, Delia and Mark's third book will be published soon - we'll let you know when! They are offering a lecture tour in 2005. Base fee: \$7,000 plus travel. If you know anyone interested in sponsoring a lecture or need more information, contact Mary Dykes. Thank you!

- **To receive conservation updates and/or newsletters by email:** email [marydykes@mindspring.com](mailto:marydykes@mindspring.com)
- **New email or postal addresses.** Please advise - saves dollars to be used for conservation, not paperwork.
- **Donation by Credit Card** can be made at [www.owens-foundation.org](http://www.owens-foundation.org) or by calling me. (3% to CC Co.)
- **Foreign currency donations** must be made by wire transfer, US\$ money order or check or by credit card.
- **Online purchases** via OFWC web page link to **Barnes&Noble.com** generate income for our work.
- **Recycle used Cell Phones:** See our web pg link to recycle cell phones at no charge & make \$ for OFWC.

**DONATIONS FOR N LUANGWA:** Thanks to all who have shipped school & medical supplies to N Luangwa. They are GREATLY needed and appreciated. Still needed are: **School Supplies:** Crayons, pens, pencils, erasers, chalk, wildlife books & magazines (used are fine.) Paper is too heavy to ship. **Medical Supplies:** Betadyne, antibiotic ointment/cream, gauze pads & rolls, first aid tape, Band-Aids, sterile latex gloves, antibiotic soap (Dial) ziplock bags. **Sewing Supplies:** Women's groups use any fabric, thread or sewing notions. **Shipping:** Label medical as *Hygiene Supplies*, school & craft as *Education Supplies*. Customs Form: *Gift*. Ship USPO surface/no insurance. Use sturdy boxes, w/ 2 strips of duct tape in each direction & overlay edges w/2-inch plastic tape. Use USPO "M BAG" for books at \$1 per pound, 11 lbs minimum and 66 lbs maximum per box. **SHIP TO: NLWCCDP, Box 450210, Mpika, Zambia**

If you do not wish to receive the *Dear Everybody* please contact me and I will remove your name from our files.

*Cheers, Mary Dykes/Administrative Director - OFWC, PO Box 870530, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30087 USA*  
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