



“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

“Hunting provides the principal incentive and revenue for conservation. Hence it is a force for conservation.”

Special To The Hunting Report World Conservation Force Bulletin

by John J. Jackson, III

DATELINE RUSSIA

News... News... News The “Real Skinny On That Hunting Closure

On August 1, the government of the Russian Federation issued the region-by-region hunting quotas for that country. (The USSR, or Soviet Union, no longer exists as such. It is now the Russian Federation.) The quotas are set by a “panel of experts” that is convened at the national, federal level. The quotas cover the period of August 1, 2005, until the same date in 2006. There are 86 administrative regions in Russia and all are covered by the order. The expert panel sets a separate quota for each game species in each of the 86 administrative regions.

There have recently been some confusing reports of a hunting ban in Russia in the media. The local hunting organizations and authorities were frustrated by the reports because they were not entirely true. The local interests explain that most hunting in the Spring is bird hunting and that it was open as usual this past Spring. General

big game hunting has never been open in the Spring, so it was not closed at all. Bear hunting alone was not authorized, as distinguished from being closed or banned. There was a change in the sign-off authority for big game that delayed the Spring bear opening until after that season had passed. That was due to the transition of authority



between different ministries, not any plan or intended closure. Since most hunting in the Spring is bird hunting, most hunting was in fact open this past Spring.

There is one area that is closed to Spring bear hunting and remains so at this time, that is Kamchatka, which is so popular to tourist hunters. A quota

of 500 bears is specified in the August quota listed for Kamchatka, but with a footnote that the hunting is only to be in the Fall hunt, not Spring. The Kamchatka governor temporarily closed the Spring bear hunt. That closure is now in litigation. The quota is the same as it would be and has been for both Spring and Fall. The litigation may be concluded by next Spring but there is a great deal of confusion at this time within Russian circles about the biological effects and impacts of Spring bear hunting. Some fear that there is an overharvest in the Spring because Spring bear hunting is easier and that too many genetically trophy bears are taken then. Others think that too many large bears (genetically superior) are taken in the Spring by tourist hunters (non-resident aliens) who target the largest bears. We are growing accustomed to that argument for various species of big game from residents antagonized by outfitters and outfitted non-residents around the world for all trophy game species. The primary authority for the argument that “trophy hunting” by non-residents is causing genetic degradation is the *Ram Mountain Study* in Alberta that docu-

mented a decrease in the body size and horn size of wild sheep in just a few generations. Although it is used as cannon fodder for some resident hunting interests and others opposed to trophy hunting in principle, the results of the study are widely misunderstood and misrepresented. Ram Mountain was not managed for trophies at all. It was used as a non-trophy, high-offtake meat and subsistence hunting area. Had it been managed as a trophy hunting area, such as with full-curl ram restrictions and/or lower quotas, the authors of the study conclude that body and horn size would not have declined. In other words, the study documents the advantages of trophy hunting management, not the opposite. It is being mis-cited and erroneously accepted, when in fact the area of the study was not managed for trophy hunting and that choice of management caused the decrease in size. The fact that there was a decline should not be confused with the cause of the decline. It was not managed as we manage most sheep and other big game today. Do not presume from the fact that there was a documented decline in size that trophy hunting was the cause. It was not managed as a trophy hunting area at all. It was a high volume meat hunt. The decline in size is not what is being experienced in trophy hunting areas around the world. Game is getting bigger in many instances. It is being managed to live and

reproduce longer.

Conservation Force’s own opinion is that Spring hunting is preferable precisely because it is more selective. Large boars are the first to come out of hibernation and travel about in the Spring, which means females for the most part, which are so much more important to reproduction, are spared. Moreover, the largest boars that have been alive long enough to be large trophies because of the management regime, have already spread their genes. They don’t wait until they are old and on the down side to mate. If they were shot sooner, they would never become trophies.

Many fear that poaching will worsen during the Spring if hunting remains closed. We share that concern. Kamchatka is divided into 80 hunting leases and those lessees (lease holders) are the primary means of controlling poaching. It is worth noting that there was a workshop entitled *Developing a Reliable Monitoring System for the Brown Bears of Kamchatka* in August, 2004. It was apparently conducted by the Wildlife Conservation Society with a goal to develop better methods to estimate bear population size and trends in Kamchatka. Despite the fact that the method that had been used in the past was established by World Wildlife Fund and was considered conservative, the Kamchatka Department of Wildlife Conservation and Manage-



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Grand Slam Club/Ovis has been a contributor of core operating funding to Conservation Force from our creation. That support has grown as Grand Slam Club/Ovis itself has grown. With this additional contribution, it becomes one of our single largest continuous supporters, surpassed only by Dallas Safari Club and the Chancellor International Foundation.

Grand Slam Club/Ovis was also an important intervener in the *Argali Law Suit* when the Humane Society of the United States and Fund for Animals tried to stop the importation of all Argali hunting trophies. In fact, the sworn statement of Dennis Campbell, the Executive Director of Grand Slam Club/Ovis, helped turn that case around and bring it to its epic, successful conclusion. Let’s all help keep them growing for everything that they do.

We want to give special thanks to all of those who offered to fund the World Conservation Force Bulletin. It is nice to be respected and appreciated.

ment and the Kamchatka Branch of the Pacific Institute of Geography attempted to raise the bar. Five recommendations were made: (1) Factor in the “sightability” of bear to obtain more accurate population estimates; (2) Change the survey technique from quadrants to line transects because of its many advantages; (3) Implement a tetracycline biomarker–capture pilot study; (4) Collect teeth (and analyze) from all trophy bears harvested to detect changes in age structure; and (5) Conduct a study to better ascertain the degree of the unreported bear kills from poaching.

Although this is a state-of-the-art plan, we hope that it did not contribute to the closure of the Spring hunt. We’ve watched the periodic false alarms about the status of Kamchatka bear over the past 15 years and have found them to be “crying wolf”. The sooner Spring bear hunting is opened, the less time the poachers will have it to themselves.

DATELINE: SIBERIA

**Special Report
Conservation Force
Attends Symposium**

An important three-day meeting was held jointly by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the Russian Association of Hunters and Fishermen, The Russian Academy of Science and others at Lake Baikal, Irkutsk (Siberia) in early August. The purpose was to perfect the sustainable hunting policies in Siberia, Russia (Asian Russia) and to develop formal partnerships to do that cooperatively. I attended by special invitation in my capacity as President of CIC’s *Commission (Committee) on Sustainable Use* and on behalf of Conservation Force. It was primarily a CIC symposium co-hosted by the three-million-member Russian Association of Hunters and Fishermen. It was attended by over 100 wildlife management specialists, Russian Hunter Union officers, Ministry, Academy of Science leaders and others. It was the start of a more collabora-

tive relationship to ensure the role of hunting in sustaining Russia’s wildlife, wild places and biodiversity. The location was at the home of the Irkutsk State Agricultural Academy that has



trained more than 5,000 wildlife managers for service throughout all of Russia. CIC has also been offered an office space complimentary in a magnificent new headquarters that the Baikal Hunters Union is constructing.

There was virtually universal agreement between hunting leaders, wildlife managers and the academicians alike that lawful hunting reduces poaching and that poaching take would increase and substantially exceed hunting quotas if hunting were stopped. There was also general agreement that there are too many wolves but that it takes special hunting skill and effort to reduce the number of wolves. I was amazed at the knowledge, intensity of concern and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the many speakers towards their wildlife resources. What I heard made me proud to be a hunter.

The Sustainable Use Commission is to act as a partner and advisor to the Russian Association and its 86 unions that correspond with the 86 administrative regions of Russia. A copy of the draft resolution of agreement that was adopted between CIC and the Russian Association appears below:



International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation
Conseil International de la Chasse et de la Conservation du Gibier
Internationaler Rat zur Erhaltung des Wildes und der Jagd
International CIC Baikal 2005 Symposium,
9-13 August 2005,
Irkutsk, Russia

RESOLUTION

This Symposium was arranged at the *International Day of Indigenous People* with the intention to highlight the importance of their culture and tradition as well as their role in wildlife conservation.

UNANIMOUSLY WELCOMES AND ENDORSES the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity*, developed under the Convention on Biodiversity and adopted by the Russian Federation, as tool to enhance sustainable hunting throughout Russia.

STRONGLY UNDERLINES the vital importance of sustainable hunting as traditional and socio-economic factor in rural economy throughout Russia. This is particularly evident in the Baikal Region with its abundance of wildlife and natural habitats.

NOTICES WITH CONCERN the de-

crease in certain game species populations due to unsustainable development and unsustainable industries.

RECOGNISES the important role hunting and fishing plays in the development of ecotourism in the Baikal region.

SUPPORTS the formation of a regional section of the “Exceptional Lakes in the World” Association, with Lake Baikal as unique and exceptional nucleus, in order to combine efforts of all stakeholders to safeguard lakes of indisputable national importance.

FURTHER SUPPORTS the idea to develop a concept for a “World Ecological Village” at Lake Baikal.

The CIC 2005 Baikal Symposium, therefore, identifies the following priorities for the sustainable development of the Baikal Region as baseline of a working programme of the Russian CIC Delegation and the *Russian Union of Hunters and Fishers*:

1. to address the Federal Russian Gov-

ernment with a view to:

- finalise and implement a modern and efficient federal hunting law, which takes into account the special and unique character of the hunting sector compared to other industries and sectors like forestry, fisheries, veterinary control, specialities of each region, as well as the important role of true stakeholders, especially non-governmental hunting organisations,
- clarify the legal status of hunting organisations and territories,
- standardisation of quota setting and better control of quota usage and licenses;

2. to acknowledge the importance of scientific based analysis, monitoring of game species, populations and use practices as a prerequisite for all management schemes, where appropriate, in cooperation with local and indigenous communities;

3. to create programmes enabling the monitoring and compensation of damage to wildlife and habitats, which

should be funded through revenues from licence fees and tourism, transportation of cargo and people as well as natural resource extractive industries, etc. causing this damage;



4. to develop, in accordance with the Russian *National Biodiversity Strategy* and the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines*, a national sustainable hunting strategy.

5. to develop programmes for education of wildlife managers and hunters including hunting tourists.

6. to include Russian wildlife management education institutions into CIC's *Wildlife Management Education* network (WME).

7. to create a regional professional union of all users of wildlife resources, including game biologists, hunters, professional wildlife managers and hunting associations.

8. to offer the Toff and Evenk indigenous communities an active collaboration with the framework of the CIC.

9. to offer the assistance and knowledge of the CIC's *Migratory Bird Commission* with its international network of scientists and collaborators within various UN organisations etc. to the Russian authorities and scientists with regard to the problem of Avian flu as well as methodologies to estimate waterbird harvest.

10. to request the government to improve methodologies, including financial support, for appropriate and balanced control of wolf populations.

Briefly Noted

Bertrand des Clers wins award: Bertrand des Clers of Paris, France, has been chosen to be the recipient of the Peter Capstick Hunting Heritage Award. We could not agree more with the choice. He is a founding Board Member of Conservation Force, one of our hardest workers and most trusted advisors. This is a working position in which he has advanced or prepared documents on every conceivable issue from Endangered Species Act reform to elephant quotas, often seven days a week without pay for nine years. He was the trusted head of Prince Abdorezza's Foundation in Paris, the International Game Fondation for two and one-half decades, co-author of the CITES Convention, particularly the Resolution that permits trophy trade as a non-commercial activity, co-founder of the International Professional Hunters Association, President of CIC's Tropical Game Commission for decades and much more.

Bertrand des Clers truly has no equal in the international arena in the

biopolitics relevant to hunting. He has done more for international hunting than anyone in the entire world. I hope you all get to meet this charming champion of hunting and wildlife conser-

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Grand Slam Club/Ovis generously pays all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. Founded in 1956, Grand Slam Club/Ovis is an organization of hunter/conservationists dedicated to improving wild sheep and goat populations worldwide by contributing to game and wildlife agencies or other non-profit wildlife conservation organizations. GSCO has agreed to sponsor *Conservation Force Bulletin* in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. For more information, please visit www.wildsheep.org.

GRAND SLAM CLUB  OVIS

vation at the Dallas Safari Club Convention January 28, 2006 when he receives his award. If you do, thank him for being a workhorse in Conservation Force, too.

Lion Workshops Set: The African lion workshops arising from the 13th Conference of the CITES Parties have finally been set by the IUCN Cat Specialist Group that is coordinating them. The first is to be a meeting in Douala, Cameroon, for Western and Central Africa, October 2-6. The second is to be in South Africa for Southern and Eastern Africa, January 8-13, 2006. Both meetings are to be divided into two parts with different participants. The first three days of each are to be technical meetings of African lion specialists. Those technical meetings will be followed by three day-long strategy and policy meetings of a broader range of stakeholders to set the course of African lion conservation and management for each range country in the respective regions. – *John J. Jackson, III.*