The Snow Leopard Conservancy believes that building local communities’ capacity for conservation is the key to a future where the noble snow leopard continues to roam the mountains of Central Asia.

In 2003, we continued to build upon our long-standing partnerships in four of the snow leopard’s range countries. We initiated new conservation efforts in Pakistan and Tajikistan (above); and in India and Nepal, we initiated new efforts while strengthening the conservation and education programs already under way.

We are pleased with progress in Ladakh, where Tashi Lundup has been promoted to Program Assistant for Zanskar. Tashi supervises the predator-proofing of corrals in Zanskar, and assists with camera-trapping and other program activities as needed.

Tsedar Bhutia is now facilitating communication and coordination between California, the urban center of Kathmandu and the remote sites in rural Nepal where our projects are located. Tsedar, who grew up in eastern Nepal, is a staffer with The Mountain Institute, with experience that includes research on medicinal plants, and design and development of guidelines for participatory community planning.

A big Thank You to The Mountain Institute for maximizing resources by sharing a portion of Tsedar’s time with the Snow Leopard Conservancy.

Advisory Board

Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten, Ph.D., International Union for the Conservation of Nature
Don Hunter, Ph.D., U.S. Geological Survey
Nandita Jain, Ph.D., The Mountain Institute
Kristin Nowell, Cat Action Treasury
Camille Richard, Rangeland Ecologist
George Schaller, Ph.D., Wildlife Conservation Society;
Mike Weddle, Science Instructor, Jane Goodall Environmental Middle School

Promoting community-based stewardship of the endangered snow leopard, its prey and habitat
UPDATES ON INDIA

• 15 village corrals begun or completed in Ladakh and Zanskar, serving nearly 200 households.

In 2003 we trained 24 new homestay providers and 11 new nature guides; expanded the program to 8 new areas in Ladakh; and implemented a community-based monitoring process. For information visit: www.Himalayan-Homestays.com

UPDATES ON NEPAL

Despite Nepal’s continuing political crisis, community-based conservation is going forward.

• Household depredation surveys initiated in Humla District, in partnership with Nepal Trust. Three villages have signed conservation agreements.
• Household depredation surveys initiated in Dolpa District, in partnership with DESERT.
• 3 village corrals begun or completed in Mustang.

Camera Trapping Census, Ladakh

• Improved techniques over the winter of 2002-2003, and in 9 weeks captured 100+ cat images on film.
• Developed a procedure to identify individuals, for testing during winter of 2003-2004 in Hemis National Park’s first official snow leopard count.

The Himalayan Homestay Program

Urban travel agents have traditionally captured the bulk of tourist income, but this program generates cash for villages close to wildlife areas.
Anthropologist-scholar Dr. John Mock and his wife writer Kimberley O’Neil visited Pakistan’s Northern Areas on behalf of the Snow Leopard Conservancy. The two have worked in the region for many years, are experts on the culture, and have earned the trust and respect of the local people – vital for any new conservation efforts. After holding a series of village meetings, and interviews, they put in place a process for participatory questionnaires on livestock depredation to be completed by villagers in three areas. In their extensive report, Mock and O’Neil delivered invitations to the SLC from both the Khunjerab Village Organization and the Shimshal Nature Trust, and made a number of recommendations, which form the framework for our 2004 activities in Pakistan.

TAJIKISTAN (New Program)

Tajikistan’s Pamir Mountains, rising to more than 16,500 feet, are home to snow leopards, ibex, and the world’s largest wild sheep, the endangered Marco Polo sheep. This high-altitude desert gets less than 3.6 inches of annual precipitation. Most people here depend upon livestock. Basic services and economic opportunities collapsed with the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. The situation was exacerbated by civil war after the establishment of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Activities that promote improved local livelihoods and natural resource management within the new free market system are being implemented under the Pamir High Mountains Integrated Project. With a grant from UNESCO, the French Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) is leading the project.

In July, at ACTED’s request, Dr. Rodney Jackson visited Tajikistan to examine opportunities for promoting wildlife conservation and community-based monitoring in the eastern Pamir mountains. He trained local staff and herders in basic survey methods for monitoring snow leopard and Marco Polo sheep. The Tajiks conducted their first wildlife survey in the fall.

INDIA (New Program)

In the fall of 2003, the Snow Leopard Conservancy partnered with The Mountain Institute and UNESCO for an assessment of Community-based Tourism and the potential for Traditional Himalayan Homestays in Spiti District, Himachal Pradesh. The Homestay program is part of a larger integrated program to link snow leopard conservation with local livelihoods in Asia. Further, this survey allowed us to leverage funding provided by the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund, for a collaborative program in Spiti, under development between SLC and the International Snow Leopard Trust.

Spiti supports good populations of snow leopard, ibex, and other wildlife, and is gaining in popularity among domestic and foreign visitors alike. Important protected areas that are home to the snow leopard and its prey include the Pin Valley National Park and Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary. Spiti lies within the Trans-Himalayan region of India, and consists of a high altitude “cold desert” zone with cold winters and warm summers.

Three villages emerged as suitable potential communities with whom to start community-based tourism activities. All are located close to protected areas and offer prospects for cultural and wildlife-based tourism that could build upon existing local skills and knowledge.

In order to help ensure sustainability and ownership, and to build local capacity, we will work through two local Spiti organizations, each of which nominated a staff person to attend a Community-Based Tourism course co-sponsored by the SLC, held in September in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve.
Darla Hillard also visited Manang to evaluate SLC’s education program. The visit was timed for World Environment Day, June 5. Activities at the local high school included a parade, student speeches and a quiz contest.

*UNICEF ordered 1600 copies each of the Nepali/English version of My Grandmother Says..., Snow Queen, and Pasang and the Sheep Thief, prompting a reprint.

* The Tibet Autonomous Region Education Committee reprinted the Tibetan/Chinese version of My Grandmother Says..., for wider distribution in the schools.

*Tibetan Braille version of My Grandmother Says... published jointly with the Project for the Blind in Lhasa.

**Sister Schools**

Mandalas (right) drawn by students at the Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School show the relationships between the students’ personal interests and their concern for global issues. The innermost circle is “myself,” with “family and friends”, and “school.” The four segments outside represent global concerns. In the narrow circle are possible solutions. And finally, what the world will be like when the problems are solved. The Moravian Mission School students in Leh sent drawings (right) showing their ideal environment.

The 49 members of the Moravian Mission School’s Roots & Shoots club, supported by SLC, will study the Jane Goodall Institute’s Lessons for Hope. At left are the club’s officers.

Darla Hillard, SLC’s Education Director, led a group that included two of the Roots & Shoots club members on a field trip to Rumbak Village. They experienced the Himalayan Homestays, and spent two days hiking with two of the newly trained Nature Guides (right).

**Children’s Books**

* The Tibet Autonomous Region Education Committee reprinted the Tibetan/Chinese version of My Grandmother Says..., for wider distribution in the schools.

**Nepal Programs**

Darla Hillard also visited Manang to evaluate SLC’s education program. The visit was timed for World Environment Day, June 5. Activities at the local high school included a parade, student speeches and a quiz contest.

**School and Outreach Partners:** Dana Gray Elementary, Ellis School, Hamilton Middle School, Pinewood School Lower Campus, Centauri Summer Arts Camp, Sierra Endangered Cat Haven, Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund.
Nepal Education Program (Cont’d)

Nagendra Budhathoki, SLC’s coordinator for Dolpo, visited participating Junior Ranger Program schools in the gateway to Shey Phoksundo National Park. Park authorities provided official approval to conduct the program for the next five years. The program is being expanded to Mugu District. Nagendra reported:

Eight hundred and sixty square kilometers of the park lies in Mugu District, yet the communities are deprived of most park-related activities, research and studies, education and community outreach programs.

Mugu has prime snow leopard habitat, and the locals showed keen interest in the program.

Good Livestock Management posters (left) are useful both in the snow leopards’ range countries, and here at home. Elementary school teachers in Rhode Island, New York, Virginia and New Hampshire have put together a comprehensive lesson plan on Exploring our Living Mountain Laboratory. The plan grew out of a teacher training conducted by SLC partner The Mountain Institute, and features a section on snow leopards. The Good Livestock Management poster, jointly produced by SLC and TMI, forms the centerpiece of this section. Betsy Whitesell, the teacher from Virginia, reported:

This was a great lesson! It would have been hard without the poster... I used very small versions (5”x7”) of the poster as a backdrop to the kids’ own sheep pen project. It gave them a focus to their activity and helped them explain the project to their parents.

For further details on any of the Snow Leopard Conservancy’s programs, please visit our website, www.SnowLeopardConservancy.org
FINANCES

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www.SnowLeopardConservancy.org
A Project of the Cat Action Treasury (www.felidae.org)

Many thanks to our wonderful supporters!

**$50,000 or greater** - Jon Vannini

**$10,000 to $49,000** - Anonymous (2), Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Charitable Foundation, Fort Collins Science Center, Pierre & Pam Omidiyar, Shared Earth Foundation

**$5,000 to $9,999** - Anonymous, Sidney S. Byers Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund, International Trust for Nature Conservation, Sabrina Johnston


**$500 to $999** - Meredith & Shilo Bishop, Julie Brock, Judith Brown and Michael Meyers, Antonia DeMatto, Celia Felsher, Steve Flaherty, Joann Grothe, Bob and Kennon Hudson, John and Kellie Lehr, Claudine Mussuto, Herrick Stickney, Virginia VanWolbeck


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