Dear Friends:

The Snow Leopard Conservancy’s tenth anniversary as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit coincided with the first time in my career that I could not travel to the realm of the snow leopard for an entire year. Still, we were able to react to the hardships brought about by this devastating pandemic by providing help to remote rural communities and partners in Nepal, Mongolia, and Pakistan who faced sudden economic collapse. With the closure of international borders and government mandated travel restrictions, tourism visitation came to a grinding halt, evaporating local people’s source of income. But thanks to you, our loyal supporters, the Conservancy mobilized in-country partners like Mountain Spirit and ensured that remote communities of Nepal’s Nar Phu Valley received personal protective equipment (PPE) and food shipments to carry them through critical months of the year. Without this emergency support, the upturn in poaching would have been much worse, with snow leopards more directly affected by loss of primary native prey species such as blue sheep and Asiatic ibex.

With the closure of schools, we worked with partners to improve environmental education curriculums. We launched plans to identify and establish alternative sources for income generation through special job skills training and related governance capacity building of communities. At the same time, we remained fully committed, addressing threats like climate change, conflict between herders and snow leopards, and local monitoring of the elusive cat.

Pandemics aside, it’s an exciting time for both snow leopards and the Conservancy to focus on new opportunities and approaches for ensuring that remote communities play a crucial role as protectors of Asia’s fragile high mountain environments.

Last but certainly not least, Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson joined the Conservancy in April as our new vice president. As I step back to half time, I’ll be focusing on special projects, fundraising, and mentoring of the next generation of snow leopard conservationists.

Thank you for your continuing support!

Rodney Jackson
Founder-Director

I joined the Snow Leopard Conservancy in April 2020 to ensure snow leopards have a place in this rapidly changing world. Working in close collaboration with the communities that live among snow leopards, we are facilitating solutions for human-wildlife coexistence to conserve these magnificent cats.

The Coronavirus pandemic has presented unprecedented global challenges, including new hurdles for wildlife conservation. My heart goes out to everyone who has experienced loss and hardship this past year.

On a positive note, with challenges come opportunities, and in my experience, the bigger the challenge, the bigger the reward. The interconnection between human health, animal health, and ecosystem health (One Health) has never been more evident. We have the ability in this pivotal time to reshape the future in a more compassionate, equitable, healthy, and sustainable way for all life on earth. We envision one where Indigenous voices and holistic traditional views of the world are embraced and one where local people are empowered to become guardians of wildlife and wild places. As we have seen the positive impact of the Snow Leopard Conservancy’s grassroots conservation over ten years and our founders’ pioneering work in community-based snow leopard conservation over the last 40 years, I remain optimistic.

It is an honor to be able to help lead the Conservancy into its next chapter in partnership with our incredible team, partners, and local communities.

Your support means the world to us. We truly couldn’t do it without you. Thank you so very much.

Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson
Vice-President
Celebrating Ten Years 2010 - 2020

5,000,000
Dollars put toward snow leopard conservation

17,000
Students received instruction in conservation education

11
Snow leopards forgiven by villagers for livestock raiding and released back into the wild

4
New regions targeted for Nomadic Nature Trunk expansion

350
Foxlight® solar powered nighttime predator deterrents distributed

70
Predator proof livestock corrals built

25
Partner organizations throughout the snow leopard’s range

8
Countries with Snow Leopard Conservancy Ongoing Projects

Cover photo: Tashi Dhak, Nepal - Searching for the Snow Leopard
Above photo: Vikram Singh, Wild World India
Using virtual tools in this time of change, the Conservancy team began strategic planning to guide our strategy for the greatest positive, long-term impact in snow leopard conservation and beyond.

Connecting Communities for Conservation is built on the foundation that local communities are at the heart of saving snow leopards and that the communities, themselves, can serve as agents for change. These goals are delivered through a holistic program using a landscape - wildlife paradigm driven by

**Connectivity ~ Coexistence ~ Communities**

### Unifying People and Snow Leopards

When snow leopards kill livestock, a cycle of human-wildlife conflict is launched. We are working hard to mitigate this conflict, which currently involves many thousands of households from the Himalaya to Siberia.

### Developing Resilient Mountain Communities With Diversified Livelihoods

We are facilitating the development of livelihood enterprises and incentives paired with snow leopard conservation, hoping to build robust, sustainable communities that will be the stewards for snow leopards and biodiversity.

### Expanding Empathy and Conservation Through Learning

Together with our partners, we are working to increase comprehension of ecosystems, empowering the next generation of snow leopard champions, and providing guidance to communities living with snow leopards.

### Empowering Indigenous Traditional Knowledge

We are building a coalition of Indigenous Cultural Practitioners (ICPs) who live and work in snow leopard habitat. Land of Snow Leopard Network has over 100 members who are reviving traditional knowledge within their communities and reigniting the sacred power of the snow leopard.

Since March 2020, the Conservancy team has been working primarily from home while conducting team member and board of directors’ meetings virtually.
People and snow leopards share the rugged mountain landscape. As herd sizes are increased to satisfy the cashmere trade, herders move their livestock further into snow leopard habitat. This increases the chance of depredation.

Our Lights for Life program distributes Foxlight® predator deterrents to discourage wolves and snow leopards from attacking livestock.

Another method to protect carnivores as well as livestock is building predator-proof corrals. Traditional corrals are built to keep livestock in, not to keep predators out.

Building enclosures with strong walls and a sturdy roof will prevent a snow leopard or wolf from entering the nighttime corral and killing the livestock.

These solar-powered units are placed at nighttime corrals where the random light patterns simulate human activity which can frighten a carnivore away.

Over the past ten years, we have distributed 350 Foxlights® throughout Mongolia, Nepal, India, Bhutan, and are initiating programs in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and China.

Preventing attacks will prevent retaliatory killing of snow leopards.

The Conservancy has facilitated the building of 70 predator-proofed corrals in collaboration with villagers.

These corrals prevent retaliatory killing of carnivores, suffering and death of livestock, and economic loss to the herder.

Every well-built corral will save the lives of snow leopards and wolves.
The Conservancy’s award-winning Himalayan Homestay program in partnership with the Mountain Institute and a grant from UNESCO, celebrated its 15th year. Homestays enable travelers to experience a cultural exploration while providing income for the communities that live among snow leopards.

In Ladakh, India, homestays have been changing local peoples’ perceptions of the snow leopard from a pest to an asset.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic negatively affected tourism in all snow leopard range countries as well as globally, and it will likely take several years to recover.

In response, the Conservancy has shifted to investigating alternative revenue streams.

A variety of new sources for income include value-added agricultural and medicinal products that are environmentally sound and can be grown or traded sustainably.

Creating awareness of the snow leopard’s ecological as well as cultural and spiritual importance is a necessary step in its preservation. Community members are engaged and informed through International Snow Leopard Day festivals, radio programs, social media channels, and literary publications like *The Snow Leopard* magazine.

Awareness is the first step towards empathy, and empathy is the first step towards action.

The Conservancy’s conservation education programs provide a variety of opportunities for learning.

Our partners facilitate traditional instruction in conservation education and bring unique programs to both girls and boys living in remote areas.

Environmental education is also offered to adult community residents, including the introduction of improved methods of animal husbandry and pasture management and new tools to better coexist with predators.
Engaging local communities in conservation

The Land of Snow Leopard Network’s (LOSL) approach is unique in that it is rooted in indigenous understanding of the sacredness and the cultural and environmental significance of the snow leopard across central Asia. Indigenous Peoples in this region relate to the snow leopard as the “protector of sacred mountains, a unifying force and a source of spiritual power and wisdom.”

The Land of Snow Leopard Network program area includes Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Buryat and Altai Republics of Russia, and Tajikistan.

Being a recipient of the IUCN Save Our Species grant, Sustaining Indigenous Communities in Snow Leopard Conservation, has enabled us to expand the LOSL educational programs.

This grant fully supports the program Elders and Youth for Conservation of the Snow Leopard in Kyrgyzstan, conceived of and executed by Zhaparkul Raimbekov, a founding member of LOSL and a Giver of Blessings throughout his community.

In 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, all the LOSL coordinators focused on refining lesson plans while working from home and successfully conducted virtual instructor training in the use of Nomadic Nature Trunks. They look forward to getting back into the field.

In 2020, emergency food and personal protective equipment were delivered to the Nar and Phu communities to combat food scarcity and assist in public health safety during the pandemic. The development of regional ecotourism was planned to launch in 2020 but due to travel restrictions is rescheduled to begin in the fall of 2021.

Facilitators from Mountain Spirit work closely with community members to identify strengths and aspirations, which, in turn, helps to develop new livelihood alternatives that are sustainable, diversified, and reduce pressure on natural resources. These new opportunities will be integral in maintaining the communities’ flexibility to better prepare for future disruptions and effects of climate change.

IUCN Save Our Species aims to improve the long-term survival prospects of threatened species. It also focuses on supporting the species habitats and working with the communities who share this habitat. It achieves success by funding and coordinating conservation projects into multiple initiatives across the globe.
In 2019, we began working with Dr. Eric Dinerstein and the team at RESOLVE, Inc. to develop the AI VillageGuard, a new artificially intelligent (AI) camera trap that will be the next generation of electronic predator deterrents. This technology is capable of identifying an approaching snow leopard or wolf and then alerting herders to its presence.

Ultimately, the technology will also be capable of producing a loud noise generated from speakers placed near the camera unit. The expectation is that the sound will act as an aversive stimuli which stops the predator from advancing toward a grazing herd or livestock pen.

In 2020, the prototype AI camera trap technology was tested and further developed at local partner zoos to aid in identification technology of snow leopards, wolves, and tigers.

When international travel restrictions associated with Covid-19 ease, AI VillageGuard will be ready for testing in mountain communities where snow leopards are most at risk for conflict.
Highlights of 2020

Maria Azhunova, Winner of the 2020 Stanford Bright Environmental Award

Maria Azhunova, Director-Elect of the Conservancy’s program Land of Snow Leopard Network and Executive Director of the Baikal Buryat Center of Indigenous Cultures, received Stanford’s prestigious 2020 Bright Environmental Award. “Maria is an indigenous Buryat conservation leader who harnesses her people’s Indigenous knowledge and culture to drive conservation projects in both Eastern Russia and Mongolia.”

Celebrating 15 Years’ Partnership with BWCDO

In February 2020, Conservancy partner Ghulam Mohammad of the Baltistan Wildlife Conservation and Development Organization was the keynote speaker at a special Conservancy event which celebrated our 15-year partnership protecting snow leopards through innovative predator-proofing methods, environmental education for girls and boys, and citizen scientist snow leopard monitoring in Pakistan.

2020 Artwork & Literary Contest

To celebrate the release of the book Searching for the Snow Leopard, the Conservancy held an Artwork & Literary Contest. The creative works that were submitted help to create awareness about the mysterious and beautiful cat that is an ecologically important species of the high Asian mountain ecosystem.

Publication of Searching for the Snow Leopard

Searching for the Snow Leopard, Guardian of the High Mountains was released by Skyhorse Publishing in October 2020. Editor/author Shavaun Kidd collaborated with co-author, photographer Björn Persson and other renowned photographers, researchers, and conservationists who have traveled to the high mountains of Asia to study and photograph the elusive snow leopard. In December, Ms. Kidd introduced the book at the Mussoorie Mountain Virtual Festival. Proceeds from sales support Conservancy programs.

First Jigme Dorji Virtual Mountain Festival

Bhutan Foundation Executive Director Tshewang Wangchuk, a Trustee on the Conservancy’s Board of Directors, and Rodney Jackson joined forces to share their experiences working with snow leopards and Himalayan communities during the first ever virtual Jigme Dorji Mountain Festival. Their conversation focused on the snow leopard’s importance to the mountain landscapes of Central Asia and the Hindu-Kush-Himalayas and potential in the region for eco-tourism, business, and community-led environmental conservation.

WCN First Virtual Wildlife Conservation Expo

In the fall of each year, our partner Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN) holds a Wildlife Conservation Expo in San Francisco, California, which provides a unique opportunity for supporters of wildlife to come together with some of the world’s leading conservationists. In 2020, a “virtual” two-day Expo was held for the first time. Rodney Jackson and Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson were featured presenters, speaking about snow leopard conservation and the work done by the Conservancy with its partners in the field.

Snow Leopard Day 2020 Virtual Event

On International Snow Leopard Day, the Conservancy hosted a virtual event, “Celebrating Snow Leopards from the Heart,” featuring members of Land of Snow Leopard Network, including Indigenous Cultural Practitioners Norbu Lama and Shaman Buyanbadrakh Erdenetsogt.

The Snow Leopard Calling Wins Best Documentary at the Kathmandu Mountain Film Festival

Congratulations to the sister-duo, filmmaker Sonam Chokskyi Lama and Conservancy partner Tshiring Lhamu Lama for the incredible success of their short documentary film The Snow Leopard Calling, which won Best Documentary in the Panorama category of the 2020 Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival.
Thank You To Our Generous Donors

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Kathy Clevenger

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Sandy Ball
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Mary Ann Edwards
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Kelly Avery: C H & M A Harris, Colleagues at CBRE
Miss L. Haggerty, Mr. & Mrs. G Jackson, Jo & Kevin Lush, Simon & Patricia Lush, Ian Parker Trading Limited
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Joe Rohde's Retirement from Walt Disney Imagineering: Pamela Rawlins, Eric Summers
Pamela Stevenson: Betsy Ballenger

On Behalf of
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Janet Feyston: Peter Feyston
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ESRI - Geographic information mapping software
Ben Hunter - Videography
Angela Ingrossa Arwady - Graphic design
Shavuna Kidd - Professional writing and special events
Paul Kratter - Illustrations
Microsoft - Software
John Sicht - Tech support and web design
Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce - “Safe Reopening” mini-grant
Spirithoods - Outerwear

Special Appreciation
Snow Leopard Conservancy Volunteers
In 2020, 26 Volunteers, Staff, and Board Members gave more than 1000 hours of their time and talents, valued at more than $18,000.

Organizations Providing Platforms for Outreach & Donations
AmazonSmile
eBay Giving Works
Facebook
Network for Good
OneToday by Google

Photographers
Who generously allowed us to use their images in fundraising for snow leopard conservation.
Peter Bolliger, Steve Tracy, Suzi Eszterhas, Jak Wonderly, Oriol Alamy, Bjørn Persson, Tashi Ghale, Vikram Singh, Katey Duffey, Steve Winter

Contributors to Searching for the Snow Leopard Guardian of the High Mountains
Co-Authors - Shavuna Mara Kidd & Bjørn Persson
Foreword - Rodney Jackson
Contributors - Oriol Alamy, Katey Duffey, Jak Wonderly, Tashi Ghale, Susan Leibik, Darla Hillard, and Eulália Vicens
Cal Barksdale, Skyhorse Publishing
Literary Agent, Margaret Gee

Artwork & Literary Contest Winners

Artwork
Elena Kolotusha
Muhammad Sufyan
Ekaterina Drozhdina
Lucia Schenker
Parag Chethti
Hanna Dribinski
Daniel Dahan

Grand Prize Artwork - Faces of the Wild: Elena Kolotusha

Literary Works
Becky Norman
Anne Curtis
Debra Crowe-Vitale
Ailin Mao
Chingiz Samudinu uulu

We would like to acknowledge the extraordinary program support provided by:
Caroline Gabel, Board Chair and Susan Janin, Event Host
Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman Fund
Wildlife Conservation Network

With limited field activities due to Covid-19, we focused on building institutional capacity and remote training of staff during successive lockdowns. Program expenses not expended in 2020 were carried over in 2021 for action.
Snow Leopard Conservancy’s Mission

Ensuring snow leopard survival and conserving mountain landscapes by expanding environmental awareness and sharing innovative practices through community stewardship and partnerships.