

IMPACT REPORT 2023

**SNOW LEOPARD
CONSERVANCY**



U.S. BASED STAFF

Kayley Bateman – Programs Manager
Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson - Executive Director
Astrid Stevenson – Office Manager

CONSULTANTS

Maria Azhunova - Land of Snow Leopard Network Director
Grace Dougan Consulting - Accounting
Lucia Guaita - Grant Writing & Program Development
Rodney Jackson, PhD - Technical Advisor
Shavaun Kidd - Outreach Manager
Brian Peniston - Darwin Initiative Program Manager

Thank you to Kathy Ah San and Charleen Gavette for their invaluable work as Accounts and Office Administrator and Conservation & Education Program Manager, respectively, in 2023.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Raja Bhadury - Vice President
Caroline Gabel - Trustee
Mary Herrmann - Trustee
Rodney Jackson, PhD - Founder & President
Carolyn MacKenzie - Secretary
Eric Newsom - Trustee
Tshewang Wangchuk - Trustee
Robert Wilson - Chief Financial Officer

We mourn the loss of Robert J. Wilson, Board Treasurer/CFO and longtime personal and professional friend of the Snow Leopard Conservancy. He will always be remembered for his huge heart and caring commitment to wild animals. Bob was responsible for helping establish SLC in 2010 as a 501(c)(3) organization, and his attention to good fiscal management and governance helped guide the organization to where it is today.

ASSOCIATES

Margaret Gee - Australia Ambassador for Snow Leopard Conservancy
Charlotte Hacker, PhD - Research Biologist, Department of the Interior U.S.
Jonathan Hanson, PhD - Social Science Associate
Jan Janečka, PhD - SLC's Genetics Research Program, Duquesne University

ADVISORS

Darla Hillard - SLC Co-founder & Advisor, Land of Snow Leopard Network
Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten, PhD - IUCN Cat Specialist Group
Don Hunter, PhD - Founder, Rocky Mountain Cat Conservancy
Barbara Palmer - Husbandry Advisor
George Schaller, PhD - Wildlife Biologist and Conservationist

U.S. BASED PARTNERS

International Veterinary Outreach
OneNature Institute
RESOLVE
Rocky Mountain Cat Conservancy
Wildlife Conservation Network
Worldwide Indigenous Science Network

RANGE COUNTRY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

BHUTAN

Bhutan Foundation

INDIA

Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust

KYRGYZSTAN

Rural Development Fund
Taalim-Forum Public Foundation

MONGOLIA

Association of the Protection of Altai Cultural Heritage
Irbis Mongolia
Mongolia Academy of Sciences
Nomadic Nature Conservation
Wildlife Conservation Society Mongolia
Wildlife Initiative
World Wildlife Fund Mongolia

NEPAL

Animal Nepal
Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
National Trust for Nature Conservation, Annapurna Conservation Area Project
Mountain Spirit
Project UKALI
Snow Leopard Journey
Teku Samuha Nepal
Third Pole Conservancy

PAKISTAN

Baltistan Wildlife Conservation & Development Organization, Project Snow Leopard

RANGEWIDE

Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program Secretariat
International Snow Leopard Trust
Snow Leopard Network

TAJIKISTAN

Public Organization "Kuhhoi Pomir" (Pamir Mountains)

We would like to acknowledge the extraordinary program support provided by:



DR. FISK JOHNSON



PAWANKA
FUND



SheppardMullin



Saving Snow Leopards

Tales of Guardianship in Asia's High Mountains

Dear Friends,

We invite you to embark on a journey through the Conservancy's 2023 highlights, made possible by your invaluable trust and support!

The year commenced with Director Ashleigh and Program Manager Charleen traveling to the Indian Himalaya hoping for their first wild sighting of the elusive snow leopard. They were privileged to witness not just one, but eight cats, including a mother with two playful year-old cubs!

In Ladakh, the award-winning Himalayan Homestay program, a community-led initiative, has truly cemented the snow leopards as cherished guardians for this fragile ecosystem. Local protection efforts ensure winter expeditions will consistently encounter the Queen of the Mountains with communities experiencing lasting benefits from wildlife-based ecotourism.

Land of Snow Leopard (LOSL) Network made significant global strides connecting Indigenous communities with sacred species and sacred mountains from North America to Central Asia. Indigenous Cultural Practitioners (ICPs) were honored at the Parliament of the World's Religions, and LOSL Director Maria embarked on the transformative "Run4Salmon" expedition, further shaping narratives of global unity for Mother Nature.

In Nepal, the One-Health-One-Welfare initiative empowered local paraveterinarians through animal health training clinics to mitigate transmissible disease threats between animals and people, while promoting compassionate coexistence. Complementing this work, the Darwin Initiative project uplifted local communities with snow leopard-friendly enterprises and improved local government conservation policies.

We also advanced applied research and conservation technology, like drone-monitored prey and GIS-mapping of vital wildlife corridors, supporting crucial international policies.

Thank you so very much for being the driving force of the Conservancy's work—we truly couldn't do it without you!

With heartfelt gratitude,

Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson
Executive Director



Rodney Jackson, PhD
Founder & President



2023 AT A GLANCE

SNOW LEOPARD RANGE



TOP THREATS TO SNOW LEOPARDS



SLC CONSERVATION PROJECTS

500 COMMUNITY MEMBERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN LOCALLY-LED CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

88 MEN AND WOMEN WERE EMPLOYED IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN 5 SNOW LEOPARD RANGE COUNTRIES

121 MORE FOXLIGHTS DISTRIBUTED

25,000 LIVESTOCK VACCINATED OR TREATED

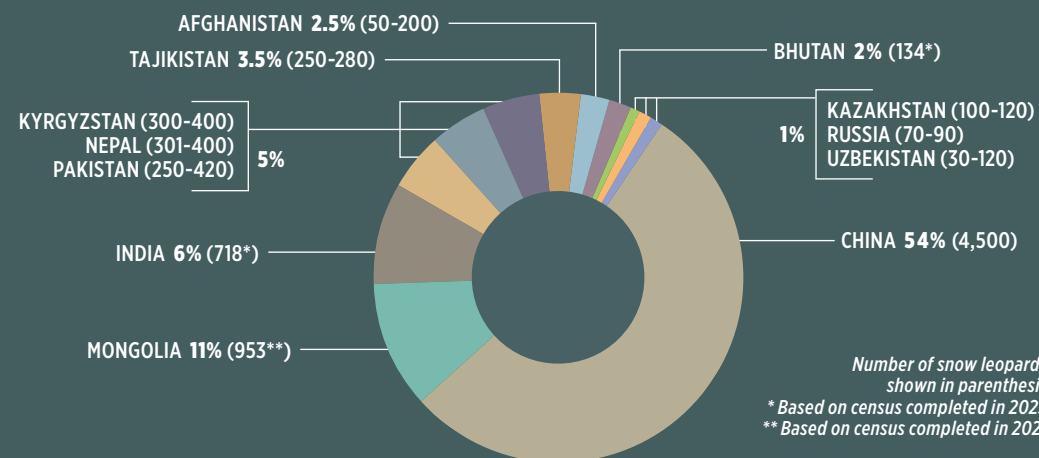
4,000-7,000

NUMBER OF SNOW LEOPARDS ALIVE TODAY (RED-LIST VULNERABLE)

12 NUMBER OF RANGE COUNTRIES WHERE SNOW LEOPARDS ARE PRESENT

5 NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHERE SLC HAS SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVATION PROJECTS

ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF SNOW LEOPARD POPULATION BY COUNTRY



SLC EDUCATION PROJECTS

44 SCHOOLS ENGAGED WITH **5,500** STUDENTS AND **100** TEACHERS

10,000 SNOW LEOPARD DAY FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS

40,000 ADDITIONAL LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED WITH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

1,400 COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED IN DIRECT TRAINING

8TH EDITION OF "SNOW LEOPARD MAGAZINE" FEATURING AN ARTICLE BY SLC DIRECTOR ASHLEIGH LUTZ-NELSON.



SLC IS LED BY OUR SIX CORE VALUES

- Passion** We are driven by the urgency of protecting wildlife and wild places
- Creativity** Embracing innovation, imagination, and insightful observations
- Empowerment** Empowering staff, partners, and communities to sustain effective conservation
- Collaboration** Recognizing the importance of diverse, inclusive, and equal partnerships
- Integrity** Maintaining honesty, trust, and respect as the basis of our work
- Reverence** Recognizing snow leopards as ecological ambassadors and spiritual totems



© Tom Walker / Alamy Stock Photo

Living With Snow Leopards

Maintaining Ecosystem Balance Through Harmonious Coexistence

Opposite page:
Mountain Spirit team conducting an Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA) meeting with villagers and herders in Phu, Nepal.
One-Health-One-Welfare paraveterinarians examining an equine patient.
Snow leopard family image from a remote sensing camera trap, Altai Mountains, Mongolia.

INTEGRATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

This year, Snow Leopard Conservancy and our partner, Mountain Spirit, were honored to receive continued funding from the Darwin Initiative supporting our community-based conservation activities in Annapurna, Nepal. The project's goals encourage collaboration among municipalities to safeguard snow leopards and their habitats. By backing local businesses, simplifying compensation processes, and improving access to livestock insurance, we expect to reduce conflicts between humans and wildlife and ensure sustainable coexistence in key snow leopard areas. Already, Mountain Spirit has successfully trained new local staff and organized planning meetings and skills improvement sessions, boosting community involvement and capacity building. Additionally, fostering local sustainable livelihood enterprises, particularly Himalayan chive production, has improved the financial stability of communities affected by wildlife conflicts.

NURTURING WELFARE AND WELLBEING IN MANANG VALLEY

In September, SLC Executive Director Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson and Program Manager Kayley Bateman, together with partners International Veterinary Outreach, Animal Nepal, and Mountain Spirit, traveled to Nepal's Manang Valley to facilitate the One-Health-One-Welfare (OHOW) program. This initiative provided specialized veterinary training to local professionals, including paraveterinarians and wildlife officials. During five days of animal clinics, 250 animals were treated and 50 guardians received education on improved care techniques. Classroom sessions, covering diverse topics from livestock medicine to snow leopard conservation, prompted productive discussions that led to a comprehensive health assessment with recommendations to enhance human-animal welfare and reduce zoonotic disease risks. Looking ahead, OHOW anticipates supporting canine vacci-

nation and sterilization campaigns that reduce the threat of feral dogs to wildlife, domestic livestock, and people.

PROMOTING COEXISTENCE: CONSERVATION EFFORTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Ensuring coexistence between snow leopards and local communities is crucial. While these apex predators play a vital role in ecosystem balance, their presence can pose challenges for an agro-pastoral society reliant on livestock for its livelihood. Therefore, finding effective conflict mitigation strategies is essential for the well-being of both people and snow leopards. In that regard, our partners have been working tirelessly to ensure that a variety of proven methods are implemented. Focusing on a goal of fostering harmonious relationships between people and predators ultimately contributes to the long-term conservation of snow leopards and the ecosystems they inhabit.

Partner Claudio Augugliario and his team at Wildlife Initiative conducted fundamental research involving local herders in the Mongolian Sutai, a vital corridor for snow leopards. Engaging the community has provided essential insights into snow leopard behavior, revealing that most attacks on livestock occur during winter and when animals are moved to and from pastures. With this information, Claudio is implementing effective conflict mitigation strategies, leading to a balanced relationship between humans and snow leopards in that region. His project highlights the importance of collaboration between conservationists and local communities to deepen understanding and promote solutions beneficial to all living beings.

In Dolpo, Nepal, our partner Tshiring Lhamu Lama is constructing a communal corral intended to serve families that live in prime snow leopard habitat. Last year, Tshiring worked closely with the local herders to incorporate their input into the final corral design, a collaboration that fostered a sense of ownership within the community. This enclosure will serve as a model for future construction of additional corrals, and is a big step forward in improving coexistence in this region.

Conservancy partners in Nepal and Pakistan are continuing their conflict mitigation work with local herders on wildlife monitoring, corral construction projects, distributing predator-detering Foxlights, and streamlining livestock insurance programs, with a particular focus on working with women's groups. ●





Land of Snow Leopard

Reawakening the Ancestral Power of Snow Leopards



Left: Zhaparkul Raimbekov and students giving a traditional blessing to the Snow Leopard. Right: “Run4Salmon” participants gather for a Whale Honoring Ceremony in California, with Chief Caleen Sisk of Winnemem Wintu Tribe (second from left) and Maria Azhunova, LOSL Director (right).

In the sacred “Run4Salmon” ceremonies, barriers dissolve, and bridges of cultural exchange unite souls in reverence. Chief Sisk noted, “All mountains in the world store hidden water, and all of the mountains are interconnected.” Maria Azhunova added, “All animals are interconnected just like the mountains.”

Throughout the snow leopard’s range, there are whispers of ancient tales of the spiritual reverence and cultural prominence of these cats. Known as “Lords of the Mountains,” a sacredness surrounds their presence and power. As historical turmoils like Socialist colonization swept through these regions and globalization took hold, the snow leopard’s prominence waned. Its cultural and spiritual significance became suppressed and slowly forgotten.

Now, a coalition of Indigenous Cultural Practitioners (ICPs: Buddhist teachers, shamans, sacred site guardians, respected elders), local communities, educators, herders, youth, children, and conservation scientists are working to reignite the legacy of these majestic cats. This group, Land of Snow Leopard (LOSL) Network, transcends borders and generations, aspiring to restore the snow leopard’s rightful place as a totemic symbol of ecological balance and spiritual harmony.

IGNITING THE YOUTH

Kyrgyz Sacred Site Guardian and LOSL ICP, Zhaparkul Raimbekov, continued his Elders and Youth program. Zhaparkul met with students of all ages, teaching about the snow leopard’s sacredness, uniqueness, role in the environment, and place in Kyrgyz traditions. His lessons resonate with passion, painting a vivid picture of the vital role these cats play in the ecosystem. Through his efforts, young hearts are stirred to the call of stewardship and symbiosis with nature. One school principal explained the importance of Zhaparkul’s work, “Guardians like Zhaparkul Raimbekov inspire children to love nature and contribute to the mutual understanding between nature and culture.”

INDIGENOUS WISDOM

The Nomadic Nature Trunks conservation education program crossed borders to successfully expand into the Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolian LOSL programs. LOSL coordinators collaborated with revered ICPs to develop new modules that are steeped in traditional knowledge, blending the ICP’s wisdom to generate regionally and culturally specific lessons. They seek to kindle a spark of awareness, fostering a deep-rooted connection between people and their natural heritage, reviving cultural and spiritual practices.

BRIDGING WORLDS

In August, LOSL ICPs participated in The Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago, a gathering aimed at promoting harmony among the world’s religious and spiritual communities for a just, peaceful, and sustainable planet. The LOSL ICP’s perspectives on Global Ethics and their impactful presentation have been recognized and respected on this prestigious platform, marking a major breakthrough and success.

A decade ago, Winnemem Wintu Tribe’s Chief Caleen Sisk joined the Sacred Fire Ceremony in the Altai Mountains, hosted by LOSL ICPs. Later, she invited LOSL members from Altai to conduct a ceremony in Winnemem Wintu sacred territories. In 2023, Maria received an invitation to join the tribe’s prayerful journey “Run4Salmon,” with the aspiration to return totemic Nur Chinook Salmon to the tribe’s ancestral lands and waters. “Run4Salmon” fosters reciprocity, cultivating Traditional Ecological Knowledge and promoting collaboration among Indigenous communities globally. LOSL and Winnemem Wintu plan to work closely together to connect sacred species and sacred mountains from Central Asia to North America, forging unity for the preservation of Mother Earth. ●

Inspiring the Next Generation

Knowledge Brings Awareness - Awareness Brings Actions



BWEDO students learn how to use a spotting scope to observe wildlife during an ecocamp excursion in Pakistan.

Snow Leopard Conservancy has a longstanding commitment to conservation education. For many of our partners, education is the cornerstone of their efforts. We are privileged to work with dedicated education partners in Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan, three countries that collectively host just under half of the snow leopard population outside China.

TEACHING THE CHILDREN

Caring for snow leopards is at the heart of our sponsored education programs. Our partners, Nomadic Nature Conservation (Mongolia), Teka Samuha Nepal, and Baltistan Wildlife Conservation and Development Organization (BWEDO), ignite the spark of curiosity in students in grades

6 to 10, both in classroom instruction and in-the-field experiences. The curriculum is holistic in that it informs the participants of the characteristics of snow leopards and how their presence affects the full ecosystem, highlighting the potential environmental consequences if the cats are eliminated. The courses extend beyond biology, though, by weaving in the cultural and spiritual significance of these magnificent cats, nurturing a sense of pride in students living in the home of rare, majestic, and culturally important animals.

Our programs reach children living in both cities and rural villages. Although those in villages live in snow leopard habitat, very few have seen a snow leopard and most are unaware of them. The instruction they

receive is exciting and compelling; many react as did Selina, a seventh-grader from Mustang, Nepal. She shares, “[The] snow leopard is an important animal in our life. Even though it harms our livestock and kills one or two of our livestock, we should not kill and trade it because this protects our environment and saves us.” This year, over 5,500 students received classroom and field-based conservation education.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Education knows no age limit; it is a lifelong journey of discovery and enlightenment. Beyond the classroom, our commitment to spreading awareness extends to every corner of society. Conservancy partners hosted Snow Leopard Day celebrations, vibrant gatherings that transcend boundaries and unite entire communities in a shared mission to protect our precious web of life.

Students, parents, teachers, officials, merchants, herders, and artisans come together to celebrate the beauty of nature and the vital role of snow leopards. These festivals are not just events; they are showcases of collective wisdom and passion. From speeches to skits, heartfelt poetry to artwork, every celebration is crafted to shine a spotlight on these elusive creatures and their precious habitat. All voices echo the sentiment expressed by Binod, a proud citizen of Mustang, Nepal. “Snow leopard is an ornament of this Nation.”

A CALL TO ACTION

Through these festivities and school instruction, we don’t just educate—we inspire conservation action. We ignite a spark of curiosity and reverence for the natural world, fostering a sense of stewardship across generations, where every participant becomes a guardian of our planet’s most majestic treasures. ●

2023 ARTWORK & POETRY CONTEST “HARMONY IN PERIL”

Thank you to all participants and congratulations to the winners!



Clockwise from top left:
Love by Maryse Louis
Floating Away by Zaina Alam Piya
I See You by Debi Lockhurst
Chasing Snow by Jaqui-Lynne Walsh
Mischief With Whiskers by Fiona Anderson

ARTWORK ADULT

TRADITIONAL:
Jaqui-Lynne Walsh
Gabriele Buratti-Buga
Ekaterina Drozhkina
Justine Woosnam
Anju Panwar Rajesh
Maryse Louis
Susi Gardner
Catherine Williams-Mourounas
Fiona Anderson
DIGITAL:
Dolgor Byambadorj
Katya Vasko

COMBINATION:
Natalya Pavlushina
UNIQUE:
Debi Lockhurst

YOUTH
TRADITIONAL:
Devlini Denethmie
Kudathanthirige
Marina Chen
Myroslava Berest (Mira)
Kuhu Kacher
Hanna Amelie Rae Dribinski
DIGITAL:
Zaina Alam Piya
UNIQUE:
Susan
Myroslava Berest (Mira)

POETRY ADULT

Anne Curtis
Sarah Mills
Sandra McEwen
Julie M. Smith
Neil Mukherjee

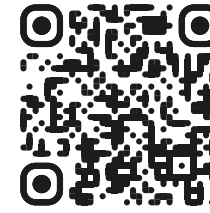
YOUTH
Hanna Amelie Rae Dribinski
Kuhu Kacher

Our Mission

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

Our Approach

Snow Leopard Conservancy partners with local conservationists, range country and international organizations, and mountain communities living with snow leopards. We invest in solutions that save the lives of snow leopards and other predators from the consequence of human-wildlife conflict and build a long term foundation of coexistence, guardianship and self-reliance. Our initiatives empower Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, evidence-based science, and promote healthy mountain ecosystems across the snow leopard's range.



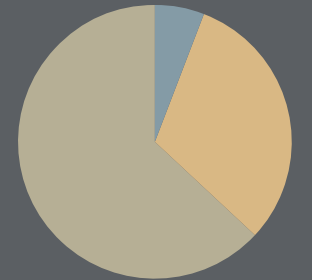
Your monetary gifts make a difference for Snow Leopards and the local communities who share their high-mountain home.

To contribute, scan with your phone or visit snowleopardconservancy.org/donations

FINANCIAL REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR 2023

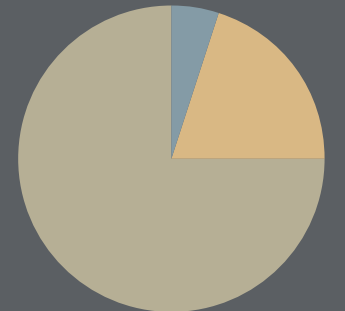
REVENUE



62.75%	Unrestricted donations	\$455,088.78
31.23%	Restricted donations	\$226,503.42
6.02%	Miscellaneous	\$43,604.88

TOTAL REVENUE **\$725,197.08**

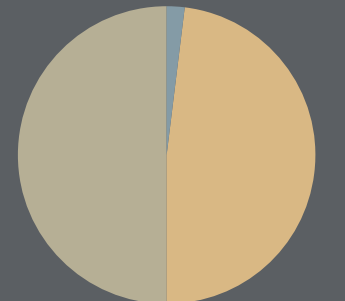
EXPENSES



75.22%	Programs	\$672,822.15
19.48%	Management/General	\$174,292.58
5.3%	Fundraising	\$47,482.08

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$894,596.81**

PROGRAMS EXPENSES BREAKDOWN



51.24%	Education Outreach	\$344,752.73
47.46%	Conservation	\$319,338.60
1.3%	Applied Research	\$8,730.82

TOTAL PROGRAMS EXPENSES **\$672,822.15**

Platinum Transparency 2024

Candid.

Complete financial reports are available upon request. Snow Leopard Conservancy is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization #61-1614981



SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVANCY

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