


## OUR MISSION


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




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# 2021 IMPACT REPORT

## U.S. HEADQUARTERS STAFF & CONSULTANTS

Kathleen Ah San - *Accounts and Office Administrator*  
Charleen Gavette - *Conservation & Education Program Manager*  
Darla Hillard - *Land of Snow Leopard Network Facilitator*  
Rodney Jackson, PhD - *Founder & Executive Director*  
Shavaun Kidd - *Outreach Manager & Conservation Educator*  
Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson - *Executive Vice President*  
Brian Peniston - *Nepal Program Director*  
Joyce Robinson - *Administrative Assistant*

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Charlotte Hacker, PhD - *Research Biologist, Department of the Interior U.S.*  
Jonathan Hanson, PhD - *Social Science Associate*  
Jan Janečka, PhD - *Director of SLC's Genetics Research Program, Duquesne University*

## ADVISORS

Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten, PhD - *IUCN Cat Specialist Group*  
Renee Bumpus - *Conservation Manager, Houston Zoo*  
Don Hunter, PhD - *Founder, Rocky Mountain Cat Conservancy*  
Kristin Nowell - *Director, Cat Action Treasury*  
Barb Palmer - *Husbandry Advisor*  
Camille Richard - *Rangeland Ecologist*  
George Schaller, PhD - *Wildlife Biologist & Conservationist*  
Mike Weddle - *Former Science Instructor*

## U.S. BASED PARTNERS

International Veterinary Outreach  
RESOLVE  
Rocky Mountain Cat Conservancy  
Sacramento Zoo  
San Francisco Zoo and Gardens  
Sedgwick County Zoo  
Wildlife Conservation Network  
Worldwide Indigenous Science Network

## RANGE COUNTRY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

### Altai & Buryat Republics of Russia

Baikal Buryat Center for Indigenous Cultures  
Foundation for Sustainable Development of Altai

### Bhutan

Bhutan Foundation  
Jigme Dorji National Park

### India

Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust

### Kyrgyzstan

Rural Development Fund  
Taalim-Forum Public Foundation

### Mongolia

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

### Nepal

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation  
National Trust for Nature Conservation, Annapurna Conservation Area Project  
Mountain Spirit  
Teku Samuha Nepal  
World Wildlife Fund Nepal

### Pakistan

Baltistan Wildlife Conservation & Development Organization,  
Project Snow Leopard

### Rangewide

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

### Tajikistan

Public Organization "Kuhhoi Pomir" (Pamir Mountains)

# Transforming a Better Future

## FOR THE GUARDIANS OF THE ASIAN HIGH MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEM



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Dear Friends,

Reflecting on 2021, we are truly thankful for your support and opportunity to again reconnect in person with some of you. We feel deeply inspired by the compassion, altruism, and generosity you have shown for protecting snow leopards.

We hope you are also moved by the commitment and human spirit embodied in our 2021 Impact Report, made possible by your generous gifts and our incredible partners in Asia, which are turning our collective vision of human-wildlife coexistence into a reality.

The lives of snow leopards, wolves, and livestock are being saved by Foxlights in Mongolia and livestock-safe corrals in Pakistan, avoiding harmful human-wildlife conflict and protecting herders' vital livelihood.

In the rapidly changing Nepalese Himalaya, community-led initiatives catalyzed by mobilizers and entrepreneurs are building local pride and advocacy for conservation and sustainability while preserving unique cultures and traditions.

Land of Snow Leopard Network is reinvigorating the power of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the Sacred Snow Leopard in Central and Inner Asia, emphasizing the importance of spirituality and culture in conservation globally.

Schoolchildren in Pakistan, Mongolia, and Nepal are demonstrating their dedication as advocates for snow leopards and their protection during Snow Leopard Day Festivals, with the energetic spirit of this next generation inspiring us that we are on the right path toward restoring the life-sustaining relationship and dependence with our amazing planet and its interconnected web of life.

We cannot thank you enough for your important role in making these achievements possible. Last year's successes leave us in a stronger position and better able to deal with rapidly emerging global threats.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Rodney Jackson, PhD  
Founder & Executive Director

Ashleigh Lutz-Nelson  
Executive Vice President

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



Wildlife Conservation Network

CAROLINE GABEL  
KENNETH & GABRIELLE ADELMAN FUND  
DR. BURT ADELMAN & LYDIA ROGERS

# 2021 AT A GLANCE

## SNOW LEOPARD RANGE



**12**  
NUMBER OF RANGE COUNTRIES WHERE SNOW LEOPARDS ARE PRESENT

**8**  
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHERE SLC HAS SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVATION PROJECTS

**4,000-7,000**  
NUMBER OF SNOW LEOPARDS ALIVE TODAY (RED-LIST VULNERABLE)

### ESTIMATED SNOW LEOPARD POPULATION BY COUNTRY

<b>50-200</b> AFGHANISTAN	<b>800-1,100</b> MONGOLIA*
<b>80-100</b> BHUTAN*	<b>300-400</b> NEPAL*
<b>4,500</b> CHINA*	<b>250-420</b> PAKISTAN*
<b>500</b> INDIA	<b>70-90</b> RUSSIAN FEDERATION*
<b>100</b> KAZAKHSTAN	<b>260</b> TAJIKISTAN*
<b>300-400</b> KYRGYZSTAN*	<b>30-120</b> UZBEKISTAN

\*COUNTRIES WHERE SLC HAS CONSERVATION PROJECTS

## TOP THREATS TO SNOW LEOPARDS



## SLC CONSERVATION PROJECTS

**5,250**  
HERDING COMMUNITY MEMBERS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN LIVESTOCK AND SNOW LEOPARD PROTECTIVE MEASURES

**67**  
MEN AND WOMEN WERE EMPLOYED IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN 6 SNOW LEOPARD RANGE COUNTRIES

**70**  
MORE FOXLIGHTS DISTRIBUTED

## SLC EDUCATION PROJECTS

**67** SCHOOLS ENGAGED WITH **3,000** STUDENTS AND **100** TEACHERS

**7,000**  
SNOW LEOPARD DAY FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS

**5,550**  
ADDITIONAL LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED WITH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

**10**  
RANGERS TRAINED

**36**  
SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVATION RADIO EPISODES AIRED IN NEPAL

## SLC IS LED BY OUR 6 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

# In the Land of the Most Elusive Cat

ENSURING SNOW LEOPARDS CONTINUE TO REIGN OVER THE MOUNTAINS



Left: Zhaparkul Raymbekov, LOSL Sacred Site Guardian and Giver of Blessings. Center: Camera trap image of mother and cubs, Baltistan Wildlife Conservation and Development Organization, Pakistan. Right: Rinzin Phunjok Lama.

**S**now Leopard Conservancy believes the key to saving snow leopards is connecting with mountain communities that share their land. We work closely with people of all ages who will be the foundation for lasting conservation, providing environmental education, knowledge on pasture and herd management, and tools that protect both livestock and predators. Spanning the gap between past and present, we also reconnect people with the profound spiritual and cultural importance snow leopards have historically borne in many countries. Finally, the Conservancy is deeply committed to mentoring individuals, creating a new generation of wildlife champions.

## RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH EDUCATION

The Conservancy has always placed high value on education,

a major focus of many of our projects. Through our partners, we provide conservation/environmental education to children, adults, parents, community members, herders, local and governmental officials, and rural and urban dwellers. We use school textbook curriculum, traveling interactive courses and materials, community festivals, magazines, social and traditional media, and artistic media. The guiding principle is that you will not care about that which you do not know.

## SNOW LEOPARD AS TOTEM ANIMAL

The Conservancy proudly sponsors the wonderful Land of Snow Leopard (LOSL) network, winner of this year's Disney Conservation Hero Award, for its dedicated work. The award acknowledged the Network's

commitment to save wildlife, protect habitats, and inspire communities to take part in conservation efforts. LOSL's Indigenous Cultural Practitioners, spiritual leaders, and keepers of Traditional Ecological Knowledge bring communities together to further snow leopard conservation while preserving unique, traditional cultures. Reviving indigenous cultural practices and attitudes toward sacred species is seen by the LOSL's members as crucial to preserving our planet.

## MENTORING NEW CONSERVATIONISTS

Knowing that the best path forward is to foster the ability for those living in snow leopard countries to take the helm of conserving biodiversity, the Conservancy invests in passionate individuals working to safeguard their lands. We help

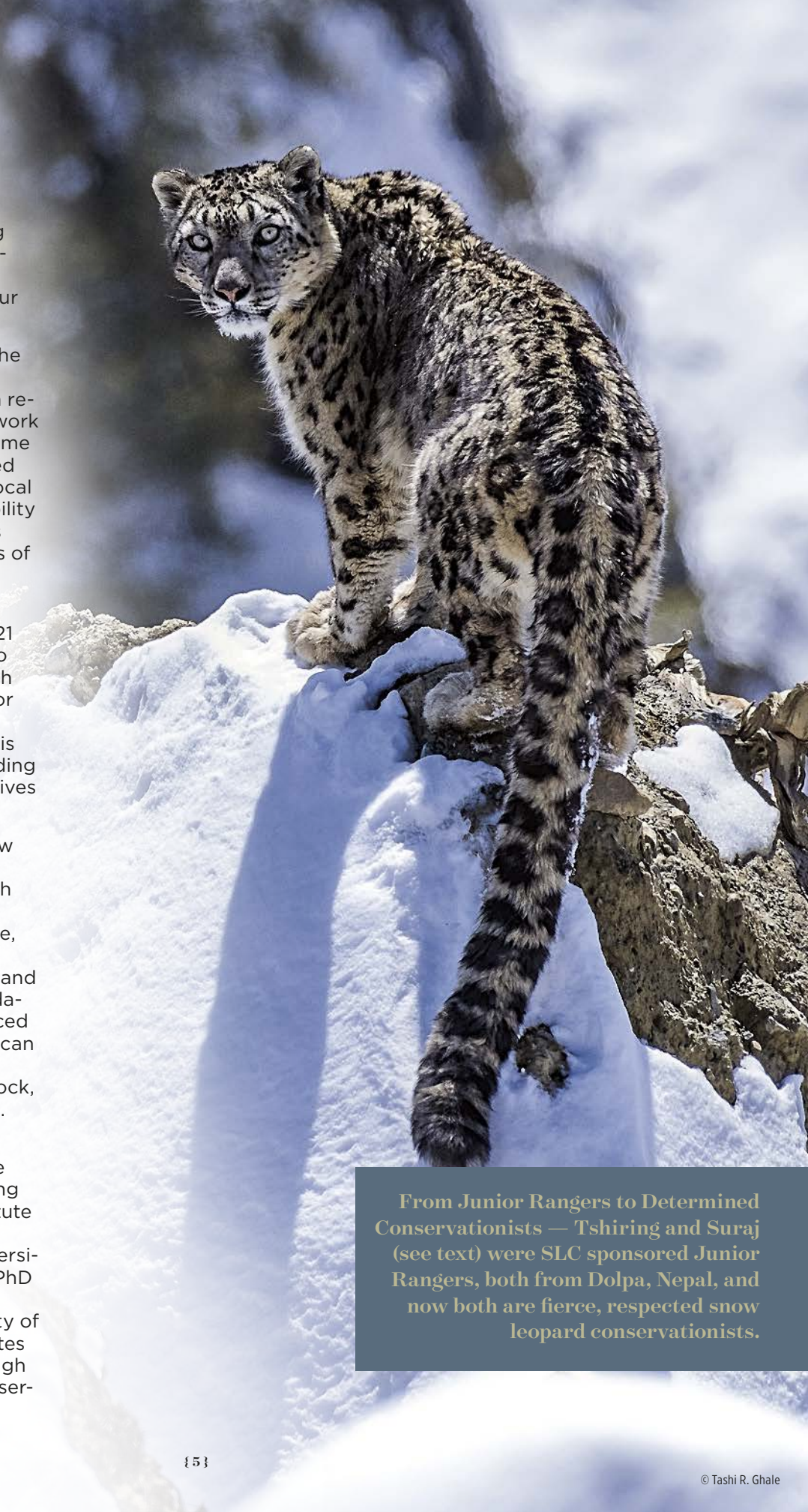
sharpen their skills, offer training opportunities, and develop pathways for effective conservation through idea sharing. Some of our mentees include:

**Rinzin Phunjok Lama** received the Rolex Award for Enterprise, the same award Dr. Rodney Jackson received 40 years ago for similar work tracking snow leopards in the same region. Rinzin's community-based conservation philosophy gives local people the power and responsibility to problem solve and challenges them to become better stewards of farmed lands and wilderness.

**Tashi Ghale**, a 2018 Disney Conservation Hero recipient and 2021 Business 360 "Top 100 People to Watch," has been associated with us since 2005. We thank Tashi for his tireless monitoring of snow leopards in Nepal and through his magnificent photography, providing connection and insight into the lives of elusive Nepali fauna.

**Tshiring Lama** is founder of Snow Leopard Journeys, a Dolpa, Nepal-based trekking company with objectives of protecting snow leopards, preserving local culture, and creating job opportunities. After witnessing the prevalence and severity of the local human-predator conflict, Tshiring was convinced that snow leopard conservation can happen only by helping herding communities protect their livestock, thereby changing their attitudes.

**Suraj Upadhaya** dreamt of becoming a forest ranger. He made that dream come true, completing undergraduate work at the Institute of Forestry, Nepal, receiving a Master of Science from the University of Kentucky, and earning his PhD from Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of Georgia. Suraj actively participates in protecting the Himalaya through his organization, Himalayan Conservation and Research Institute. ●



From Junior Rangers to Determined Conservationists — Tshiring and Suraj (see text) were SLC sponsored Junior Rangers, both from Dolpa, Nepal, and now both are fierce, respected snow leopard conservationists.

# Living with Leopards

PROVIDING COMMUNITIES TOOLS TO  
COEXIST WITH CARNIVORES



Snow Leopard Conservancy creates solutions for harmonizing snow leopards and people to lessen conflict and to ease the land.

Below, top: Learning to install and maintain Foxlights in Dolpo, Nepal.  
Bottom: Livestock-safe corral in Pakistan.

## LIGHTS SAVING LIVES

Snow Leopard Conservancy has distributed hundreds of Foxlights® night predator deterrents that are designed to discourage carnivores from approaching livestock. The solar-powered lights, placed at nighttime corrals or herd locations, randomly flash, mimicking human presence and redirecting the snow leopard or wolf away from villages. These Foxlights are in use in Bhutan, China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, and Tajikistan.

## KEEPING BOTH LIVESTOCK AND SNOW LEOPARDS SAFE

The only surefire way to keep livestock safe is to physically prevent carnivores from coming into contact with the herd. Livestock-safe corrals are built with sturdy walls and strong roofs to defend against predators. This is especially important for snow leopards as once inside a corral they tend to frantically kill all moving livestock, often remaining in the corral, which makes them susceptible to being killed in retaliation or to prevent future attacks. While corral construction has been cost prohibitive for many herding communities, the Conservancy is trialing a style in Pakistan that has shown to be economical yet capable. If effective, we will expand construction with our partners.

## IDENTIFYING FLASHPOINTS FOR POACHING

Long standing partner Dr. Bariushaa Munkhtsog completed an extensive survey of snow leopard poaching over the past century in Mongolia. Dr. Munkhtsog found no poaching in the past 25 years in the western provinces where herder engagement had occurred. Yet, there are poaching hotspots in southwest Mongolia, directing us to operate projects in the region.

## LIVELIHOODS IN PLACE OF LIVESTOCK

The three-year Darwin Initiative (DI) grant from the United Kingdom government is given to protect biodiversity and the natural environment. The Conservancy won this generous grant to work in Nepal on sustaining snow leopard conservation with new revenue-generating livelihoods that ease pressure on the ecosystem by lessening dependence on livestock as an income source. In 2021, the Initiative included vocational training

in the valleys with snow leopard populations. With tourism on pause due to the pandemic, training was adapted to include plumbing/water system maintenance, culinary skills, wildlife sign and field survey techniques, and preliminary steps to implement cultivation and marketing of a local herb, jimbu, which the community identified as a desired trade.

## INNOVATION INTO ACTION

In order to keep snow leopards, wildlife, and domestic animals safe, the Conservancy is collaborating with researchers to discover new techniques in the fields of genetics, artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned aerial vehicles, and climate and migratory corridor modeling using geographic information systems (GIS). Drones are being used to conduct snow leopard prey counts, and AI is being used to detect wildlife. We are creating

a new technology that will play adverse audio stimuli upon detecting a snow leopard to deter potential conflict. Genetics offers new insights into snow leopard behavior, including determining the proportion of livestock in their diet and physiological adaptations such as how they can live at high altitudes with low oxygen. ●



# The Power of Connection

HOW EDUCATION IS SAVING CATS



The International Snow Leopard Day Festival celebration in Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan, included a special community clean up where school children used their new eco-friendly bags in place of plastic bags, now banned in the district thanks to environmental advocacy.

Snow Leopard Conservancy is dedicated to providing a variety of interactive educational opportunities across all age ranges in the communities where we are active.

## CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL SNOW LEOPARD DAY

Partners in Mongolia, Nepal, and Pakistan commemorated Snow Leopard Day, October 23, by engaging schoolchildren in contests of artwork, poetry, essays, plays, and speeches leading up to the festivals. The winners and runners-up performed or displayed their talents during the ceremonies where community members, parents, teachers, local and regional dignitaries, and government officials attended the celebrations. These events

were a wonderful way to impart knowledge and conservation concepts to all members of the community. They demonstrated everyday actions they can perform to make a difference.

## SCHOOLCHILDREN LIGHT THE FUTURE

Children can be remarkable teachers as well as learners. We have found, when given knowledge about snow leopards, they often spread that knowledge to parents, friends, and community. The students also become advocates as they continue their education and take their place in society, sometimes going on to be conservationists themselves. The Conservancy supports environmental education programs for grade school

children in Nepal, Mongolia, and Pakistan that focus on the biodiversity of plant and animal life of the high mountain ecosystem.

Nepali partner, Anil Adhikari, noted the lack of snow leopard conservation and ecosystem information in the traditional school curriculum. Consequently, he developed, edited, tested, and published two reference textbooks for grades 7 and 8. These books form the basis for a solid conservation education with the second book building on the first. Endorsed and published by the Nepal Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, they are in use at 11 schools in Mustang and Taplejung with more planning to participate next year.

Snow Leopard Conservancy sponsored the environmental education of 3,000 children at 45 schools in 2021 and reached 5,500 community members with the message of hope for the future.

The award-winning, Mongolian-based, Nomadic Nature Trunks traveling environmental education program continues to expand annually. Land of Snow Leopard Network asked that the program be introduced in each of its regions of Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Altai and Buryat Republics of Russia. So, this past year, country coordinators received a trunk, complete with education materials, and teacher training videos as in-person training was prohibited due to coronavirus.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Conservancy participated in several outreach activities this year beginning with the Wildlife Conservation Network's Spring and Fall Expos. These events allow us to connect with other conservationists, wildlife lovers, and supporters. In the fall, we were joined by Maria Azhunova of the Buryat Republic, Russia, and Rinzin Phunjok Lama of Nepal. They were able to relate their unique perspectives on snow leopard conservation sharing a common pathway to biodiversity sustainability — empowering traditional voices and community-led conservation initiatives.

The virtual series *Conservation Cat Chats*, featuring partners and collaborators, shared experiences and insights on diverse topics surrounding snow leopards and their protection. Zoos hosted events to raise awareness about snow leopards and funds for Conservancy initiatives that protect this threatened feline in the wild. ●

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2021 ARTWORK & POETRY CONTEST WINNERS



SNOW LEOPARD ON THE MOUNTAIN BY FENG YANG



MOUNTAIN GHOST BY DEBBIE MORRIS



SAFE AND SOUND BY EKATERINA DROZHDINA



FAMILY OUR GREATEST STRENGTH BY PATRICIA VEGA GARRIDO

### ARTWORK WINNERS

Feng Yang  
Debbie Morris  
Richard MacWee  
Ekaterina Drozhdina  
Patricia Vega Garrido  
Kateryna Bielikova  
Susanne Fumelli  
Parag Chettri  
Xenia Turkish  
Sophia Kasimova  
Sara Campos  
Judith Voce  
Tana Hakanson  
Lucia Schenk

### POETRY WINNERS

Debi Lockhurst  
Genevieve Brayley  
Margarita Khrustaleva  
Tereza Schenk  
Anna Carrino  
Charith Pelpola  
(In memoriam)  
Anne Curtis  
Becky Norman  
Martin Forey  
Sandra McEwen  
Daniel Burton  
Emma Lee

# FINANCIAL REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR ENDING 2021

We are so thankful for what we accomplished together in 2021!

## Our Goals for 2022:

Save more snow leopards and wolves by alleviating human-wildlife conflict

Launch One Health initiative aimed to improve animal and public health with veterinary training

Expand opportunities for the involvement of women and girls in snow leopard conservation

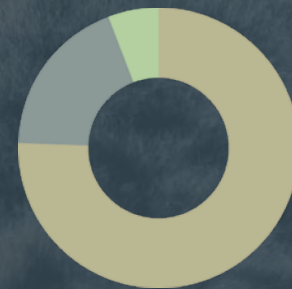
Increase educational opportunities to learn about biodiversity conservation for individuals of all ages, especially schoolchildren

Facilitate community knowledge exchanges to expand conservation impact from local to landscape level



### REVENUE

<b>63.33%</b> Unrestricted donations	\$496,383.36
<b>36.05%</b> Restricted donations	\$282,600.57
<b>0.62%</b> Miscellaneous donations	\$4,847.04
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$783,830.97</b>



### EXPENSES

<b>75.63%</b> Programs	\$435,864.28
<b>18.67%</b> Management/General	\$107,610.49
<b>5.70%</b> Fundraising	\$32,863.90
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$576,338.67</b>



### PROGRAMS EXPENSES BREAKDOWN

<b>52.62%</b> Conservation	\$229,363.21
<b>42.72%</b> Education Outreach	\$186,217.97
<b>4.65%</b> Applied Research	\$20,283.10
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMS EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$435,864.28</b>

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

