Protect, Conserve, Inspire
www.maraelephantproject.org

Helicopter Protecting Elephants

Mara Elephant Project (MEP) has been on the front line to protect elephants in the Maasai Mara region in Kenya, East Africa. Poaching has hit elephants hard over the last 5 years. In response, MEP has deployed 30 highly trained rangers who, with intel, rapid response, and patrol teams have brought poaching down dramatically with our partner, the Kenya Wildlife Service. Our work for elephants is effective and readily scaled-up across the elephant landscape. Though there has been a drop in elephant deaths, we are seeing an increase of deaths as a result of Human-Elephant Conflict.

Mara Elephant Deaths

Year	H/E Conflict	Natural	PAC	Poached	Unknown	Grand Total	PIKE
2010	2	3		21	5	31	74%
2011	9	8	1	30	19	67	58%
2012	6	8		96	12	122	83%
2013		8	1	61	14	84	76%
2014	9	11		53	12	85	73%
2015	15	8	0	12	11	46	59%

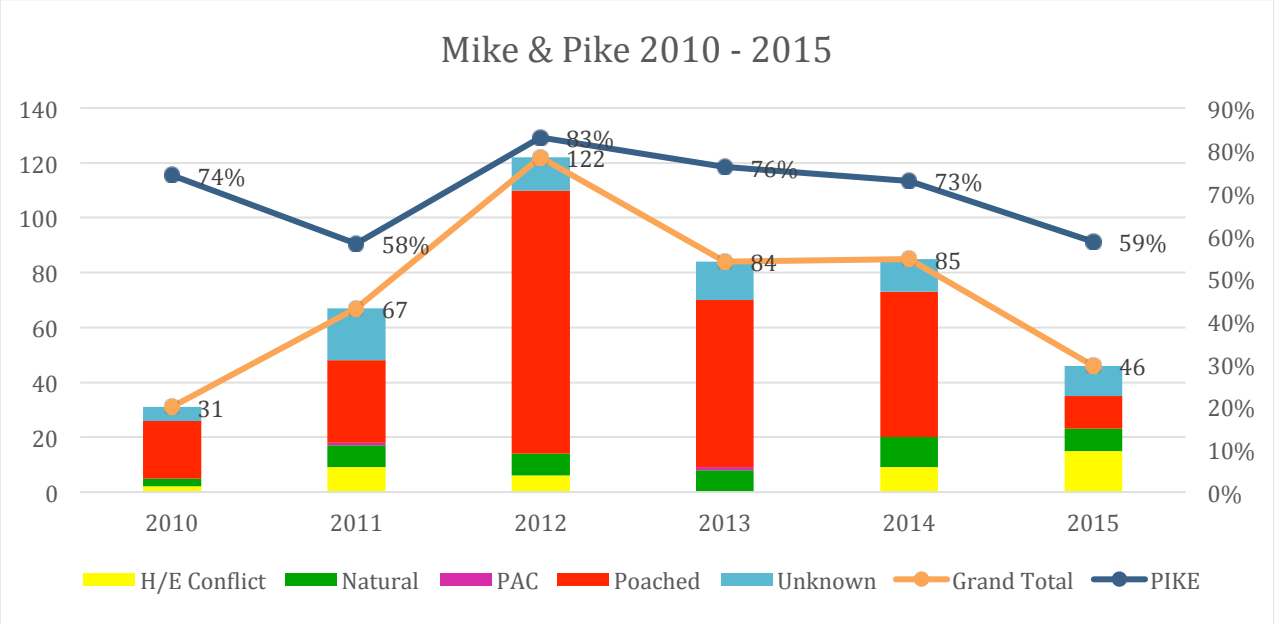

Figure of Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) data in the Maasai Mara indicates a reduction in Percentage of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE) of 34% from 2012 to 2015.

Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) ToolKit – To reduce the number of elephants killed or injured by farmers protecting their crops, MEP rangers work with local communities to employ an 'HEC Toolkit' such as building chili powder fences around crops and using small drones, big lights, and firecrackers to discourage elephants from entering and out of farms. And at times the only and most effective method for pushing stubborn elephants out of and away from farms is herding the elephants out using a well-flown helicopter.

The Karen Blixen Camp (KBC) Helicopter – Karen Blixen Camp owner Karsten Ree supported the MEP CEO, Marc Goss, to complete his Helicopter Pilot License in 2015. MEP now has access to the helicopter for HEC, anti-poaching, and security missions in the Maasai Mara.

The Rapid Response Team "RRT" provides critical support to patrol teams. The helicopter is part of the RRT Standby Team that reacts at a moment's notice to patrol team reports and intelligence reports.

This year so far the helicopter has enabled MEP to rapidly respond to situations that would take hours to reach by road. We have flown 19 flights to chase elephants out of farms and conflict areas, 14 security flights deploying rangers-searching for poachers, and ferrying supplies, 11 flights to monitor elephants, and 3 Emergency Medical Service MS flights. A total of 85 hours.

Our Request – In 2016, MEP needs to raise funds to keep the helicopter flying which costs $300 per hour for fuel and essential servicing. In order to do this, we need to raise $70,000 this year for 200 hours of flying and to build a hanger costing $10,000. If you would like to make a donation from the United States of America our umbrella organization the **ESCAPE Foundation** has 501(c)3 status. Our Kenya Trust is also able to receive donations. 100% of your donation will be allocated to helicopter time or to the hanger. To visit MEP virtually please visit our website at www.maraelephantproject.org. To physically visit MEP we can provide a list of camps in our area and you can visit us in person at our private HQ. With any donations received we will send you a monthly helicopter report written by the CEO detailing each mission flown.

Elephants were crop raiding at the Kirakor farm on the border of Mara North Conservancy. The helicopter was very effective in guiding them to safety. At dusk we turned on the powerful landing lights and they helped as well.

When the Marsh Pride lions were poisoned we were able to ferry the Kenya Wildlife Service vet to the scene. All the rivers were swollen and he was not able to reach the site. While MEP focuses on elephants as a keystone species, we aim to do this in a way that protect and conserves all wildlife.