MEP October 2017 Report

mara elephant project

Collared elephant, Chelsea, in Olkinyei.

General:

The Mara has had several heavy rains turning the area green but unfortunately, the grass is still very short. MEP is working on getting a weather station at HQ so that we can record more accurate weather information. This month we have been reacting to a number of security incidents in Loita, Mau and the Mara. The MEP intelligence team had a notable success when they led a Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) ranger unit to arrest two suspects with 40 kg of ivory in Meru. This has been the second arrest in the last three months outside Narok County. We have been assisting our partners KWS, Narok County Government (NCG) and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to bring a serious logging issue to light in the Mau Forest. We've provided intelligence gathered through aerial reconnaissance and submitted a report to the relevant people in each organization.

Fundraising:
ESCAPE Foundation Executive Director Brian Kearney-Grieve got a written pledge from Christopher Parker from Oak Foundation for core operational costs. This is fantastic news and we will be presenting the full proposal before the end of November. We're also thrilled Margy McCormick has pledged to support an elephant collar and all activities to protect this elephant and their herd for the next three years.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs):
On the 23rd of October, we received a no objection response letter to the KCAA application for the C.E.O. to operate two Mavic Pro UAVs. The last few items we need to complete is clearance from agencies in our areas of operation and updated dates of operation. This means that we are now able to continue with the UAV program to chivy elephants out of conflict.

Research:
Jake Wall from Save the Elephants and Vulcan came to visit MEP for 12 days this month which was very productive. During this time, we achieved the bulk of our agenda and agreed on items to continue to work on. One immediate exciting development is that MEP and Mara Conservancy will have its own DAS chapter. This means we will be able to populate the system with MEP data directly and get automated reports from our efforts. The C.E.O. requested that Jake be the Chairman of the MEP Science Board.

Partnership Development:
Chris Doehring and Jake Wall agreed to partner with us to set up DAS. This will happen in the next several weeks.

Trey Freshened who manages our Special Projects attended a drone training course with Brian Kearney-Grieve in Virginia with Expert Drones who MEP plans to partner with to develop the UAV project.

Security:
The same gang that we recently reported had robbed Mararienta and shot the policeman in Aitong hit another four times in the last month. This level of activity, and the inability to catch them, is totally unacceptable and MEP will re-deploy our intelligence network to help. As one of the stakeholders in the Mara, MEP takes this issue seriously. Below is a table outlining their activities.

Dates	Location	No of people	Notes
31/9/2017	Laila	3	No clear report of what the thieves stole in the center. Three people armed with AK47 Riffle hijack a matatu from Mulot to Laila.
18/10/2017	Aitong /Oloosokon	3	Three people armed with an AK 47 rifle hijack a motorbike belongs to Kuseyo Kisharu and took a motorbike, two phones and 218,000 ksh. Motorbike later found in Oloosokon bush.
25/10/2017	Endoinyio Erinka	Unknown	Motorbike stolen in endoinyio erinka
28/10/2017	Aitong center	3	Three people armed with AK 47 rifle and a pistol robbed Noor shop and managed to take Ksh240,000.

We sent the rapid response unit back into the Mau Forest and they have recorded a lot of human activity, including illegal logging, inside the forest and HEC with surrounding farmers. They followed a bull herd and a family group looking for collaring candidates.

On the 16th we responded to shots fired in Loita with a small armed team from KWS. They interviewed many herders in the forest and patrolled the areas where the shots came from.

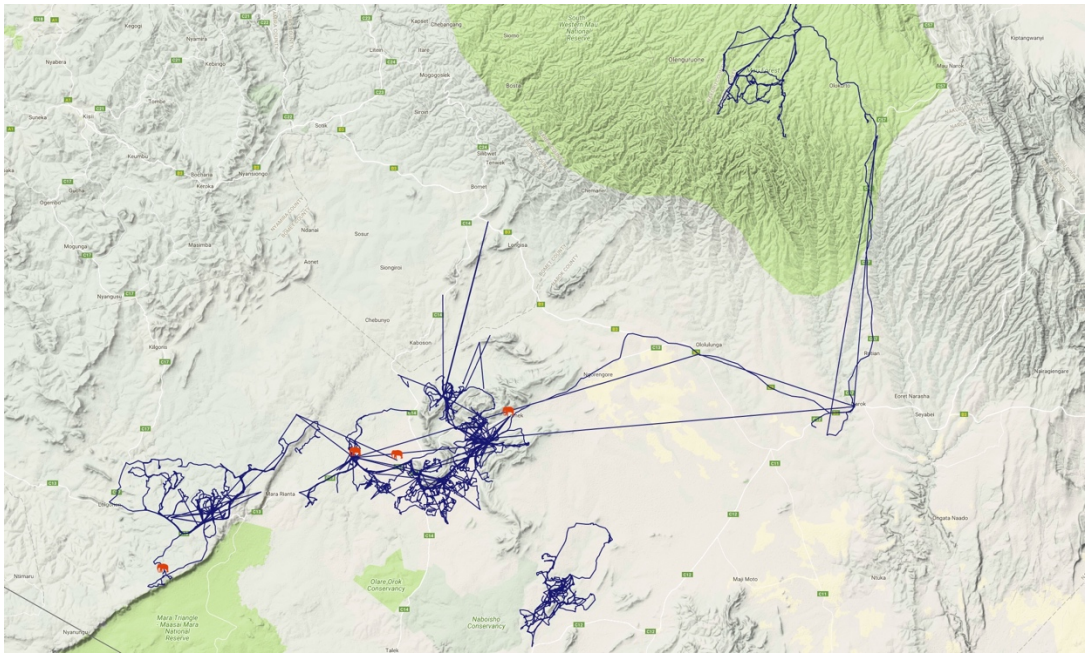
From the 11th to the 17th we joined and provided aerial support to a joint operation in the Nyekweri Forest to stop illegal charcoal burning operations. We were successful with 27 suspects arrested.

Incidents sitrep

Dead elephant on: 11/10/2017.	A dead elephant was found in Mara North Conservancy; the carcass was reported by MEP HQ team. The cause of death considered as human - elephant conflict, the raw cause was arrow wound. Elephant known as Courtney was one of Mara Elephant Project's most recent collared elephants. She was collared on October 29, 2016 in Olonkolin after she was found wounded by 11 arrows. She was in a harrowing attack by farmers after she and her herd had been actively crop raiding. Tusks were recovered and handed over to the KWS Ewuaso Ngiro station. Mike file number 20/17.
Ivory recovered and arrest: 22/10/17.	Two suspects arrested in Meru town by the KWS rangers on MEP intel, with 40 kg ivory. Suspect taken to Meru police station and booked.

Ivory recovered in Meru

Patrol Report:



All MEP ground patrol tracks for October generated by WILD.

Rangers patrol report	Kawai	HQ	Munyas	Enkutoto	Olkinyei	Mobile team	Totals
Hours on patrol per month	219:45:00	63:55:00	121:29:01	115:24:00	112:58:00	133:34:00	
Distance walked per month (Foot)	56.8	10.7	84.4	355.9	123.3	69.8	700.9
NO. of target points visited per month	3	1	4	3	6	2	19
No. of elephants sighted per month	283	139	87	245	505	84	1343
Days of WILD data submitted	23	25	16	29	29	16	138
Days of WILD data Missing	7	5	14	1	1	14	42
No. of qualities photos submitted	3	8	6	5	23	1	46
No. of incident per month	1	0	4	0	2	2	9
HEC	2	0	0	1	0	0	3
POACHING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ANIMAL MORTALITY	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
PROPERTY DESTRUCTION	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
ILLEGAL HUMAN ACTIVITIES	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
No. of poachers caught per month	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No. of snares recovered per month	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All issued equipment present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	0
Condition of equipment	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
Distance covered by vehicle	397.5	390.6	210.4	0	177.7	644.8	
Distance covered by motorbike	0	_	6.4	76.9	61.2	_	
Vehicle breakages during the month	Service next month, coil spring replace.	Welding and front main spring bushes repair.		_	_	Injector pump calibration and clutch plate.	_

Motorbike breakages during the month	_	_	_	KMDN 034W good condition	Kmdn052W Good condition.		_

The above table is constructed from data in the WILD app which has been manually compiled by Tracking Manager Wilson Sairowua. We are still having issues with WILD not being able to export tracks and tabulate patrol data; however, we can still better rate ranger teams and keep on top of their movements so we still find WILD useful operationally. We are looking at options to collect ranger data which goes strait onto DAS using Garmin InReach devices and then generate reports from our data.

HEC:

This month we only experienced a few HEC incidents. These were related to elephants in settlements, crop raiding recently planted maize farms, and disturbing livestock herds.

DATES	SECTOR NAME	CROPS	ACTION/OPERATION DETAILS	MEANS
04/10/2017	Munyas	Maize farms	Push elephants out of maize farm	by use of car& firecrackers
08/10/2016	Munyas	settlement	Push elephants out of farms	by use of car& firecrackers
08/10/2017	Kaawai	maize farms	Push elephants to Nyakweri forest	by use of car& firecrackers
09/10/2017	Isokon	maize farms	Move elephants down the escarpment	by use of car& firecrackers
14/10/2017	Munyas	maize farms	Move elephants out of maize farms	by use of car& firecrackers
17/10/2017	Endoinyio Narasha	settlement	moved big herd to Olkinyei conservancy after breaking school fence	By use of car
18/10/2017	Ngosuani	maize farms	Move elephants out of fences	By use of car
21/10/2017	Endoinyio Narasha	Settlement	Move elephants away from the Settlement	Helicopter
26/10/2017	Lemek	Maize farms	Push elephants back to safe area from settlement	By use of car
27/08/2017	Ngosuani	Maize farms	Move elephants out of fences	By use of car

Meetings:

Jake Wall and Nic Elliot from the Mara Lion Project met at the predator hub on the 24th to discuss a scientific collaboration.

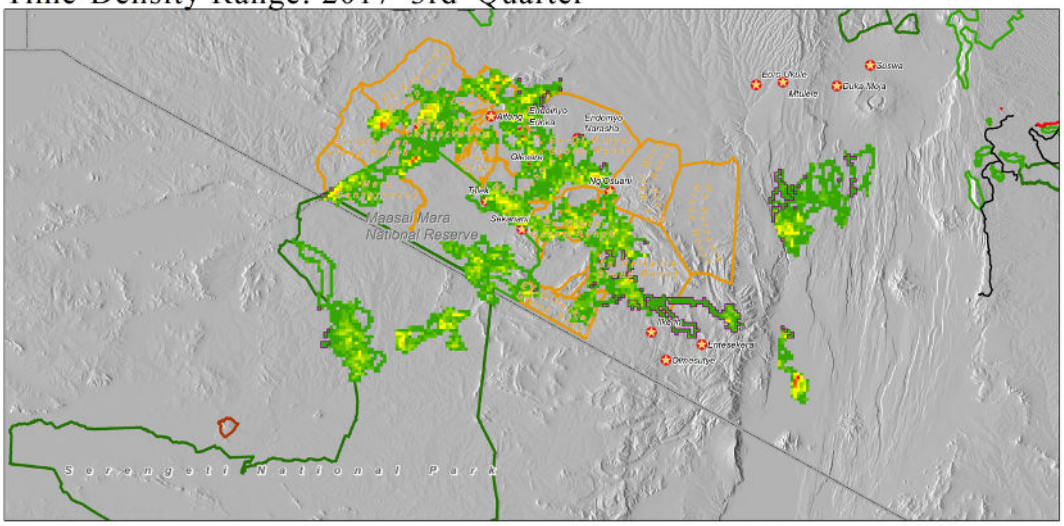
The C.E.O. attended the Elephant Conservation and Management Strategy (2012-2021) Central Rift Committee meeting in Nakuru on the 30th of October. The strategy review was presented and all the partners have a lot to do.

On the 14th Wilson hosted a training course at MEP HQ for the management of MNC, Olchoro, and Naboisho on the WILD app.

Elephant Tracking:

KWS gave us permission to collar two elephants in the Mau Forest. As mentioned in the incidents situation report we lost elephant Courtney. We have not been able to monitor all the elephants by air this month but we did visit a few during other operations. This month we are presenting the 3rd quarter SARF analysis. One notable movement was Chiri who had a 40% increase in range last quarter when she went to Loita and then back to Siana.

Time-Density Range: 2017_3rd_Quarter



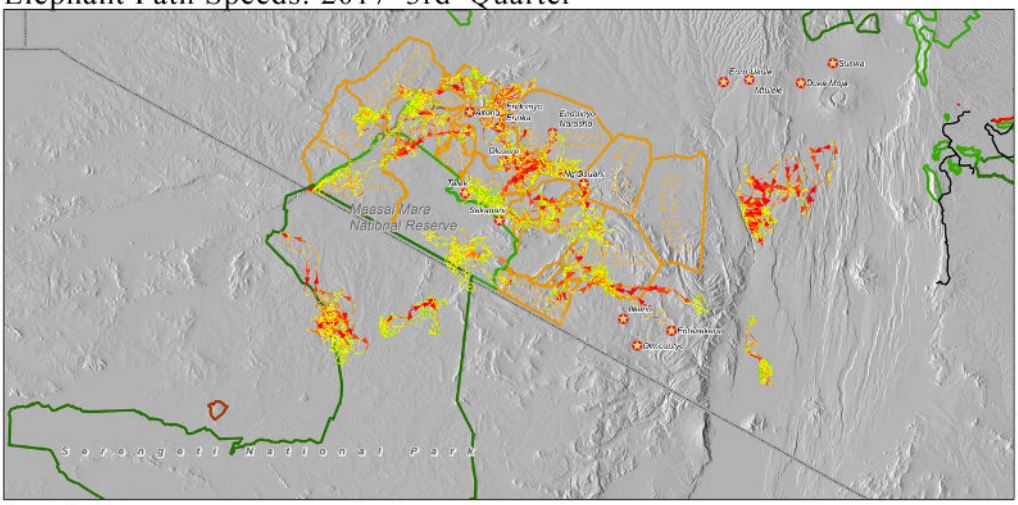
Legend

Range Increase Grid	0.01089-0.01634	0.0497-0.06876
0-0.00204	0.01634-0.02383	0.06876-0.10825
0.00204-0.00613	0.02383-0.03404	0.10825-0.17361
0.00613-0.01089	0.03404-0.0497	

0 5 10 20 30 40 Kilometers

Data: Save The Elephants
Map Created by Jake Wall
UTM Projection
Zone 37N WGS84

Elephant Path Speeds: 2017_3rd_Quarter



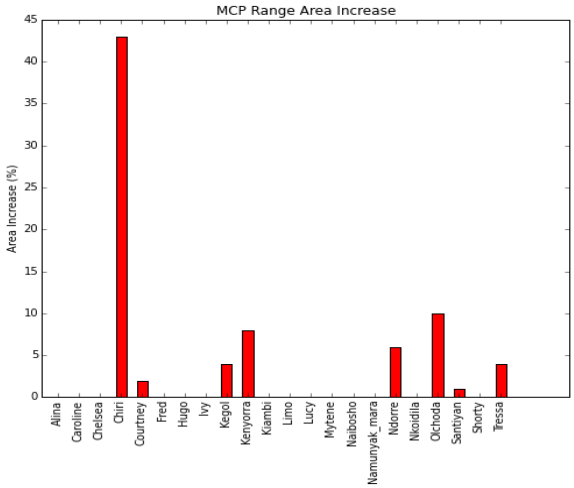
Legend

Speeds

SpeedKmHr		
0.0006	0.2572	1.4206
0.1116	0.4447	1.9717
	0.6881	2.7709
	1.0037	5.9093

0 5 10 20 30 40 Kilometers

Data: Save The Elephants
Map Created by Jake Wall
UTM Projection
Zone 37N WGS84



Helicopter:

This month the KWS has requested and funded patrol flights and support missions to the Mau and Loita areas.

Date	Justification
10/04/2017	To Nairobi for CoA inspection
10/04/2017	Test flight for CoA
10/09/2017	Return to Mara
10/10/2017	Mau Recce with Ekiru
10/11/2017	Trip to Narok Return for firearms license
10/12/2017	Mau Recce with KWS
10/12/2017	Loita Recce with KWS
10/13/2017	Mau Recce with Narok County Government
10/14/2017	Lolgorian joint operation support and check Hangzhou
10/16/2017	Rapid response to gunshots in Loita, Ferry KWS rangers to Loita
10/18/2017	To Nairobi for Firearms renewal via Ololunga
10/19/2017	Return Mara Via Mosiro to check Santiyan
10/21/2017	Retrieve Loita KWS rangers from Siana and refuel.
10/21/2017	Chivi elephant Limo from Odonyo Narasha Center
10/22/2017	Check farming status in Emarti Area
10/23/2017	Mau response to gunshots in Olengurone. Meet up with Mau team
10/24/2017	Looking for Mara Lion project collar which dropped off in Naikara
10/24/2017	HEC near Ngoswani center and check Olchoda
10/29/2017	DAS meeting with Brian Heath and monitoring. Hugo, Fred, Kegol.
10/30/2017	Flight to Nakuru for provincial committee meeting of the KWS Elephant Strategy
10/30/2017	Nakuru to Meru via Nanyuki

One of the landing zones in the Loita Forest when interviewing herders.