Protecting elephants to conserve the greater Mara ecosystem
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MEP September 2018 Report

The Mara has continued to dry up in the last month, but we expect rain in October. The main migration did not move as far north as usual this year which can be attributed to the recent heavy rains in Tanzania and the abundance of grass resources in the south.

A highlight for this month was the work MEP did with Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) in the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania. We collared a total of 13 elephants between September 4 and 11 to start to understand how elephants move inside this huge ecosystem. In addition to this main goal, it was also a great cross boundary team building exercise. I was impressed by the expertise of the TAWIRI team and it was a pleasure to work with them.

This was the first elephant collaring operation in Tanzania on September 5.

I spent the second half of September in the USA, which provided a chance for me to meet our main supporter and founder in Indianapolis, IN, the Fehsenfeld family and the Sidekick Foundation formally known as the ESCAPE Foundation. On September 28, I presented to the Sidekick Foundation board at The Heritage Group's main headquarters, The Center, which was a good chance to update each other. The Sidekick Foundation has committed to funding MEP for the next 3 years which is fantastic news. I presented at the Friends of MEP

& Wildlife Conservation event that evening at the Fehsenfeld residence and the night before attended the Indianapolis Prize kickoff event. It was an honor to attend the 2018 Indianapolis Prize Gala where the winner, Dr. Russ Mittermeier, was presented his award by actor Harrison Ford. In the world of conservation, the Indy Prize is comparable to the Noble Prize and it was wonderful to learn more about each of the finalists and to congratulate Russ in person for this huge accomplishment. Also, during my time in the U.S., I presented about MEP to Tuft's University Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and for the residents of Lopez Island off the coast of Washington. I also enjoyed some time off with my family and visited NYC with MEP and Sidekick leadership for a team building weekend.

Presenting at the MEP supporter event in Indianapolis, IN.

Communications and Fundraising:

It was an active month for Mara Elephant Project's core funder, the ESCAPE Foundation. They have officially changed their name to the Sidekick Foundation and though their focus remains the same, they are looking to capture more appropriately their belief in fulfilling their role as the sidekick to the next generation of conservation heroes. This is reflected in the renewal of their commitment to support the core activities of MEP. You can check out their new website at www.sidekickfoundation.org.

The new Sidekick Foundation logo.

Sidekick's first official business was to host a MEP supporter event in Indianapolis, IN at the home of MEP and Sidekick founder, Fred & Suzie Fehsenfeld. This event was a combined effort to say 'thank you' to our supporters for the last six years. During the presentation, MEP Trustee Trey Fehsenfeld provided a warm welcome and I was able to personally thank everyone for their support and provide an update on the activities and achievements of MEP. We appreciate our partners support at this event including Drone Warrior Brett Velicovich who gave a wonderful demonstration of how drones can be used in the Mara to mitigate human-elephant conflict. We'd also like to thank the Indianapolis Zoo who showed the MEP team great hospitality during the week of the Indianapolis Prize as well as Endangered Species Chocolate and Elephant Cooperation for joining us for a fun night!

We were pleased to host Karsten Ree in early September. Karsten has been a major supporter of MEP over the last three years. We also appreciate Alex Walker's Serian camp, The Maa Trust and Richard's Camp for sending over guests to visit HQ. I visited Tuft's University Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and gave a talk about Mara Elephant Project which was featured in the local paper and well received by faculty and students.

MEP received a very generous donation from M.A. and Jim Rogers who have previously donated to our project. Their dedication to conservation extends beyond MEP and we're thrilled to have them as supporters. MEP would also like to recognize Rita Cabases for her generous donation and continued support of MEP helicopter project. Finally, thank you to Craig & Stephanie Brater, Susan Tolbert and the Reilly Family Foundation for their support of MEP in September.

MEP communications director and two trustees had the opportunity to tour the Endangered Species Chocolate factory in Indianapolis and meet the CEO. Their GiveBack Partnership program has been extremely impactful in the past and Mara Elephant Project will be applying in hopes of being a recipient in 2019 and 2020.

On September 12, Brett Velicovich was featured on Fox Business talking about his time at MEP. His quick appearance on that show generated over $600 in donations for MEP on that day. *Warrior Boy* a book by Virginia Clay is also on shelves now and features MEP as a trusted conservation organization. Finally, Klaus Tiedge, a celebrated photographer announced that for the month of October he's donating 20% of his print proceeds to MEP. We are excited about this fundraiser and appreciate his support!

Research:
The next draft of the Technical Report was presented to the leadership of the Sidekick Foundation during the board meeting and Dr. Jake Wall was introduced to the Sidekick board for the first time as the 2019 MEP director of research and conservation. He was able to explain the importance of MEP's research objectives and we are excited about working together in the near future.

Tracking:
On September 28, Kenya Wildlife Service held a board meeting where the temporary ban on collaring was discussed. We understand the protocols for collaring were approved and we hope this ban will be lifted in October.

Security:
The increase in elephant mortalities is concerning this month. The conflict related causes of death especially in the Mara North Conservancy area means that there is a new cell attacking elephants in the area. Usually we see more conflict related deaths during the crop ripening seasons, but this increased number of deaths corresponds with the drying up of the area. This leaves us to believe that the conflict that elephants are now coming into is a result of their access to limited water and grass resources and the competition with herders for it. The elephant deaths attributed specifically to spearing is most likely this type of conflict especially since there are crops still in the fields in the area.

One of the two elephant carcasses reported on September 4 and 5.

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Incidents Situation Report:

Dead elephant on: 4/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Olare Orok Conservancy area around Kempinski; the carcass was reported by MNC rangers to MEP and KWS rangers. The cause of death considered as unknown still waiting results from the government lab. Mike file number 29/18
Dead elephant on: 05/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Mara North Conservancy, carcass was reported by tourist to MNC rangers, KWS rangers and to MEP. The cause of death considered as unknown still waiting results from the gov. Mike file Number 30/10
Dead elephant on: 06/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Mara North Conservancy; carcass was reported by tourist to MEP and KWS rangers. The cause of death considered as unknown still waiting results from the gov. Mike file Number 31/10
Dead elephant on: 15/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Olaro Ekijijini Area, carcass was reported by Olarro rangers to KWS rangers and to MEP. The cause of death considered conflict raw cause spear wound, Mike file number 32/18
Dead elephant on: 17/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Olderkesi area at the border of the conservancy, carcass was reported by Olarro rangers to, KWS rangers and to MEP. The cause of death considered conflict and raw cause is Spear wound. Mike file number 33/18
Ivory recovered and arrest: 19/09/18.	One suspect arrested in Mau by KWS rangers and MEP intel, in possession of 4 kg of ivory. Suspect taken to Bomet police station and booked.
Bush meat recovered and arrest: 19/09/2018	One suspect arrested at Mau Choronok area by DSWT Mau Team in possession of 6 kg of bushmeat.
Dead elephant on: 27/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Mara North Conservancy: the carcass was reported by MNC rangers to MEP and KWS rangers. The cause of death considered as human-elephant conflict, raw cause is arrow found at Gastro splenic attachment point with the adhesions and gastric perforation, Arrow found inside the elephant considered to have that injury for long time. Mike file number 34/18
Dead elephant on: 28/09/2018.	Carcass was found in Mara North Conservancy area; the carcass was reported by MNC rangers to MEP and KWS rangers. The cause of death considered as Natural. Mike file number 35/18
Bush meat recovered and arrest: 29/09/2018	One suspect arrested at Mau Kiromwok area by DSWT Mau Team in possession of 15 kg of bushmeat, Suspects taken to Bomet police station and booked.

One suspect arrested on September 29 with 15 kg of bushmeat.

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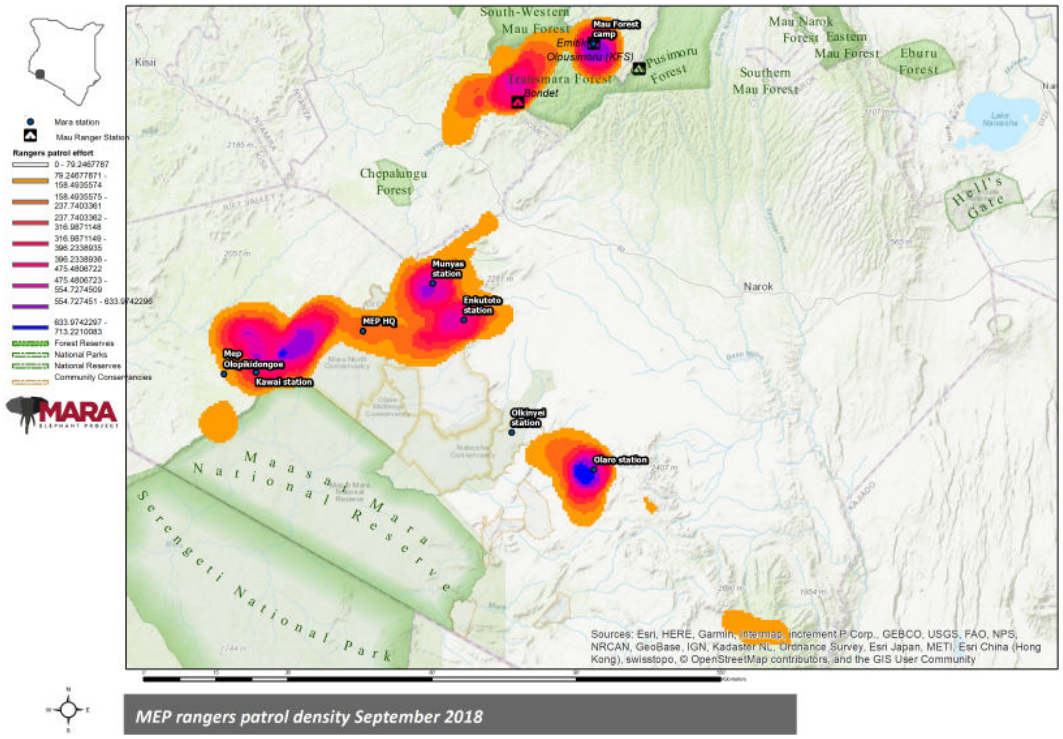
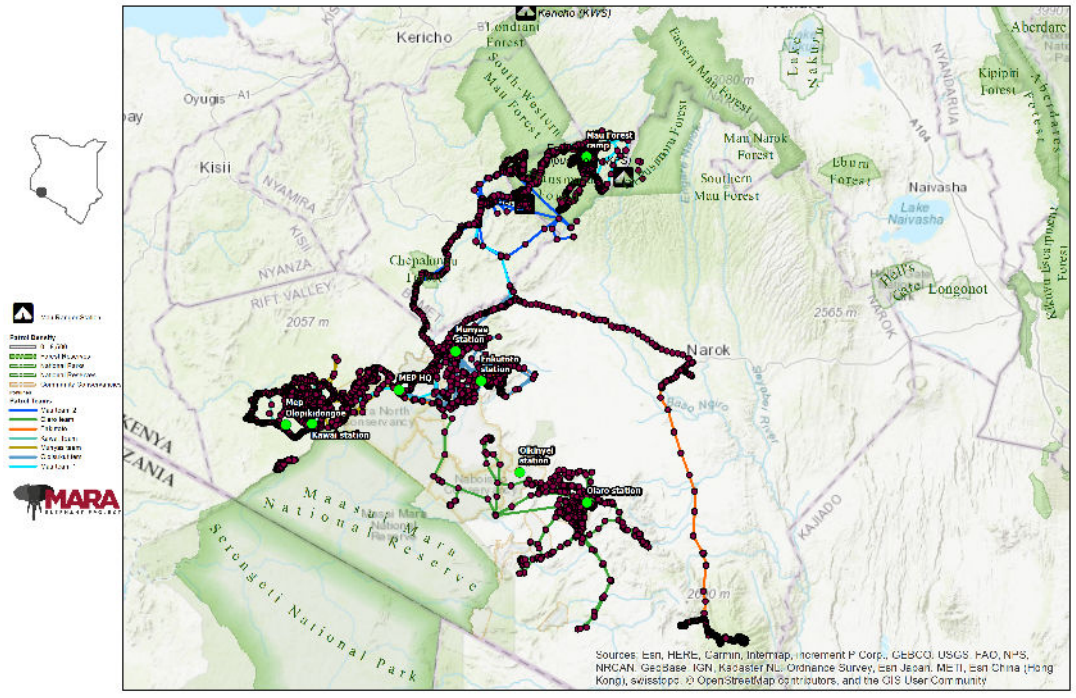
Patrol Details:



MEP rangers patrol density September 2018



Rangers Patrol tracks September 2018

Human Wildlife Conflict:
This period indicates a drop in HEC with does not match the increase in elephant deaths.

HEC Situation Report:

DATE	REGION	property	crop	mitigation action
02 September 2018	Munyas	none	maize	by use of firecrackers, motorbike lights.
08 September 2018	Ngosuani	none	Maize	by use of firecrackers, motorbike, lights.
15 September 2018	Oloisukut	Fence	None	by use of car & firecrackers
16 September 2018	Oloisukut	fence	none	by use of car & firecrackers
21 September 2018	Olaro	none	none	by use of car, drums, lights and firecrackers
25 September 2018	Olemoncho	None	None	By use of car and firecrackers
26 September 2018	Kawai	fence	Maize	by use of car & firecrackers

Helicopter:
I only did two main flights at the beginning of September before heading to Tanzania to fly a similar helicopter. These were collecting Dr. Limo in Eldoret where he lives to come and treat a baby elephant that was in a bad way due to an old snare wound. The second flight was with Karsten Ree who owns the helicopter to look for Amare's collar in Loita. Next month we will need to do the 900-hour service.

Date	Time	Mission
01/09/2018	3	To Eldoret to collect limo, treat baby elephant in Mara
02/09/2018	3	Return limo to Eldoret
02/09/2018	2	To Loita with Karsten to look for Amare
03/09/2018	1	To Nairobi for service and park at Karen
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Staff:
MEP has contracted the services of Neil Hargreaves as a financial consultant to work with Stanley to develop our administration capacity.