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US Friends of the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre
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Dear Friends,

The life expectancy of a white rhino in South Africa should be at least 40 years, and the life expectancy of the elephant should be at least 60 years. With no natural predators in the wild, these majestic animals have been rendered fragile and endangered by the selfish indulgences of mankind. And once their bounty of horn or tusk is brutally snatched, the sedated dismembered animal or lifeless corpse is abandoned, and any dependent offspring left incapable of survival in their native reserves – forever.

Much as Allen and I prefer to think about the origins and purpose of the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre as we first saw it in a more benign time 12 years ago, we have come to realize that the needs served by this enclave have changed. While acclaimed programs for breeding of cheetah, wild dogs, sable antelope, rare birds and other species remain prominent, and release back into the wild a continuing priority, along with breakthrough genetic and nutritional research and medical procedures and the adoption of individual animals, the escalation of poaching has necessitated urgent rededication of resources.

In 2008, 83 rhinos were reported as poached. By 2015, this number had increased to over 1,000, with no decrease in 2016. With its groundbreaking medical procedures and research on nutrition, HESC has become a preferred destination for providing acute care to surviving mature rhinos and surrogate parenting for young orphaned calves.



U.S. Friends of Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to the conservation of wildlife. Charitable contributions to U.S. Friends of Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre, Inc. are deductible for U.S. Income Tax purposes, to the extent allowed by law.

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In the past few months, intervention and rapid transport to HESC has enabled an orphaned elephant to receive medical attention and dietary supplements to restore health and gain acceptance by the Camp Jabulani elephant family – in a way not possible in the wild, where herd instincts would bar a juvenile interloper.



Deterring poaching has become a worldwide effort, with meaningful international initiatives in the movement and trade of contraband rhino horn and ivory. Countering poaching at its source requires direct vigilance, and U.S. Friends of HESC is gratified that it has helped in several respects.

Wanting to involve and assist young people having poor prospects for employment and little awareness of the value of conservation, in 2010 U.S. Friends of HESC developed a pilot intern program. We interviewed and selected candidates and then provided funding for uniforms, meals, transportation and a stipend so trainees could work at HESC. Simon Mnisi was one of the first interns to benefit from this community outreach, receiving tangible economic support and nurturing encouragement from caring HESC staff to benefit from what he describes appreciatively as “the opportunity of a lifetime.” Committed to personal

advancement, Simon enrolled in programs for study of wildlife and conservation, and now he is in charge of the anti-poaching dogs at HESC.

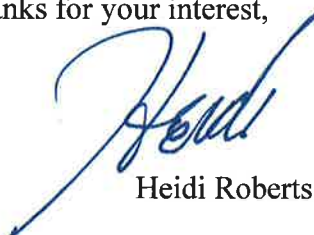


Believing youngsters can best understand that South Africa's extraordinary natural resources are vital to their own lives and the vibrancy of the bush for tourism, U.S. Friends of HESC provides funds for community outreach initiatives and actively supports opportunities to help educate learners about conservation issues. We are gratified by the enthusiasm and inquisitiveness of young students among the 795 enrolled at the Lumukisa Primary School as they see newfound relevance of HESC programs in their lives and communities.



Since its creation, U.S. Friends of HESC has raised nearly \$2 million, with annual costs of less than 0.65%. I hope you will call me if you would like any more details about our objectives and accomplishments.

With sincere thanks for your interest,


Heidi Roberts