

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Jelena Poučki
Project title	Education towards wildlife conservation – training scheme for pilot large carnivores monitoring
RSG reference	13707-1
Reporting period	October 2013 – October 2014
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	jelena.poucki@gmail.com
Date of this report	9.11.2014.

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
To provide a unique opportunity to combine monitoring and research efforts with conservation education of visitors		X		We have successfully enhanced the interest of both the volunteer team and visitors, and established monitoring and research programme at the sanctuary. The daily visitors are of very various depth of interest. We believe that certain percentage of them leave Kuterevo with better understanding of bigger picture of bear conservation and management. The educational trail was finalised only at the last stage of the project and the long-term effect of it will be possible to assess only in the next seasons.
To complement ongoing countrywide research on large carnivores and monitoring program within management plans		X		We have established a closer cooperation between the sanctuary and the research team supervising the countrywide research on large carnivores. We were training the volunteers at the Kuterevo bear sanctuary on the methods and importance of systematic monitoring. We believe some of them took it very seriously and will certainly apply that experience later in their lives.
Education of visitors improved the understanding of the conservation issues and enhance the coexistence with large carnivores			X	We have improved the educational service at the sanctuary. This was achieved mostly by sharing knowledge while guiding visitors. The fact that so many visitors come to see bears in Kuterevo Bear Refuge raises the importance of bears in general in the minds of local people and help the conservation and coexistence. With the interviews to visitors we could see and estimate the effect of our educational efforts and how it affected their attitude. The work with the visitors also helped to create bonds between them and the people at the sanctuary, and we believe it will gain in the future.

To produce protocol for training on large carnivore monitoring			X	The protocol has been produced: a detailed version in Croatian language and the summary in English (Power Point presentation). We productively implemented this protocol in the sanctuary. The implementation will be continued with the support of the research team in next years.
Volunteers gained basic knowledge on different monitoring techniques as well as on ethology of large carnivores			X	Regular training/workshops for volunteers were organised during this project and will be continued in the future, according to protocol. We successfully involved the volunteers and obtained their support to these kinds of projects in the future. (The report on executed trainings of volunteers is attached.)

General comment: The objectives that we marked as partially achieved were assessed as such due to its long-term character. We believe that to see its real and long-term effect will be possible in next seasons. This project has lead to initiate, apply and establish the processes and activities that will be continued next years.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

- Unusually mild winter 2013/14 was unexpected, which influenced wolf and other large carnivore tracking in snow. Because of this we decided to focus more on transects and large carnivore signs surveys. As the monitoring activities will be continued, we will provide additional training and supervised snow tracking while appropriate winter conditions in the next season.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- Educational trail is set up in the most frequent place in the Bear Refuge and as such all visitors (more than 20,000 per year) will gain more information about bear's biology, conservation, treats, co-existence and mythology. The trail is created in an open way, what leaves space for further development and upgrading.
- Educating and involving Kuterevo volunteers into monitoring of large carnivores. Long-term and short-term volunteers gained lots of new knowledge on monitoring and ethology, as well as motivation to get more involved into field work and collection of data for national monitoring programs. In the same time, volunteers acted as multipliers and messengers, through guiding visitors in the Refuge (more than 20 000 this year) and coordinating and working with other volunteers (around 300 this year)
- Involvement of different groups into monitoring of large carnivores was a pilot attempt to share different viewpoints and motivations for getting involved.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

The very fact that the village of Kuterevo hosts the Bear Sanctuary offers the opportunity to local community to market the local products (wooden and woollen handicrafts, local honey, cheese, berry products), as well as renting apartments and preparing meals. People in general have a very positive attitude towards bears and it is essential that it does not worsen. With the input from this project we believe that their eventual concerns about coexistence with bears and other large carnivores will be more properly met.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

- Trail to be developed and upgraded.
- Transferring knowledge and competences to new generations of volunteers - in the next years they will be using the equipment bought (GPS devices, camera, and laptop) with the funds of this project and will continue monitoring presence of large carnivores in the area.
- Closer cooperation with protected areas around Kuterevo (Velebit Nature Park and National Park Northern Velebit) and with hunting right owners around Kuterevo area.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The results will be shared via internet tools (webpage, volunteers' blog, and newsletter) and social media. We will also use different events (workshops, exhibitions, conferences) as opportunity to share experience, results and suggestions.

- An online version of the panels will be available online on the sanctuary website as an electronic leaflet.
- Educational trail is the obvious way of sharing results, content, and information to visitors, volunteers, and school groups. The guiding tours will be focused on continuing this effort and using the trail to increase the large carnivore's awareness of visitors and improve the understanding of the conservation issues, and enhance the coexistence with large carnivores.
- Workshops and educational activities with school groups and volunteer groups will be developed based on the educational trail.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

RSG was used throughout the whole duration of the project of 1 year. The elements of the Educational trail were gradually installed during the whole year but the main set of panels were produced and placed at the project's end.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Personnel costs	250	250	0	

Travel costs: Training on large carnivores monitoring	800	876,40	+76,40	Extra costs for travelling were covered from leftover from other costs related to training.
Equipment: for data collection, analysis and storage	1400	1548,64	+148,64	Besides all equipment mentioned, a photo camera for documentation of tracks and other work was bought.
Consumables	100	92,13	-7,87	
Educational trail posters and folders – design, preparation/printing and maintenance	2500	2360,11	-139,89	Additional materials for educational trail were also covered with this (ecological paint, brushes, and wooden planks). Leftover was used for covering extra costs of the equipment.
Other costs: Service costs for trainings and seminars	800	730,44	-69,60	Leftover was used for covering travel costs.
Indirect costs:	150	150	0	
TOTAL	6000	6007,72		

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

- To organise / structure the transfer of knowledge and competences to new volunteers – who will be involved in monitoring and guiding visitors in the trail.
- To maintain regular educational activities at the sanctuary based on the ones developed with this project.
- To develop new activities and interact with visitors.
- To produce additional educational materials.
- To develop programme for including volunteers in LC monitoring in protected areas.
- To maintain research and monitoring activities supported by the research team supervising the countrywide studies on large carnivores.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes. We used RSGF logo in all materials, including calls for participants, program of the training, panels for educational trail. (Photos attached)

ANNEX

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Education towards wildlife conservation – training scheme for pilot large carnivores monitoring and conservation education in brown bear sanctuary in Kuterevo

This program has been performed at 5 occasion's times during the project duration. The first was one introductory presentation, followed by one session included the full program over three days with practical training. At the remaining 3 sessions the theoretical part has been repeated and the results of the independent work of team members were discussed.

Session #1:

04 September 2013. (15.15-18.00) Introductory Power Point presentation on bear issues in Croatia and the importance of monitoring followed by discussion.

Participants 30.

Session #2:

22-25 October 2013 - the main event. Program bellow:

PROGRAM

Dates: 23-25 October 2013

Location: Kuterevo

Day 1. 23 October 2013.

Theoretical part – volunteers

Presentations:

- 10.00 Introduction: aims of the training [Djuro]
- 10.15 Area – characteristic, large carnivores in the area [Helena]
- 11.00 Signs – recognition: bear, wolf, lynx [Djuro]
- 12.00 Methods – sign surveys [Djuro]
- 13.00 Lunch break

Presentations:

- 15.00 LC monitoring – forms [Djuro]
- 16.00 Technical presentation: GPS, database, how to keep records [Slaven]
- 17.00 Technical presentation: map of the area, setting the transects and monitoring schedule [Djuro, Slaven]

Day 2. 24 October 2013.

Theoretical part – Croatian monitors

Volunteers do self-practice on using GPS devices and mapping

20.30 ALL depart for howling attempts to detect wolves.

Day 3. 25 October 2013.

Practical part – field work - ALL

09.00 Field work: Recording the transect start, searching for signs, mapping and recording data in standardized way. (Slaven, Josip)

14.00 Lunch

Database and records handling

Participants 10

Session #3:

13 March 2014 (12-26-16.25). Lecture to volunteers and discussion on “Educational trail” content, design and responsibilities.

Participants 9

Session #4:

08 May 2014 (09.04-11.30) Lecture to volunteers and discussion on bear monitoring.

Participants 8

Session #5:

19 September 2014 (11, 44-13.30) Lecture to volunteers and discussion on bear monitoring.

Participants 9