



March 2011

Caucasus Nature Fund signs five new project agreements to conserve nature in the Caucasus

Dear Friends,

In just the last two weeks we've signed five new project agreements to protect spectacular Caucasus wilderness sites. Three of our projects will cover the operating costs in large protected areas (PAs) - Lagodekhi Protected Areas in eastern Georgia, and Shikahogh/Zangezur Protected Areas and Arevik National Park in southern Armenia. Together, these three PAs cover almost 90,000 hectares. A fourth is for Erebuni State Reserve, a small (about 100 ha) reserve near Yerevan that despite its size is richly diverse with important relict grain species. Our last project will create a new management plan for Dilijan National Park (34,000 ha) in central Armenia.

Together, the new parks add more than 120,000 hectares to our portfolio of PAs, bringing the total area we are supporting in Armenia and Georgia to about 220,000 hectares - or more than a half-million acres.



By safeguarding fragile habitats, the agreements give the region's endangered leopards, ancestral sheep (Mouflon) and threatened mountain goats (Bezoars and Caucasian Turs) a better chance of survival. The benefits also extend to the local people, who stand to gain from sustainable economic development around park lands.

UNDF/GEF Armenia Grant

We've also formalized the previously announced agreement with GEF/UNDP, which will give us an additional \$1 million for projects in Armenia. With comparable financing from GEF/UNDP secured last year for work in Georgia and a new gift from the German government in December, we can continue to support our current 220,000 hectare portfolio on a sustainable basis.

These are important milestones-particularly for a young organization like CNF. But we must redouble our fundraising efforts if we are to reach our goals of protecting more than 850,000 hectares in the two countries, so that we can create additional projects and build professional capacity to sustain them in perpetuity.

Warm thanks to all of our donors and partners. We're delighted that you're interested in CNF's progress and look forward to keeping you posted.



Yours sincerely,



David Morrison
Executive Director

Photos courtesy of Borjomi Kharagauli National Park and WWF Caucasus PO

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