



## September 2010 Grants-in-Action

### Caucasus Protected Areas Fund Fire-Fighting Equipment Helps Put out Georgian National Park Forest Fires

Dear Friends,

In February of 2009, the CPAF's first grant was to Borjomi Kharagauli National Park (BKNP) in Georgia. The grant was made in response to severe forest fires that broke out in the Borjomi region due to Russian bombing during the brief August 2008 war. At that time, hundreds of hectares were burned, including areas within the park's borders. Rangers worked hard to put out the fires in and around the park, but they were severely hindered in their efforts by the lack of modern fire-fighting equipment and training.



Recognizing that fire preparedness is part of the park's everyday job, we provided BKNP with two fire trucks equipped tanks, hoses and related equipment at a cost of more than €60,000. Little did we know, however, that the summer of 2010 would bring a heat wave in the region that put our equipment to an immediate practical test.

BKNP's Chief of Administration, Levan Tabunidze, remarked, "We lost 900 to 1000 hectares of forest in this area due to bombing in the 2008 conflict. But when fires broke out over the summer, we were able to put it out with minimum damage thanks to training and equipment financed by the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund."

Seeing our first grant successfully utilised is an important milestone for us, and we look forward to seeing similar achievements in other protected areas we are financing. Although the road to securing the conservation of biodiversity in the Caucasus is long, this result shows that we are off to a good start.

Yours sincerely,

David Morrison  
Executive Director

*Photos courtesy of Borjomi Kharagauli National Park*

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