



# PANTHERA

PARTNERS IN WILD CAT CONSERVATION

Issue 7 November 2009

## PANTHERA NEWSLETTER

### In This Issue

[Panthera Honors Carlos Manuel Rodriguez](#)

[Panthera's 2010 Jaguar Challenge](#)

[12 Pounds of Cougar Cub Cuteness](#)

[Lions in Vogue](#)

[Panthera's Blog: Cat Tales](#)

[A Winning Tiger Team in Thailand](#)

[Panthera.org Gets a Fresh Look](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

[Click here to see our newsletter archives](#)

### Quick Links

[Contact us!](#)

[About Us](#)

[Panthera in the News](#)

[Partners](#)



### Welcome to Panthera's Newsletter!

Panthera is an international nonprofit whose sole mission is the conservation of the world's 36 species of wild cats. Bringing together the knowledge and expertise of the world's top cat biologists, and working in partnership with local and international NGOs, scientific institutions, universities and government agencies, Panthera develops and implements range-wide species conservation strategies for the world's most imperiled wild cats.

### Panthera Honors a Hero for the Environment and for Jaguars: Carlos Manuel Rodriguez

On October 29th, Panthera honored Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Costa Rica's former Minister of Environment and Energy, at an event hosted by actress Glenn Close and former Assistant Secretary of State Claudia McMurray. Rodriguez, whose visionary policies halted Costa Rica's rampant deforestation and restored critical habitat for jaguars, was awarded Panthera's Rabinowitz-Kaplan Prize for Excellence in Wild Cat Conservation.



Dr. Alan Rabinowitz, President and CEO of Panthera and inaugural winner of the prize stated, "The Rabinowitz-Kaplan Prize was created to acknowledge people whose lives have made a profound difference for wild cats. When Carlos Manuel took office, the government classified forests as 'unproductive' lands and encouraged people to destroy them for ranching and crops. Without his policies, Costa Rica would have far fewer jaguars today."

To rescue Costa Rica's forests, Rodriguez developed a creative, market-based approach that achieved conservation and development goals simultaneously. Under his model, government incentives like income tax exemption for planting trees, and compensation for environmental services supplied by forests - including clean water, clean air and suitable habitat for wildlife - encouraged Costa Ricans to preserve and protect their land. Now, as Vice President and Director for Conservation International, Rodriguez advises governments around the world on adapting this strategy, termed Payments for Ecosystem Services, which has helped to revive Costa Rica's economy and make it one of the top ecotourism destinations in the world today.



In Glenn Close's opening speech, she expressed her gratitude to Rodriguez for his dedication to wildlife and said of Panthera, "I am proud to be involved with this organization that is dedicated to saving and protecting the great cats of the world. To lose any one of these species would be to lose part of our soul."

To learn more about Panthera's Jaguar Corridor Initiative, please [click here](#).

### **Panthera's 2010 Jaguar Challenge**

At our October 29th event (see section above) Alan Rabinowitz introduced Panthera's Jaguar Challenge. To date, Panthera's work in the Mesoamerican Jaguar Corridor has been tremendously successful as governments and communities have committed to national policies and land-use planning initiatives designed to keep critical jaguar pathways intact. However, three major development projects planned in Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama threaten to sever the Corridor at critical linkages. But with your support, we hope to overcome these obstacles and continue to preserve jaguar habitat through Mesoamerica. The three threats are as follows:



#### *Highway expansion in western Honduras*

On the Caribbean Coast of Honduras, plans are underway to expand an existing highway linking Puerto Cortes and San Pedro Sula to create a "dry canal" that will rival the Panama Canal in transporting goods across the Central American isthmus. This project threatens to sever ties between the central Atlantic coast to the Guatemalan border, making the region impassable to jaguars and other wildlife.

#### *Oil Palm Development on Nicaragua's Caribbean Coast*

Oil palm plantations are beginning to rival coffee and bananas for agricultural lands throughout Central America, and are of particular threat to Nicaragua's Jaguar Corridor. Panthera has been conducting research to provide guidelines that will make oil palm agriculture more "jaguar friendly" rather than allow the burgeoning industry to destroy jaguar habitat.

#### *Cattle Ranching in the Panama Canal Zone*

The cattle ranches in Panama's northern Canal Zone remain dangerous for jaguar passage as ranchers are killing jaguars because they believe jaguars threaten their livelihoods. Based on Panthera's work with ranchers in other parts of Latin America, we are now making a major push to reach out to ranching areas in Panama to mitigate problems and secure the passageways needed for the Jaguar Corridor.



To donate to the Jaguar Challenge and help Panthera secure the Mesoamerican jaguar corridor, please [click here](#).

To learn more about Panthera's Jaguar Corridor Initiative, please [click here](#).

### **12 Pounds of Cougar Cub Cuteness**

Last month, Panthera's Director of Western Hemisphere Programs, Howard Quigley, located two healthy female cubs, each weighing six pounds, in a den at our Teton Cougar Project site in Wyoming. Employing a technique developed over recent years, Howard and his team waited until the cougar Mom was off on a hunt to enter the den and weigh and mark the cubs before she returned. When the team entered the den, they found two female kittens (featured right and below).



Ten days after Howard's visit, the kittens were moved by their mother to their first kill, where they enjoyed their first solid meal.

At seven weeks of age this is normal timing for the weaning process in cougars.

Visits to these dens allow us to gain critical information on cougar litters and cub survival. Panthera ultimately uses the information to develop effective conservation strategies for wild cougars throughout the mid and western United States.



For more information on Panthera's Teton Cougar Project, please visit [http://www.panthera.org/teton\\_cougar\\_project.html](http://www.panthera.org/teton_cougar_project.html).

### **Lions *in Vogue***

Panthera grantee Leela Hazzah graces the pages of Vogue Magazines' November issue as they cover her innovative approach to lion conservation! Vogue traveled to Kenya to interview Leela and feature the Panthera-funded Lion Guardians program.



In 2006, Leela founded Lion Guardians as a project under Living with Lions. Lion Guardians employs Maasai warriors as conservationists in the Kenyan Maasailand, a region where retaliatory and traditional spearing by Maasai warriors is among the greatest threats to lions today. Under the program, Maasais are trained in using new technologies to track lions, reducing conflict, and speaking to their own communities about conserving lions. Local people are often the most effective wildlife conservationists, and using this knowledge, the program has had a dramatic impact on lion killing in the area. Lion Guardians and Living with Lions are part of Panthera's lion conservation strategy for the region. The article also features the Director of Living with Lions, Laurence Frank, as well as Panthera grantee and Lion Guardians colleague Stephanie Dolrenry, both of whom are on the front lines, fighting to secure a future for the African lion in Kenya.

For more information on Living with Lions, [click here](#).  
For information on Panthera's Lion programs, [click here](#).

### **Cat Tales: Inspiring Encounters with the World's Most Iconic and Endangered Cats**

Panthera recently gathered stories from our scientists, researchers and partners to document their favorite encounters with big cats in the wild. Our newest blog is a story from Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, former Minister of Environment and Energy for Costa Rica and current Vice President and Director for Conservation International. This "Cat Tale" is the first in our series of seven.

To check out Panthera's latest blog, please visit <http://www.panthera.org/blog.html>

### **A Winning Tiger Team in Thailand**

Panthera's Director of Media, Steve Winter, recently returned from visiting Huai Khai Khaeng (HKK) Wildlife Sanctuary in Thailand, a Tigers Forever site, where he witnessed the capture of a female tiger and her cub. What was equally as inspiring as seeing a mom with her cub was the impression the capture team left on Winter. He stated, "I was incredibly impressed by the passion and commitment of the whole team, including its leader Dr. Saksit Simcharoen." Dr. Simcharoen, originally hired by Alan Rabinowitz over 20 years ago, is now head of the tiger program at Khao Nang Ram Research Station in HKK Wildlife Sanctuary. Dr. Simcharoen has captured and radio-collared 12 tigers and 15 leopards over the years, gaining valuable information about these animals in the area. He works as a team with his wife, Achara Simcharoen, who is currently working toward a PhD in tiger ecology and prey relationships.



HKK is a shining example of where tigers are doing well because of the commitment and focus on the ground to protect them. Of his experience, Winter said, "I came away from my visit with Saksit and his entire team believing that as long as there are people out there like them, tigers will have a strong future not only in HKK, but in other sites too."

For more information of Panthera's tiger program, please [click here](#).

### **Panthera.org Gets a Fresh Look**

Panthera.org has made some changes! Please check out the updated site by [clicking here](#).

**To learn more about Panthera and how you can help save the world's wild cats, visit:**  
**[www.panthera.org](http://www.panthera.org)**

To see more 'Panthera in the News', please visit:

**[http://www.panthera.org/news\\_and\\_events.html](http://www.panthera.org/news_and_events.html)**

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to [jfoller@panthera.org](mailto:jfoller@panthera.org) by [info@panthera.org](mailto:info@panthera.org).

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Panthera | 8 West 40th Street 18th Fl. | New York | NY | 10018