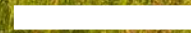




**BIG LIFE**  
FOUNDATION



**2021**  
**IMPACT REPORT**

# MISSION

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Using innovative conservation strategies and collaborating closely with local communities, partner NGOs, national parks, and government agencies, Big Life Foundation seeks to protect and sustain East Africa's wildlife and wild lands, including one of the greatest populations of tusker elephants left in Africa.

The first organization in East Africa with coordinated anti-poaching teams operating on both sides of the Kenya-Tanzania border, Big Life recognizes that sustainable conservation can only be achieved through a community-based collaborative approach.

Big Life has established a successful holistic conservation model in the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro ecosystem that can be replicated across the African continent.

## OUR MISSION

On the ground in East Africa, partnering with local communities to protect nature for the benefit of all.

## OUR VISION

We believe that if conservation supports the people, then people will support conservation.



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# LETTERS FROM LEADERSHIP

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## A Year of Wild Cards

Over the past three decades, living as a conservationist here in East Africa, I have seen the repeated necessity of adapting to and tackling unforeseen challenges. 2021 threw two such wild cards at Big Life – the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and Maasai land subdivision. We managed to get through the ongoing COVID pandemic relatively unscathed: none of our 500+ staff had to be furloughed and somehow we managed to adapt and continue with the same vigor and impact as pre-COVID. The second wild card was land subdivision across our area of operation becoming a reality: communally-owned land being converted to privately-held plots.

For several decades, we have been partnering with community members and leaders of the local group ranches, which are essentially 300,000-acre blocks of communally-owned land. This land tenure structure has been turned on its head, with the group ranches dividing the land into 2-to-60-acre parcels of individually owned properties. This scenario, if not managed correctly, has all the ingredients to implode the ecosystem.

I am happy to report that, with your help, that will likely not be the case. The communities involved have, with little exception, embraced the principle that hosting wildlife on their land has to be taken into account as part of the process. As I write, we have negotiated over 300,000 acres that will be set aside for wildlife

needs, and are in the process of earmarking other tracts of crucial wildlife habitat to remain undeveloped.

I truly believe the willingness of the communities involved to set land aside for wildlife is the result of the work Big Life has done over the years, proving wildlife is an asset rather than a liability. This is underpinned by providing education, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, offering employment, and pursuing other wildlife-based income streams for locals.

For now, this change of land tenure represents a conservation opportunity to provide long-term security of wildlife habitat. But with it comes the challenge of ensuring the landowners realize meaningful benefits and payments for the ecosystem services they are providing.

I need to recognize the huge and invaluable roles Craig Millar, now Chief Operating Officer, and Benson Leyian, our new Chief Executive Officer, have played not only in navigating us through the complex daily operational challenges, but also leading the way responding to land subdivision so positively and successfully.

**Richard Bonham**

*Executive Chairman, Big Life Kenya*



# BIG LIFE'S NEW KENYAN LEADERSHIP

Twenty-one years ago, I was initiated to be a Maasai moran (young adult) through traditional rituals and ceremonies. I had waited my whole life to drop out of school to take care of my father's livestock. Though it didn't last long, I enjoyed that short moment of livestock herding, lion hunting, and other cultural ceremonies. Many of the things I enjoyed as a warrior have had a bearing on my conservation career.

Despite wanting to stay a warrior, I eventually joined one of the most prestigious universities in Nairobi. I got my first job in conservation with the Amboseli Ecosystem Trust (AET), not knowing that it was the start of a career that would take me right back to where I'd always wanted to be: spending time around wildlife, livestock, my community, and the beautiful plains of Amboseli.

Land subdivision was creeping in even then, albeit slowly. For many people, my father included, we all thought that this land belongs to God and we shall live free forever. But all hell broke loose when the Community Land Act was signed in 2016 by the government of Kenya.

This led to unstoppable, rampant land subdivision that has shaken both lovers of wildlife and natural habitat and the local communities. One day my 82-year-old father asked me, "Son, can you ask our governor to stop land subdivision?" The rate at which non-pastoralists were buying land, fencing and blocking wildlife migratory corridors and community livestock watering points was alarming to my old man. His request wasn't tenable but his fears got me thinking.

As if by the power of infinite intelligence, I joined Big Life Foundation when all these processes were kicking off. The last three years have been trying years for Greater Amboseli.

Land barons ganged up to buy huge tracts of land for crop farming, a land use that's not compatible with livestock rearing or wildlife conservation.

These farms not only risk wildlife conservation and community livelihoods, but also negate the global mission to reduce 51 billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions every year to zero (according to the COP21 Paris Declaration).

Until recently, I never realized the tight symbiotic relationship between community livelihoods and wildlife conservation. Pastoralists keep open spaces for their livestock, and by extension for wildlife as well.

Big Life's philosophy that "if conservation supports the people, people will support conservation" has become my mantra too. Big Life's model where the community benefits directly from conservation through employment, scholarships, health programs and many more has given us a competitive edge. Over the last two years, Big Life has been approached by different group ranches for subdivision planning support and offered unconditional leasing and management opportunities within critical wildlife habitats. This has given us an opportunity to keep the land open for wildlife to move freely, but it comes with a financial burden.

Thank you to our donors for their resolute support, our Board members' commitment, and our staff members' determination to keep us moving forward.

## **Benson Leyian**

*Chief Executive Officer, Big Life Kenya*



Big Life has always tried to be a community-centered, impact-driven, and nimble organisation. Nearly all of our programs have sprung from an idea originating with community members themselves. If there is one thing I have learned in my 10-years tenure here, it is that this link with the community gives us the platform to be as impactful as we are, and that must never change.

I am admittedly completely biased, but I look through reports like this one with a huge amount of pride, and truthfully I can't help but try to measure our relative success against what is going on elsewhere. It may not be very scientific, but it does make me (and hopefully you too) feel good about what we have achieved.

I can distinctly remember a strategic planning meeting several years ago, when one of the targets we set for ourselves was “zero trophy poaching.” We had been told that targets needed to be realistic and attainable, and zero poaching was thought to be an overly ambitious goal. And yet against all odds, it has been 4 years since the last trophy poaching incident happened in the area Big Life protects.

The fact that a target we set for ourselves has now become the minimum standard we measure ourselves against is immensely encouraging. If Big Life stopped existing today,

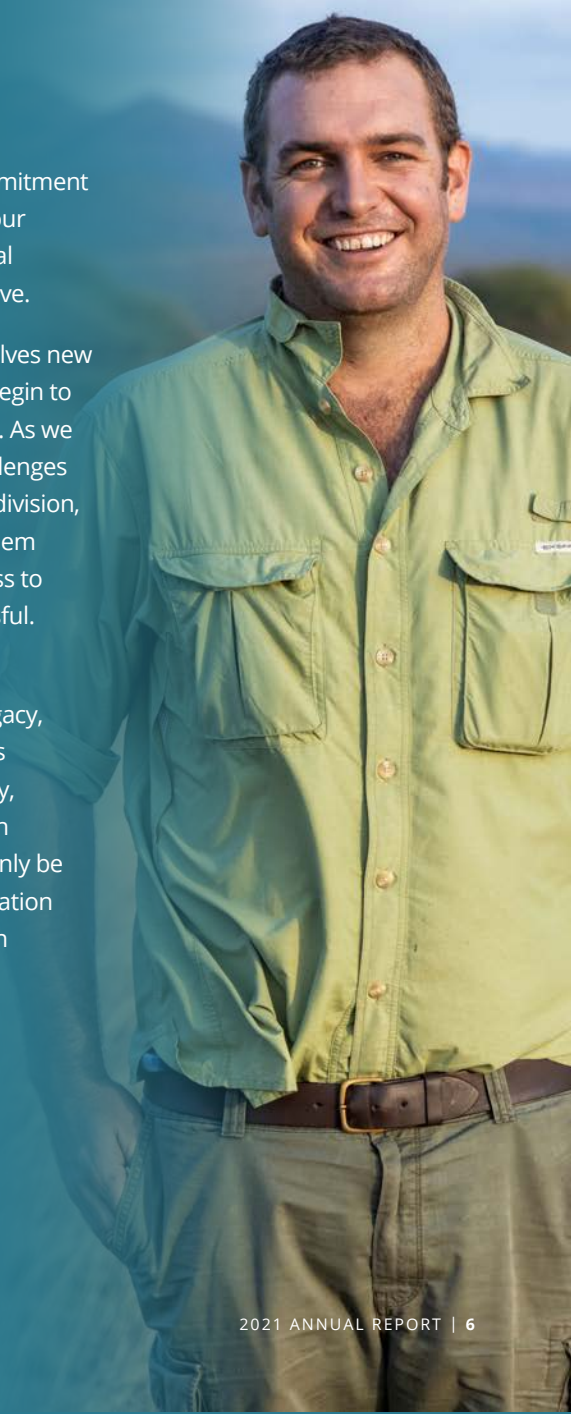
this achievement alone would be worth celebrating. It speaks volumes to the commitment of our rangers, the cumulative impact of our programs, and the involvement of the local community in everything we do and achieve.

Needless to say, we are now setting ourselves new targets, and zero poaching doesn't even begin to cover our ambitions for Greater Amboseli. As we move beyond poaching, we face new challenges with human-wildlife conflict and land subdivision, detailed in this report. And while it may seem daunting, the local community's willingness to live with wildlife means we can be successful.

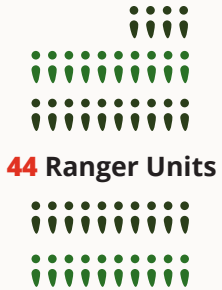
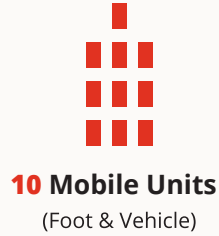
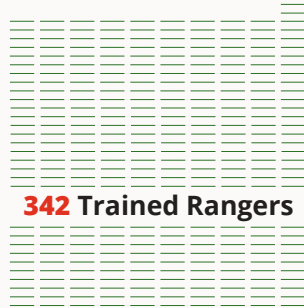
Changing the community's perspective on wildlife from negative to positive is our legacy, both of Richard personally and the donors that have supported Big Life so generously, and has set up a successful future for both wildlife and people. BUT that future will only be realized by finding new ways that conservation can support the people, while we maintain and grow the ones that already exist.

**Craig Millar**

*Chief Operating Officer, Big Life Kenya*



2021  
Year in Review



TOTAL KILOMETERS PATROLLED



On Foot: **127,547**



By Vehicle: **684,161**



By Plane: **36,784**



**0**

Elephants Poached

**365 KG**

Ivory Confiscated

**584**

Scholarships Awarded

**25**

Suspects Sentenced in  
16 Concluded Cases

**0**

Rhinos Poached

**393**

Suspects Arrested  
in 199 Incidents

**256**

Rangers Trained in  
11 Ranger Trainings

**8,865+ KG**

Sandalwood Confiscated



# AREA OF OPERATION

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**Big Life Foundation's Area of Operation (AOO) covers approximately 1.6 million acres across the Amboseli-Tsavo-Kilimanjaro (Greater Amboseli) ecosystem in East Africa.**

Our team of 500+ people helps to protect and secure wildlife and critical habitat stretching from the rangelands north of Amboseli to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo West National Parks in the east, and south to Kilimanjaro National Park. The area is a central connection point for migrating wildlife and contains some of the most important habitat left in Africa.

Our AOO is divided into a core area with a permanent ranger presence that is regularly patrolled by mobile units, a non-core area where mobile units respond based on need and are actively covered by our intelligence network, and adjacent areas where we provide support as needed.

The level of Big Life support provided varies among outposts.

## **Core AOO:**

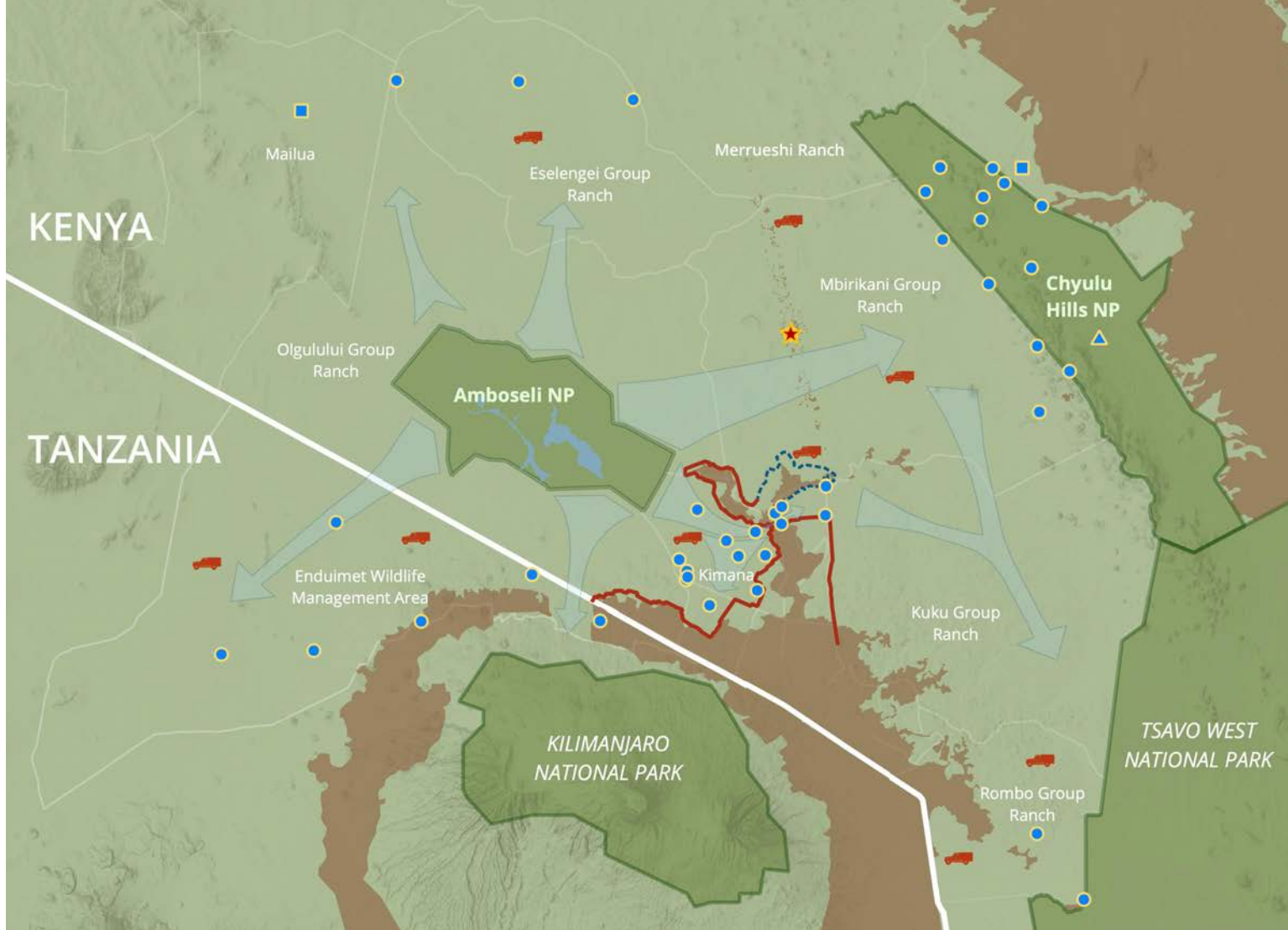
Chyulu Hills National Park  
Enduimet Wildlife  
Management Area (Tanzania)  
Eselengei Group Ranch  
Kimana Area  
Mbirikani Group Ranch  
Rombo Group Ranch

## **Non-Core AOO:**

Kaputei South Ranch  
Merrueshi Ranch  
Taveta Area

## **Adjacent Areas:**

Kuku Group Ranch  
Mailua Ranch  
Olgulului Group Ranch  
Tsavo West National Park



★ Big Life Headquarters

● Ranger Outposts

▲ Mobile Foot Unit

■ Home-based Community Units



Mobile Ranger Units



Wildlife Migration Routes



National Parks

■ Agricultural Areas

— Completed Fence

- - - Planned Fence

## WILDLIFE PROTECTION

The Greater Amboseli ecosystem is generally regarded as one of the richest wildlife regions left in Africa. But the same animals that make it famous also put it in the crosshairs for illegal wildlife crime.

Big Life strives to prevent the poaching of all wildlife in our area of operation. Our community rangers are expertly trained, well-equipped, and ready for action at a moment's notice. They're supported by a fleet of vehicles, two airplanes, two tracker dogs, and an expansive intelligence network.

Besides tracking and apprehending poachers, Big Life also collaborates with local prosecutors to ensure the guilty are punished to the fullest extent of the law.

Since our inception, poaching of all animals has dramatically declined and many wildlife populations are rebounding.





## ELEPHANTS

Big Life was founded to address the dramatic escalation of elephant poaching in the Amboseli ecosystem, and their protection remains at the core of our mission to this day.

In the 1970s, there were fewer than 500 elephants in the ecosystem. But today, there are more than 2,000 moving in and out with the rains, the highest numbers ever recorded. Some of these elephants are the last big tuskers on Earth.

We haven't had an elephant poached in Big Life's area of operation in 4+ years thanks to the hard work of our community rangers.

**0**

Elephants Poached

**12**

Elephant Mortalities

**Within Big Life's Core AOO: 9**

**Causes**

Natural: **3**

Unknown: **3**

Human-Elephant Conflict: **3**

**Within Big Life's Non-Core AOO: 3**

**Causes**

Natural: **1**

Unknown: **1**

Human-Elephant Conflict: **1**

**100%**

Ivory Recovery Rate  
*(tusk removal from carcasses)*

**2**

Elephant Rescues

**19**

Elephant Injuries

Treated: **10**

Not Treated: **9\***

\*Some elephants either did not require treatment (1), were being monitored (1), or were not found (7).

*Rescues and treatments are done in collaboration with our partners at the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service.*

## RHINOS

In the early 1990s, it was believed that the Eastern black rhino was extinct in Big Life's area of operation. But one day, rangers found tracks and droppings. It took years to prove they were there, but against all odds, a small population had been hiding in the Chyulu Hills all along.

What started as a population of 15 animals when rediscovered was reduced in short order by poachers intent on harvesting their horns. In response, Big Life intensified our patrols, increased our manpower, and improved our operations. Working in close coordination with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), between our rangers, intelligence network, monitoring team, aerial surveillance, and new roads and fences, the rhino territory in the Chyulu Hills is the safest it's ever been.

As a result, the critically endangered Eastern black rhinos in our area have experienced ZERO poaching incidents in the last 6+ years. While only 7 remain, the only death they've experienced since has been entirely natural, and we intend to keep it that way.

We are almost ready for the inbound translocation of new rhinos. This is imperative, as there are only 938 Eastern black rhinos left in all of Kenya.

### 0

Rhinos Poached

### Rhino Statistics

Rhino Protection Rangers: **59**  
 Dedicated Rhino Outposts: **10**  
 Dedicated Rhino Units: **10**  
 Water Points: **3**  
 Camera Traps: **43**  
 Direct Sightings: **8**  
 Indirect Sightings: **114**  
 Spoor Sightings: **105**





## BUSHMEAT

People poach animals for bushmeat for two reasons: killing for subsistence as a source of protein, or killing for profit, to sell meat in the commercial game meat trade. In Big Life's AOO, bushmeat poaching often spikes in the dry season, when resources are scarce and farm laborers are out of work. Species targeted for bushmeat in 2021 included: bushbuck, dik-dik, eland, gazelle, giraffe, impala, lesser kudu, ostrich, and zebra.

**60**

Animals Injured or Killed  
in Bushmeat Poaching  
Incidents

**87**

Suspects Arrested in  
117 Incidents

## INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

Big Life's intelligence network has been steadily growing since 2016 and now operates on both sides of the Kenya-Tanzania border. Our intelligence operations spread well beyond our AOO and extend all the way to the Kenyan coast. Big Life's intelligence network, working with KWS, has confiscated more than 3.5 tons of ivory in the last 5 years. More than 88% of all arrests by rangers in 2021 were made possible by intelligence from our network of informers.

**122**

Suspects Arrested Based on  
Intelligence in 62 Incidents

**60+**

Regular Informers in our  
Network

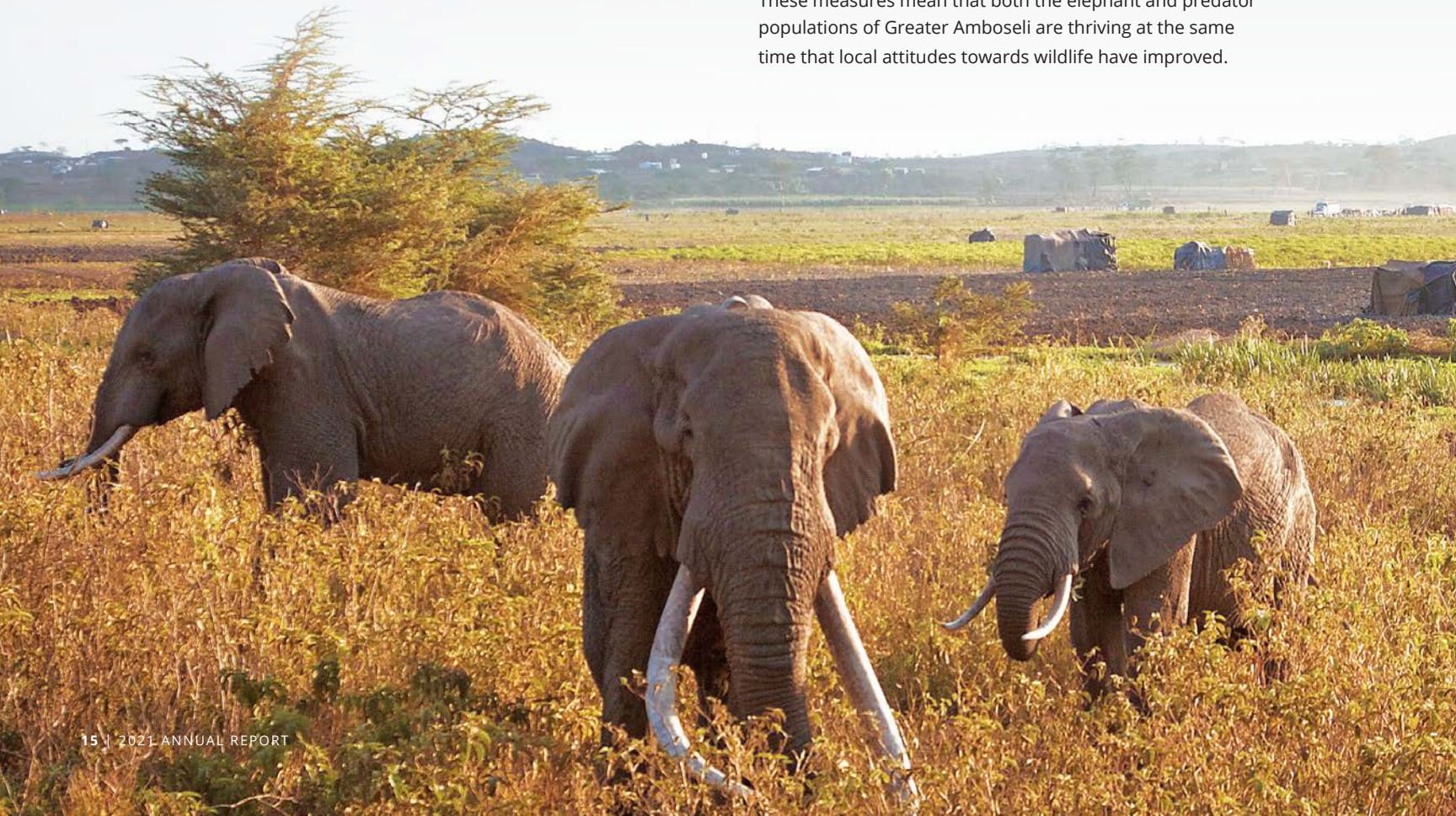
## HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

While living near charismatic megafauna might sound like a dream to most wildlife enthusiasts, reality often paints a much different picture. Whether it's elephants raiding their crops or lions preying on their livestock in the night, the local Maasai community is often at great personal risk of injury or even death living in close proximity to wildlife populations.

As a result, in order for the local community to support conservation, conservation must also support the local community, and that means mitigating the impacts of human-wildlife conflict whenever possible.

Big Life deploys rapid response ranger teams to move elephants away from farms and has erected crop-protection fencing to keep both elephants and farmers safe. We also implement predator protection initiatives to offset the impacts of living with apex predators.

These measures mean that both the elephant and predator populations of Greater Amboseli are thriving at the same time that local attitudes towards wildlife have improved.







## CROP RAIDING

Poaching continues to pose a significant threat, but many elephants face an even bigger challenge: conflict with humans. As the human population increases, so do competing land uses, such as farming and development. As we further reduce what were once wild lands, humans and wildlife compete for limited resources like water, land, and grazing. With less space to share, people and animals now come into direct contact at an alarming rate and often with deadly results.

**Crop Raiding Incidents: 259**

**Crop Raids by Elephants: 218**

**Acres Damaged by Elephants: 196**

**Crop Raids Prevented by Rangers: 200**

**Crop-Protection Rangers: 24**

*(Crop raiding occurs almost exclusively in areas without crop-protection fencing.)*

## CROP-PROTECTION FENCE

One of the best ways to protect both elephants and people has been to construct a fence in the most heavily farmed areas. The fence has created a hard boundary between the farms, which present very tempting snacks for elephants passing through, and the farmers, who will protect their livelihoods by any means necessary.

Currently, there is 100 km of fencing that is maintained by 31 fence attendants.

An electric fence is not impenetrable, and certain elephants have learned ways to break through it, which they then teach to others. As a result, Big Life is constantly adapting our fence design in an ongoing intellectual battle against an extremely smart adversary. However, fencing has been remarkably successful, reducing crop raids by more than 90% in the areas where it has been installed.



## PREDATOR COMPENSATION FUND

Twenty years ago, the lion population in Amboseli was headed for local extinction. Thanks to the efforts of Big Life and our lion conservation partners, today the ecosystem is home to more than 250 lions.

The core component of Big Life’s Predator Protection Program is livestock compensation. The Predator Compensation Fund (PCF) was started in 2003 and pays Maasai livestock owners a portion of the value of their livestock lost to predators on the condition that no predators are killed in retaliation. Verification Officers confirm incidents, and penalties are applied for poor animal husbandry practices. The community provides 30% of the total compensation paid. Fines are assessed and payments are withheld if any predators are killed

by members of participating communities. In Kenya, PCF offers varying levels of compensation for livestock killed by lions, leopards, cheetahs and hyenas.

Big Life currently manages PCF on Mbirikani and Eselengei Group Ranches, and in the Kimana Conservancies. The lion population in Big Life’s AOO is one of the few lion populations in all of Africa that is growing, not declining.

Big Life also supports 20 rangers on the Tanzania side of the border in the Enduimet Wildlife Management Area (EWMA). The EWMA implemented its own compensation program specific to lions using PCF as a model, with great success.

### Compensation Issued for Predation

**Cows: 312**









**Sheep/Goats: 1,864**

**Donkeys: 13**

**TOTAL LIVESTOCK KILLED:  
2,189**

**TOTAL COMPENSATION PAID:  
\$101,413**

### Livestock Killed By

			
<b>HYENA</b>	<b>JACKAL</b>	<b>LION</b>	<b>CHEETAH</b>
Total: 1,346	Total: 353	Total: 231	Total: 198
<b>61%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>
			
<b>LEOPARD</b>	<b>ELEPHANT</b>	<b>CARACAL</b>	<b>SERVAL</b>
Total: 40	Total: 13	Total: 7	Total: 1
<b>2%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>

### Lion Statistics

**Lion Mortalities in Big Life’s AOO: 2**

*\*Both in violation of PCF*

**Retaliatory Lion Hunts Prevented: 10**

*\*Hunts prevented in coordination with Lion Guardians and Kenya Wildlife Service. Lion population figures courtesy of Lion Guardians.*



## THE MAASAI OLYMPICS

The second part of Big Life's Predator Protection Program is the Maasai Olympics. The Maasai Olympics is an organized sports event based on traditional Maasai warrior skills designed to replace the long-held tradition of hunting lions as a mark of manhood, bravery and prestige.

Every two years, participating villages select teams through a series of tournaments leading up to the finals across six categories: rumbu and

javelin throwing, high jump, and 200m, 800m, and 5,000m races. The Maasai Olympics includes categories for female athletes as well.

The inaugural games were held in 2012, and it has been a biennial event ever since, until 2020. Because of COVID-19, the 5th Maasai Olympics, due to occur in 2020, had to be postponed until people could safely gather again.

The games will resume in 2022, with the finals planned for December 10.

## HABITAT PROTECTION

The Greater Amboseli ecosystem is one of our planet's surviving natural treasures. It is also home to almost **200,000 people**.

Big Life and our partners have taken on some of the most complex conservation challenges and been successful. Populations

of key wildlife species, elephants included, are the highest on record.

But the demands of an increasing human population and unplanned development have already blocked some key wildlife corridors and habitats. If this continues, space will run out, decimating wildlife populations and depriving human

communities of the natural resources on which they rely.

While it is not possible (or necessary) to conserve all natural habitats in the ecosystem, there are key wildlife corridors and dispersal areas that we can still protect, and in doing so, keep this magnificent ecosystem thriving.





## LAND SUBDIVISION

The process of land subdivision is sweeping Greater Amboseli, fragmenting large tracts of community-owned land into thousands of small, privately-owned parcels. Resultant land sales, land-use conversion, and private fences have the potential to destroy this irreplaceable ecosystem.

However, thanks to Big Life's relationships with local communities and the mutual trust that has been built over decades, we have been invited to provide input on the critical decisions needed as part of the process.

Big Life has supported our partner communities by investing in proper land-use planning, and the outcomes are extremely positive. Communities have reserved large areas for wildlife conservation and livestock grazing, and a series of corridors will connect these habitats across the ecosystem. Our efforts in 2021 were focused on two communities that collectively own 525,000 acres of land – Mbirikani and Eselengei.

### *Mbirikani Group Ranch*

Mbirikani (330,000 acres) encompasses vast wildlife habitats and seasonal grazing refuges, and it borders the Chyulu Hills National Park. Big Life has contributed technical and financial support to the subdivision process from the start, and the result is already becoming a model for communities elsewhere in Kenya. The final plan includes spatial allocations for all land uses, and includes 125,000 acres that will remain communally-owned as a livestock grazing and conservation area, with corridors for wildlife to move to and from Amboseli National Park, and 150,000 acres that will be privately-owned but with land use restricted to livestock grazing (which will keep natural rangelands intact).

### *Eselengei Group Ranch*

Eselengei's (190,000 acres) first subdivision plan was rejected by authorities, as it failed to incorporate the needs of wildlife and livestock, and would effectively have marooned the 12,800-acre Selenkay Conservancy as an ecological island. Big Life was asked to join the plan revision process and worked with the Eselengei community and partners to delineate two corridors totaling 35,550 acres (with necessary legal protections) to keep the conservancy connected to the rest of the ecosystem. Land in the corridors will be privately owned, and Big Life is entering into conservation lease agreements with the 700 new landowners in 2022.

## When Subdivision Goes Wrong: The Case of KiliAvo

It started with the approval of a proposal by a company called KiliAvo Fresh Ltd to develop a 180-acre avocado farm in the main wildlife corridor linking Amboseli and Tsavo West National Parks.

The approval violated two local land-use plans, and the proposal vetting process was fraught with irregularities. Following public outcry, Kenya's National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) announced its intention to revoke the development license.

The ensuing legal battle captured the attention of Kenya and the world. Media attention put it at the forefront of a larger debate about

dwindling space for wildlife, as well as the future of human communities in the face of uncontrolled development.

Big Life has invested significantly in the community conservancies that protect the Kimana wildlife corridor, and support for the legal battle against KiliAvo was a logical extension of these efforts.

After seven months of hearings, KiliAvo's case against the revocation of its license was dismissed. It's a huge win, but KiliAvo has unsurprisingly appealed the decision in a higher court. Activities at the farm remain halted for now, and Big Life is continuing to support the Kimana community in the next stage of this pivotal legal fight.



## LAND LEASES

Big Life believes that land belongs best in the hands of its traditional owners, but widespread land sales as a result of subdivision have the potential to destroy large areas of natural habitat, and result in landless communities.

Our involvement in the subdivision processes on various group ranches has ensured that important wildlife habitats are protected, but things don't stop there. The next critical step is to develop revenue streams from these areas, or risk their eventual conversion to other land uses.

Conservation land lease agreements are a way of ensuring continued local ownership and generating the financial returns that those landowners need. These lease agreements are willingly entered into by both parties, the terms of which restrict land conversion and fencing in exchange for annual lease payments.

This model keeps natural land open and available for use by wildlife as well as Maasai and their livestock. Big Life has experience maintaining land leases in the Kimana Conservancies over the past five years, and we believe that land leases are the most appropriate tool for scaling-up habitat protection efforts across the ecosystem.

### *Kimana Conservancies (ALOCA)*

The Kimana Ranch subdivided two decades ago, and while some landowners sold their parcels, the majority came together to form six Kimana Conservancies, which border Amboseli National Park and protect the first section of the Kimana Wildlife Corridor.

With support from Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, Big Life has lease agreements with 333 landowners in the conservancies, protecting critical wildlife habitat. Landowners have full access to their land for livestock grazing, and mechanisms are being developed to ensure that any tourism revenue benefits all conservancy members.

**20,008** Acres

**56** Rangers

**7** Outposts

**1** Mobile Unit

**\$164,942** Land Lease Payments to Community Members

## Kimana Sanctuary

When Big Life took over the Kimana Sanctuary in 2017, things weren't looking good. Mismanaged tourism enterprises had failed, and the initial high hopes of the 844 communal landowners had turned to frustration.

With support from the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and the D.N. Batten Foundation, Big Life set about getting the sanctuary back on its feet. We renovated a guest house, created campsites, and improved the road network. Tourism revenue has increased consistently since then, but still we relied on external funding.

This is about to change thanks to an exciting new partnership with Angama, owners of Angama Mara safari lodge in the Maasai Mara, who are building a new lodge in Kimana Sanctuary. We expect that the resulting revenue streams will allow Kimana Sanctuary to become self-sufficient, simultaneously covering the costs of its protection and increasing income to its landowners.

Once this comes to fruition, it will be huge cause for celebration, the demonstration of a sustainable financing model that achieves Big Life's goal of building local economies that rely on conservation, not destruction, of nature.

**5,700** Acres  
**40** Rangers  
**5** Outposts  
**1** Mobile Unit

**3,457** Total Visitor Entrance Days  
**\$115,300** Total Tourism Revenue  
**\$82,826** Land Lease Payments to Community Members







## REDD+ Carbon Project

The Chyulu Hills REDD+ project is ambitious, with nine project partners including two government agencies, four community landowner groups, and three conservation non-profits. But ambition is what is needed to protect this 1-million-acre area within the Greater Amboseli Ecosystem.

Since 2017, two million carbon credits have been sold, and the income generated is fast becoming a fundamental contributor to the management of the Chyulu Hills National Park and the creation of benefits for surrounding communities. In 2021, Big Life received \$167k+ in revenue, which helped to fund Big Life's rangers protecting the area, conservation scholarships, and firefighting equipment and training.

## Rangeland Restoration

Amboseli's arid rangelands are hurting. High numbers of livestock, and the breakdown of traditional rotational grazing practices, have resulted in unsustainable pressure on the savannah grasses. Without a protective covering, soils are eroding and gullies scar the landscape. The little rain that does fall, runs straight off the hard surfaces, depriving the land of moisture and resulting in a downward spiral. Large areas have been rendered unproductive, with negative impacts on wildlife and people.

2021 is the first year that we've been able to act on this problem, thanks to support from Conservation International and Apple Inc. Big Life is working with the Mbirikani community to restore 10,000 acres of rangeland back

to health. As a way of offsetting the costs of grazing restrictions for the project period, restoration jobs are creating income for those living near the two pilot sites, and restoration scholarships are being awarded to children on the ranch. We're thrilled by the future possibilities for this initiative, and the potential to heal large areas of degraded land across the ecosystem.

**6,006** Acres Across 2 Restoration Sites

**11,999** Anti-Erosion Bunds Created

**23** Acres Reseeded

**327** Temporary Staff Employed



## Firefighting

In the dry season, bush fires present a serious threat to the ecosystem. In remote areas, rangers are the first, and only, line of defense against fires, which are started either accidentally by honey hunters, trespassers, or farmers, or intentionally by poachers or by herders to stimulate grass. Thanks to our partners, Big Life has been able to secure firefighting equipment and undertake training to control fires quickly. In 2021, rangers responded to 44 fire incidents.

## Habitat Destruction & Encroachment

Big Life rangers enforce laws to prevent and deter habitat-related crimes, such as illegal charcoal production, arson, sand harvesting, water extraction, and logging (including high-value protected species like sandalwood). Rangers also enforce protected area rules in conservancies and national parks, where encroachment activities like trespassing, settlement, and grazing are illegal and harmful to critical ecosystem habitats.

**206** Suspects Arrested for Habitat Destruction in  
**84** Incidents

**10** Suspects Arrested for Encroachment into  
Protected Areas in **8** Incidents

**13** Incidents of Conservancy Rules Enforcement

“[Big Life] has . . . gone a long way to ensure emerging challenges, especially on human wildlife conflict and wildlife poaching, are tackled in a timely manner and therefore ensuring that communities and wildlife coexist for the benefit of conservation as a whole.”

- Kenya Wildlife Service







## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

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**Supporting the local community is as critical as any of Big Life's wildlife or habitat protection initiatives. In fact, the success of those programs depends on it. Because if conservation supports the people, then people will support conservation.**

Big Life offers community support services that include education and healthcare, as well as using ranger vehicles as ambulances, responding to crime within the community, conducting search and rescue operations, and more.

Many of our community programs had to be adapted in the wake of COVID-19 to minimize the pandemic's impact on the community. As a result, these initiatives are now more resilient than ever.

## EDUCATION

Taking care of the Greater Amboseli ecosystem, both people and wildlife, means not only catching poachers, but also investing in the people who share this special place. Big Life continues to invest in the ecosystem by funding teachers' salaries, providing scholarships for local Maasai students, and facilitating conservation-specific curriculum alongside field trips into the protected areas.

While schools across Kenya were closed for most of 2020, there was a concerted effort to get students back in school as safely and efficiently as possible in 2021. Many programs that had been put on hold or modified to account for remote learning were re-established, including our conservation education program, which teaches students in school about the benefits of conservation directly to their community.

This year, we also achieved a new milestone: more than 500 student scholarships were awarded. This is a significant increase from over 300 scholarships at the end of 2020. And equally importantly, more than half of these scholarships have been awarded to girls, who were under an increased risk of premature marriages and underage pregnancies during COVID-19.

We are grateful to those who support and invest in the education of the Maasai youth living in the Greater Amboseli ecosystem.

**584**  
Scholarships Awarded  
to **507** Students  
*Girls: 263 // Boys: 244*

**\$248,533**  
Awarded in Scholarships  
and Support

**6**  
College/University Students  
Supported to Graduation

**18**  
Schools Assisted

**7**  
Teachers' Salaries Paid

**4,717**  
Students Reached with  
Conservation Education via  
**97** School Visits

**5**  
National Park Trips  
Organized for  
**125** Students



## HEALTHCARE

While healthcare has always been a big part of Big Life's community support programs, two years of a global pandemic has led to an increased focus on health support services and resources.

Unable to bring large groups of people together for clinic days, Big Life pivoted to provide remote healthcare services and education via backpack nurses and Community Health Volunteers (CHVs).

Working in close coordination, backpack nurses and CHVs provide primary healthcare and family planning services, immunizations, and antenatal check-ups across the Greater Amboseli ecosystem. Big Life is also working to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights education for both the wider community and for the youth and adolescents in local schools.

Programs are conducted in partnership with the Kajiado South Sub-County Department of Health and Ministry of Education.

**189** Backpack Nurse Visits

**80,066** People Reached via **28,845** CHV Household Visits and **198** Community Dialogue Days

**6,039** Patients Who Received De-Worming Medicine

**8,281** Patients Who Received Immunizations

**5,048** Patients Who Received Family Planning Services

**Congratulations to Joan Seleyian for getting her motorbike license, the first female employee at Big Life Kenya to do so.**

Joan is our Community Health Program Assistant, and helps provide essential health services in remote areas of the Greater Amboseli ecosystem. She convenes community meetings to dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding family planning, as well as manages a team of Community Health Volunteers. As if that wasn't enough, she is also at the forefront of a new program to tackle high child and teenage pregnancy rates. Being able to safely use a motorbike makes a world of difference for her ability to do her job.

# FINANCIALS

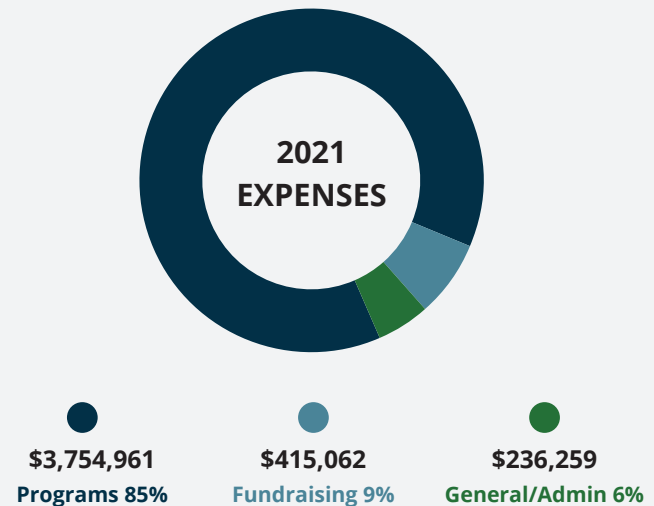
Organization: Big Life Foundation USA | Period: January to December 2021 | Country: USA | Currency: US Dollars

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

INCOME	2021	2020
Contributions & Grants	\$6,059,417	\$3,788,813
In-Kind Contributions	\$116,905	\$132,797
Other Income	\$11,628	\$65,461
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$6,187,950</b>	<b>\$3,987,071</b>
EXPENSES		
Programs	\$3,754,961	\$4,026,848
General/Admin	\$236,259	\$232,409
Fundraising <sup>1</sup>	\$415,062	\$305,050
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,406,282</b>	<b>\$4,564,307</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$1,781,668	(\$577,236)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$990,325	\$1,567,561
Net Assets, End of Year <sup>2</sup>	\$2,771,993	\$990,325

At Big Life, we **maximize every penny** of your contributions.

**85¢** out of every **\$1** donated goes directly towards our mission of protecting wildlife and wild lands for the benefit of all.



Our Form 990 tax filings and audited financial statements are available online at: [biglife.org/about-big-life/financials](http://biglife.org/about-big-life/financials)

<sup>1</sup> Big Life receives up to \$120,000/yr of [free online advertising](#) from a Google Ad Grant. Auditing standards require us to categorize this donated advertising as a fundraising expense, which inflates our numbers slightly, but [we do not spend a penny of your donations on Google AdWords](#).

<sup>2</sup> Big Life maintains two Board-designated funds. One is a reserve fund to be drawn upon in the event of financial distress or an immediate liquidity need resulting from events outside typical operations of the organization. The other is intended to help provide for ongoing and future land-related expenses.

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Thank you to all of our Board of Directors and Advisory Board Members, who invest considerable amounts of time, resources, expertise, in-kind donations, and financial contributions towards achieving our mission.



## We are grateful for the support of our partners, including:

### Field Partners

51 Degrees  
African Conservation Centre  
African People & Wildlife  
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Amboseli Ecosystem Trust  
Amboseli Landowners Conservancy Association  
Amboseli Trust for Elephants  
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Ranger Campus  
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The Thin Green Line Foundation  
Tsavo Trust  
Tusk Trust  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Wildlife Conservation Network  
Wildlife Direct

# DISNEY CONSERVATION HEROES

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Two of Big Life's community rangers have received the Disney Conservation Hero Award: **Commanding Officer Francis Legei** and **Sergeant Mutinda Ndivo**. The award recognizes local citizens for their commitment to save wildlife, protect habitats, and inspire their communities to take part in conservation efforts. We are incredibly proud of both Francis and Mutinda for their unwavering commitment to protecting wildlife and wild lands in East Africa, and we are grateful to the Disney Conservation Fund for recognizing their achievements.





**IN MEMORIAM**



**Ann Maloi**

*Radio Room Operator*

**1993 - 2021**



Big Life Foundation USA | 1715 North Heron Drive | Ridgefield, WA 98642 | USA | [biglife.org](http://biglife.org)