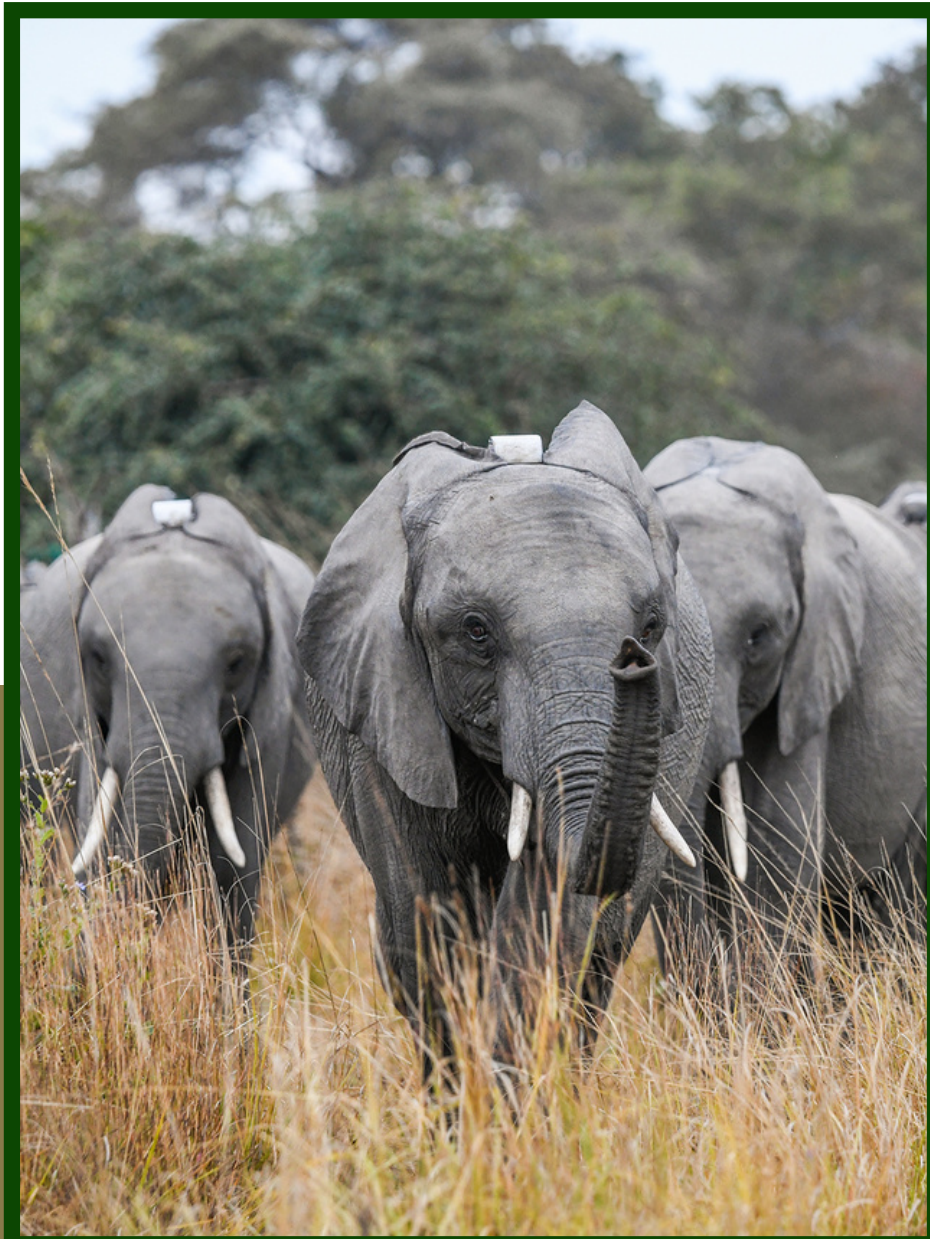

GAME RANGERS

INTERNATIONAL



BUSH TELEGRAPH

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#WeAreAllRangers
www.gamerangersinternational.org



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Front Cover: The Release Herd in Kafue National Park
Below: The Ox-bow (Nkala River)



INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

By JAMES AMOORE, DIRECTOR OF
RESOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAMME

Welcome to the 6th Edition of GRI's Bush Telegraph! As Director of the Resource Protection Programme, I have the honour of working with 164 Wildlife Rangers across Zambia, and I am thrilled to be able to shine a well-deserved light on them and their vital work.

On page 13 you will see our very own Neddy Mulimo receiving the Tusk Wildlife Ranger Award from HRH, The Prince of Wales, given in recognition of decades of tireless work towards conservation in Zambia. Neddy was understandably incredibly proud, as we are of him, to receive the award, which also helps to promote the work of Rangers on an international scale.

This edition brilliantly illustrates our holistic approach to conservation – from helping to educate the next generation in conservation awareness, researching elephant behaviour, to painting eyes on the backsides of cows as part of HWC mitigation. GRI leaves no stone unturned in the race to reverse the devastating loss of biodiversity.

The birth of my son in September has made me think even more about the future, and what sort of world he will know as he grows. It is up to all of us to safeguard what is left, and to do everything we can to support the brave men and women, who daily face the ultimate sacrifice in order to protect our wildlife and wild spaces.



James Amooore

EMPOWERING RANGERS AND LOCAL
COMMUNITIES TO CONSERVE NATURE

GAME RANGERS

INTERNATIONAL



WILDLIFE RESCUE PROGRAMME

RESCUE
REHABILITATE
RELEASE



Batoka is successfully re-collared!

RESEARCH

POST RELEASE MONITORING

COLLARING:

In October 2022, five new satellite collars were deployed on KNP elephants. One of these was for Batoka, who has been wild since Feb 2020, and four were fitted on wild elephants (2 females and 2 males that are part of breeding herds). The collaring operation was funded through our collaboration with Indiana University on a research project that looks into the biological effects of early life trauma on elephants, which is highly significant in the orphaned elephants as well as the KNP population who have experienced high levels of poaching and human-elephant conflict.

Satellite collar data allows us to follow and monitor the elephants providing us with essential information about elephant populations which also supports their long-term security. Their movements and dynamics will inform critical law enforcement planning to ensure their security, as well as supporting human-elephant conflict mitigation, keeping both the community and the elephants safe.

The orphaned elephants are usually collared before they return to the wild, however the collars need replacing between 2-4 years as the batteries expire. Since Batoka is now considered a wild elephant it was essential to re-collar him as we would any other wild elephant, and this required locating and darting him from a helicopter for safety. He is usually seen amongst breeding herds or with other wild bulls, so accessing him with a skilled helicopter pilot enabled us to safely isolate him from other elephants, giving the vets and support team the ability to access Batoka on the ground, without other wild elephant interference. With Batoka safely anaesthetised the team (pilot, vet and researchers plus additional ground support thanks to his accessible location) worked quickly to fit the collar and take biological samples and measurements, whilst ensuring his health and welfare throughout. The collaring was completed within 10 minutes before the DNPW vet reversed the anaesthetic, and within minutes he was back on his feet.

This was the first time in over a year that we had been up close to Batoka, so it was great to be able to confirm that he was in good health. Shortly after his new collar was fitted, we observed that he started spending time further south towards the Release Facility from the Kafue River where he had previously spent a lot of his time, although notably he did not come to the camp or boma. This avoidance of KRF further demonstrates his successful integration into the wild.

Currently we have deployed a total of 14 GPS collars within the Kafue National Park landscape: 10 on wild elephants through the Trauma Study and 4 on release phase orphans. This GPS data is shared with African Parks who are managing KNP, to further assist with the understanding of elephant populations and movements across the Kafue Landscape, which is vital to ensuring their long-term security.



Camouflage netting installed at the Elephant Viewing Hide

RESEARCH

VISITOR IMPACT STUDY

The GRI-Elephant Orphanage Project aims to rescue, rehabilitate and release orphaned elephants back into the wild. To give these elephants the best chance for a successful release our focus is to ensure the elephants are as wild as they can be when they return to the National Park. An ethos of minimising human impact on the elephants has therefore evolved throughout our journey of elephant rehabilitation, and this goes hand-in-hand with ensuring high welfare and best practice.

We also recognise however the incredible value of enabling visitors, in particular the younger generation, to see the young orphans during their rehabilitation, as their stories and antics inspire, and enable a deep connection that is essential for promoting long-term conservation of wildlife and wild spaces.

To support the minimisation of impact on the orphans we promote distance viewing through a 'viewing hide' platform, however we continue to look for ways to improve upon our systems. The Visitor Impact Study involves the installation of removable camouflage netting at the elephant viewing hide to experimentally evaluate the impact of visitor density and behaviour on orphan elephant behaviour and boma space use. By providing the netting screen at the hide we hope that the elephants will benefit from not being as aware of human presence (as without the net) and that visitors will appreciate the efforts we are undertaking to give these young orphans the very best chance for a truly wild life one day.

The research team have been trialling the application of the net and assessing elephant behaviour and human feedback of the viewing experience with and without the net in order to ascertain if its presence is beneficial to the elephants. The initial findings have helped to demonstrate the importance of managing noise levels within the hide, in particular when the net is present as the netting does not conceal noise, however may give visitors this perception. To help demonstrate this visually we have installed an LCD decibel noise meter on the wall of the viewing hide. Not only does this enable us to measure and store sound levels accurately, it is also a visual reminder to the visitors, while portraying a clear message that the elephant's welfare is at the forefront of our operations. We still have further trials to conduct to confirm the effectiveness of this approach and guide the application of the net for the long-term and we will aim to publish the results to ensure our findings are available to other rehabilitation programmes facing such similar challenges.



Camouflage netting being created and installed & noise being monitored

GAME RANGERS INTERNATIONAL



COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME

ENGAGE
EDUCATE
EMPOWER



WILDLIFE DISCOVERY CENTRE

WALK-IN VISITORS AND DISCOVERY DAYS

This quarter, we welcomed a total of 3,025 people to the GRI-Wildlife Discovery Centre in Lusaka National Park. This included 1,962 walk-in visitors, of which 854 were Zambian nationals, 784 were Zambian residents and 324 were international tourists. 78% of walk-in visitors were adults, 20% were aged 3-12 and 2% were infants.

A total of 293 children and 35 teachers from 18 Lusaka-based schools participated in our specially developed Discovery Days, which include interactive and immersive conservation sessions, a traditional hot lunch, the opportunity to view the Nursery Herd and a guided nature walk in Lusaka National Park. Fourteen of these Discovery Days were generously sponsored by corporate and individual donors. An additional 669 Zambian children and 66 teachers visited the facility on independent school trips, delighting in the orphan elephant viewing.



The Exploratorium in use as well as the elephant viewing platform and the newly opened Parkside Cafe



Children playing football at Musungwa Community School

CONSERVATION THROUGH SPORT

FOOTBALL CLUBS AND MORE

Brian Bulongo, Community Outreach Ranger, and GRI-Resource Protection Projects Assistant, Lauren McNeil, launched a Sports Club at Musungwa Community School to promote physical fitness, raise conservation awareness and connect young people with positive role models. Every Thursday afternoon Brian, Lauren and Rangers from Musa HQ facilitate games and activities for over 200 students.

Britius Munkombwe, Community Outreach Manager, met with a team of Itezhi-Tezhi District Amateur Football Association representatives and Headman Samundengo to survey the 300m x 200m land that has been secured for the construction of a Youth Sports Centre in Itezhi-Tezhi.



Children of all ages participate in sports to foster a sense of fitness, wellbeing and conservation awareness

Professor Daniella Chusyd generously donated football jerseys to Basanga and Nanzhila Primary Women's Football Teams, much to the excitement of the girls and their coaches who explained that engaging girls in sports builds their confidence and protects them from engaging in risky behaviours.



Women's football team wearing newly donated jerseys



Billy painting the i-cow stamps

HUMAN-WILDLIFE COEXISTENCE

BEING SEEN

In December, Britius Munkombwe made a follow-up visit to assess the effectiveness of the Shezongo Community Kraal which we installed in 2021. The kraal successfully supports community members to protect their livestock from lions and other predators and ensures that stray cattle are secured, preventing crop damage.

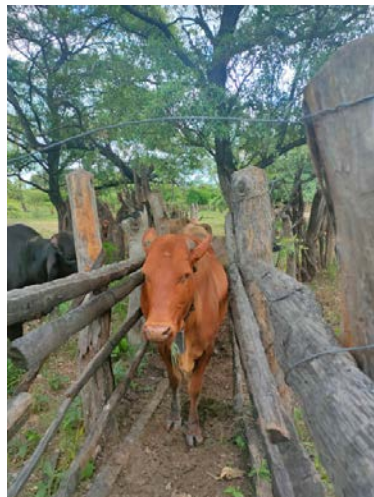
During the same month, Britius was interviewed by Itezhi-Tezhi Climate Change Forum about the Human-Lion Conflict in the area. He explained why conflicts with carnivores occur, what GRI is doing to prevent livestock predation, and how community members can protect themselves and their livestock from large carnivores.

As a direct result of DierenPark Amersfoort Wildlife Fund's support, we initiated the 'i-cow' approach in Nkala GMA this quarter. The approach was first developed by the Botswana Predator Conservation Trust, the Centre for Ecosystem Science at the University of New South Wales and the Taronga Conservation Society. Human-Wildlife Coexistence Ranger, Billy Banda, explains:

"The i-cow concept is a simple and low-cost tool. This approach is designed to prevent livestock attacks by predators such as lions and hyenas. It is a simple idea that makes use of the fact that predators rely on the element of surprise to attack their prey - once seen they give up on the hunt. This technique aims to protect livestock by tricking predators into thinking that they have been seen."



The i-cow stamp has been printed onto the cow in the Musungwa Community



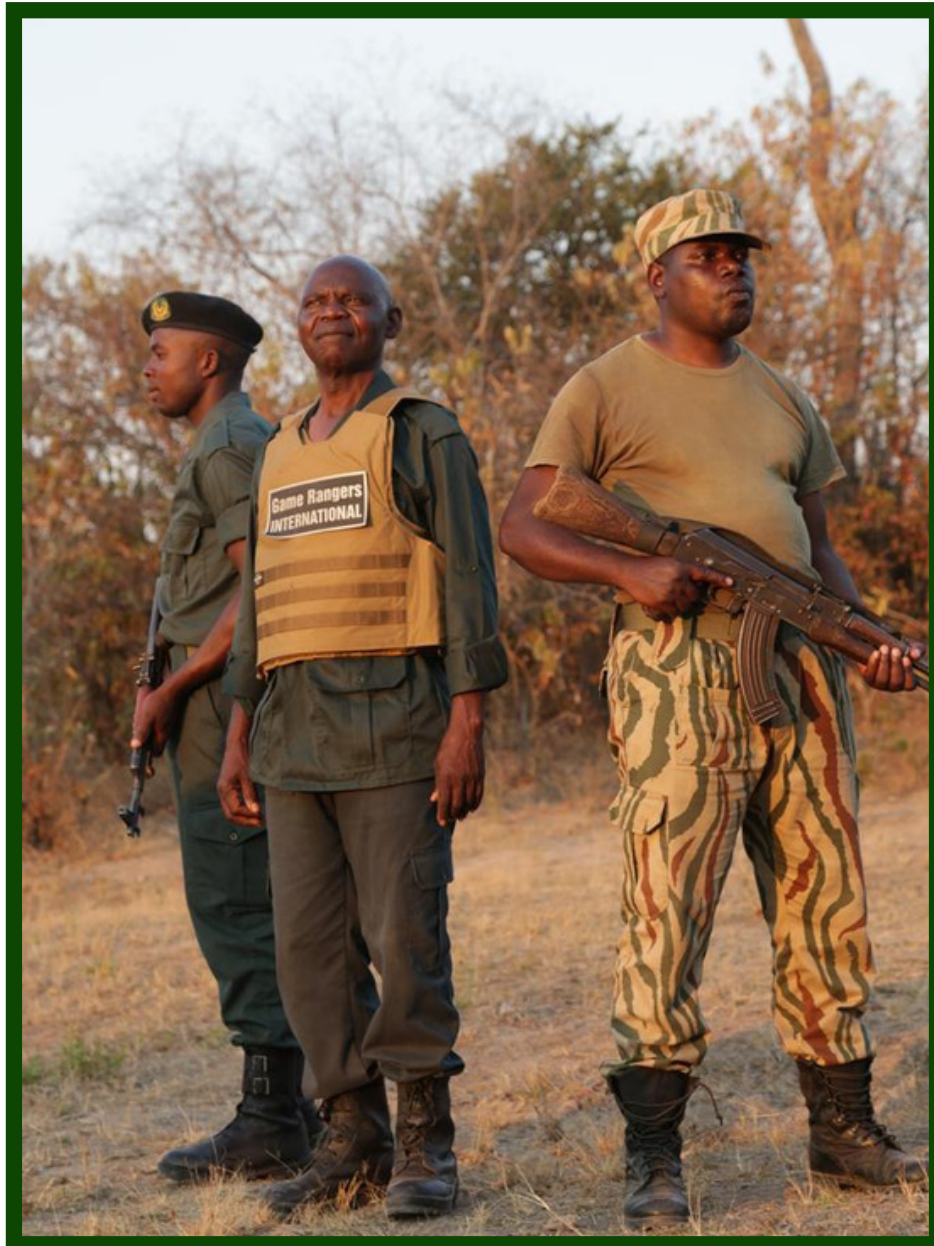
This cow is next in line for stamping



More cows successfully stamped



GAME RANGERS INTERNATIONAL



RESOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAMME

WELFARE
TRAINING
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT



Mr Mulimo accepting his award from HRH Prince of Wales

TUSK WILDLIFE RANGER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2022

MR. NEDDY MULIMO

On the 1st of November, in London, Mr Neddy Mulimo found himself in the unusual surroundings of Hampton Court Palace, as he was welcomed on stage to accept the Tusk Wildlife Ranger of the Year Award 2022. The award, presented by His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, recognises Mr Mulimo's 36 years of dedication to conservation. Neddy's passion for nature and experience in the field have been at the very heart of Game Rangers International's Resource Protection operations for 15 years where Mr Mulimo serves as Senior Support Manager. His job is to coordinate with the Anti-Poaching and Special Anti-Poaching Units, to ensure that when they are deployed, they are fully informed of their environment, kitted out, safe and effective. He is also an instructor and mentor to the teams on the frontline, as well as an inspiration to the young men and women also dedicating their lives to protecting wildlife and wild spaces.

Due to his vast experience, Mr Mulimo has been instrumental in forming policies around Ranger welfare. During his own time on the frontline, he made sacrifices by being away from loved ones for long periods, risked his own safety while on night patrols, and encountered dangerous diseases such as malaria. Now, he ensures that when a Ranger is on a 20-day deployment in the bush, they have suitable clothing, accommodation, and rations. The welfare of the Ranger both on deployment and at home is provided by GRI working in partnership with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife. Furthermore, they have been trained, they have access to good communication equipment, and their position is known to operators in camp, should they encounter difficulties and need support.

Mr Mulimo actively lobbies on behalf of Rangers to improve working conditions. His dedication, commitment and leadership are an example of how one man can make a difference in the fight against the loss of biodiversity.

Sport Beattie, Founder and President of GRI attended the ceremony.

"It has been my great honour tonight to be present to witness Mr Mulimo win his award and be recognised for his lifetime of service by HRH Prince William and all the many dignitaries and distinguished guests present at Hampton Court Palace. Mr Mulimo flew the flag extra high today and did his family, Zambia and GRI proud."

Ever humble in his accomplishments, Mr Mulimo commented on the award.

"It was a very, very exciting moment for me. I would say something I would never have expected. When I was reading my speech, I paused for almost 30 seconds, almost shedding tears. Proud of myself, proud of the job I do, having been recognised by the world. Being handed over an award by the Prince of Wales, it meant the world thanking me. Even at home, in Zambia, my family are sending constant messages, waiting to receive me back home with the trophy which is now my family's remarkable history."

With enormous thank you to Tusk, Ninety-One and The Royal Family.

Photo credit to Getty for Tusk

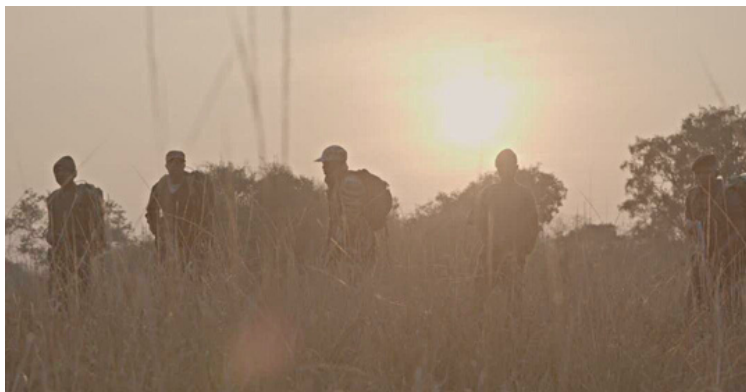


Community Scouts and WPOs in Kafue National Park

NOTABLE OPERATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS

During the quarter the Special Intelligence Unit (SIU), supported by the Special Anti-Poaching Unit (SAPU) teams, had multiple successful operations. SAPU North apprehended five suspects in possession of game meat, hooves, and tortoises on a night operation in December. The SIU and Fish Eagle team meanwhile conducted a two-day intelligence-led operation in the Kalomo District, apprehending one suspect in possession of an illegal fire arm and a Civet skin. A combined roadblock operation of all SAPU teams and the SIU saw the apprehension of one suspect in possession of an illegal firearm travelling along the main road to Mumbwa at night.

In the previous quarter, a suspect was apprehended in possession of one illegal firearm, ammunition, 70kg of bushmeat, one axe and the body parts of a Fish Eagle. The suspect has since been sentenced to 8 years imprisonment, with GRI supporting the SIU to ensure a successful prosecution.



Community Scouts and WPOs on patrol in the Release Area



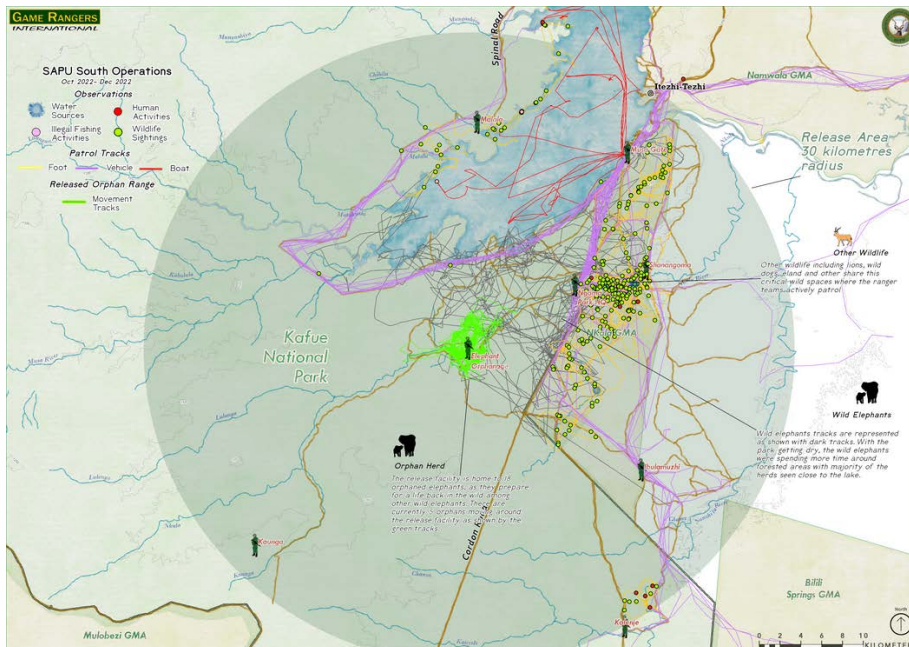
A SAPU vehicle being deployed

RELEASE AREA SECURITY

KAFUE NATIONAL PARK

GRI has a holistic approach to wildlife conservation where the Resource Protection Programme is vital to ensuring a secure environment for the orphaned elephants, and by association the wild elephant herds, in the areas contiguous to the Kafue Release Facility. Through the deployment of the Special Anti-Poaching Unit (SAPU) South and the Nkala Anti-Poaching Unit (APU), ongoing work to secure the Release Area has been achieved by apprehending poachers, both through intelligence-based strike operations, and through ground holding patrols. Throughout quarter four, SAPU South and Nkala patrol teams completed more than 1,118 Ranger Patrol Days and covered more than 5,185km in a combination of foot, vehicle and boat patrols.

The collared release elephants' movements are indicated here by the green movement tracks, as are the movements of 7 wild collared elephants, while Ranger movements are indicated by yellow (foot patrols), purple (vehicle patrols) and red (boat patrols). Wildlife sightings recorded by Rangers can also be seen (small green dots), and the location of human encounters (small red dots). It is clear from this map that GRI supported law enforcement is providing an active presence in and around the area that the release elephants and wild elephant herds are roaming. With previously released orphans now returning to join wild herds, and with wild herds of elephants and other endangered species in the area beginning to make a recovery, the presence of law enforcement has become even more critical to provide ongoing protection. Maps like these, which draw together all of the data collected by GRI, are crucial to informing conservation activity, and for increasing the effectiveness of law enforcement operations.



Map showing Patrol tracks for SAPU South and the Nkala APU between October and December 2022, in and around the Release Area, versus the KRF release elephant tracks in the same area over the same period.

THANK YOU

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS WHO HAVE HELPED MAKE ALL OF THESE INITIATIVES POSSIBLE.

