



KWS director Julius Kipng'etich (left), Rhino Ark trustee Wilfred Kiboro (centre), KWS fence manager George Odhiambo (first right) and KFS senior deputy director Emilio Mugo (second right) place a final post into Phases 7 and 8 of the fence line at Nandarasi, North Kinangop.

Leaders call for holistic plan for the Aberdares

...60 kms of Phases 7 and 8 powered up.

Aberdares' most valued asset for all Kenyans is its water catchment.

Plans for any developments must be conditional on this prime asset.

An integrated Ecosystem Management Plan that commits all ad hoc plans to the scrutiny of a 'holistic policy' and the revenue positive role the Rhino Ark Aberdare fence and its 'access protocols' into the Aberdare Conservation Area were stressed as 'prime requirements' by the Kenya Wildlife Service and Kenya Forest Service directors at the commissioning of the 60 kms of Phases Seven and Eight on April 24th.

The event was held at the Nandarasi gate into the Aberdare Conservation Area on the main Naivasha – Aberdare National Park road.

Five Rhino Ark trustees joined senior management of the Kenya Wildlife Service led by its director, Mr Julius Kipng'etich and Kenya Forest Service senior deputy directors, Mr Emilio Mugo and Mr Anthony Maina representing the Director Mr David Mbugua, who was on an overseas mission, at the commissioning event.

The role of communities in accelerating sustainable forest uses, tighter rulings on high altitude piped water proposals,

Continued on page 5

20th anniversary... Chargers gear up, Entries full!

A full house of 4x4 machines – from small Jeeps – one over 40 years old – and home built 'hybrids' to big Land Rovers, Range Rovers, Land Cruisers, Mercedes G wagons and even bigger Unimogs – will gear up shortly after dawn on June 1 for the Twentieth Anniversary Rhino Charge.

All will be looking for a day of excitement and adrenaline rush as they tackle the 10 hour event in a remote area of Kenya's wild bush country.

They make up a huge jamboree in the bush as the teams – totalling nearly 300 competitors – several thousand supporters, camp followers and spectators, have to find their way by route notes only (the venue is secret) set, up camp and to have yet another unforgettable weekend of excitement, challenge and fun.

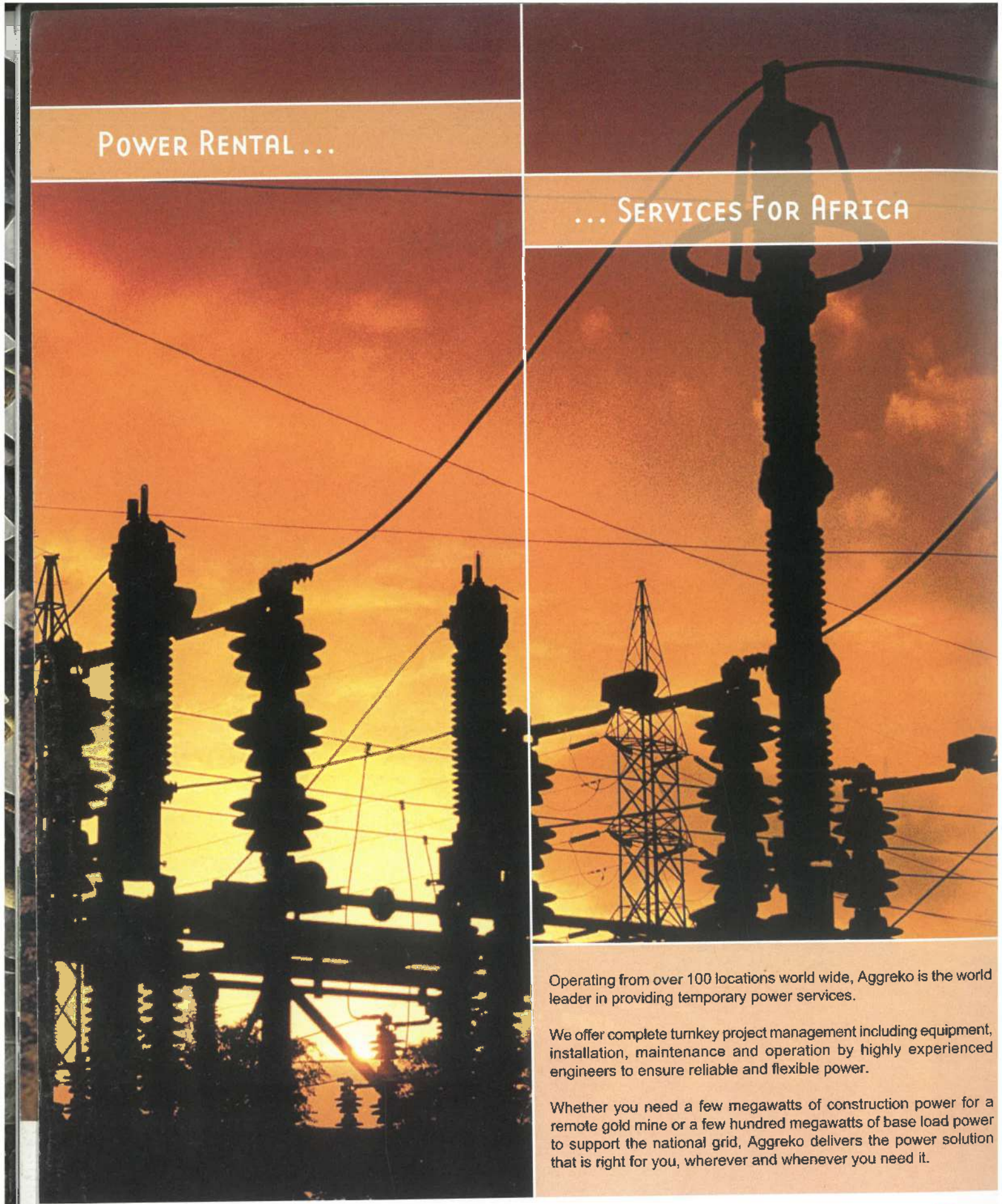
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Rhino Ark Objectives

Rhino Ark seeks solutions in the Aberdare mountain range and its eco-system to:

- Conserve one of Kenya's finest indigenous forests and its total habitat.
- Resolve human/wildlife conflict.

Rhino Ark is Committed to:

- Mobilise stakeholders nationwide and internationally for initiatives to protect and conserve the habitat; and promote managed use of forest products for the benefit of present and future generations.
- Raise funds and other forms of support for the building and long-term management of an electrified fence to encircle the Aberdare National Park and demarcated forestry areas which form the Aberdare Conservation Area.
- Build mechanisms and management structures to prevent illegal exploitation of the forest habitat wherever it is threatened. In so doing, all stakeholders will benefit and the rhino, bongo, indeed all flora and fauna species will be secure.

Act now!... help us to continue our work

RHINO ARK KENYA CHARITABLE TRUST

PO Box 181 Uhuru Gardens, 00517 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: (254-20) 2136010 / 2136011 Fax: (254-20) 604246
Mobiles: (254) 733-632460 / 724 604233
Email: rhinoark@wananchi.com
Website: www.rhinoark.org
Kenya Wildlife Services Complex, Langata, Nairobi

Rhino Ark (UK) Charity No. 1047083

Mr Guy Tritton, Chairman c/o Hogarth Chambers,
5 New Square, London WC2A 3RJ

Tel: (207) 421 2833, Fax: (207) 404 0505

Email: guytriton@hogarthchambers.com,
guy.triton@virgin.net

Website: www.rhinoark.org

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Mrs Lucy Willis Flemming - Administration

Holy Thorn Cottage, Clanville,

Andover, Hampshire, SP119HZ, England

Tel: 01264 772579 Mobile: 07748700874 Skype ID: Sipili

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Colin Church

Chairman's View

Aberdares – holistic management needed

When measured against the appalling devastation of certain gazetted forest areas in Kenya, we have a chance in the Aberdares to chart a way forward that will secure its future.

The pressures to compromise, to make expedient decisions, to bend to short term 'solutions' which chisel away at the Aberdares, most valued of all assets – its water catchments, indigenous forest and protected area status for irreplaceable flora and fauna – is as real as ever. But we have an opportunity to set a standard that could be a benchmark for national protected area policies and management plans – if we move fast.

All too frequently decisions impacting such precious conservation areas are made at random. One department of Government thinks something is a good idea for its own reasons or because there is a 'commercial' lobby pressing for a short term solution that looks good but, if enacted, will create long term degeneration or long term misuse of resources.

The Aberdare Fence Management Strategy Proposal – a blue-print for ensuring Rhino Ark's fence project is implemented into, and becomes an integral part of, an overall ecosystem management plan has now been completed. It contains the input of the major partners – Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service and Rhino Ark. It recognises the valued participation of the forest edge communities in the process. It now remains for the respective managements and their policy-making boards to review the proposals it contains. They need to ensure that the management initiative the fence represents is translated into a policy for future maintenance, not only of the fence, but most importantly, the entire Aberdare Conservation Area.

As a priority an ecosystem management framework is required so that whatever is planned – infrastructure, water off take, roads – and where they should or should not be considered, re-forestation of indigenous areas as outlined in the 2005 Forest Act, carbon credit opportunities, the sighting and type of eco-lodge development and concurrent zoning of tourism opportunities, are all planned holistically prior to any further *ad-hoc* moves. Such a plan needs a robust attitude within NEMA and for NEMA to contribute to and fully endorse a master plan for the Aberdare Conservation Area.

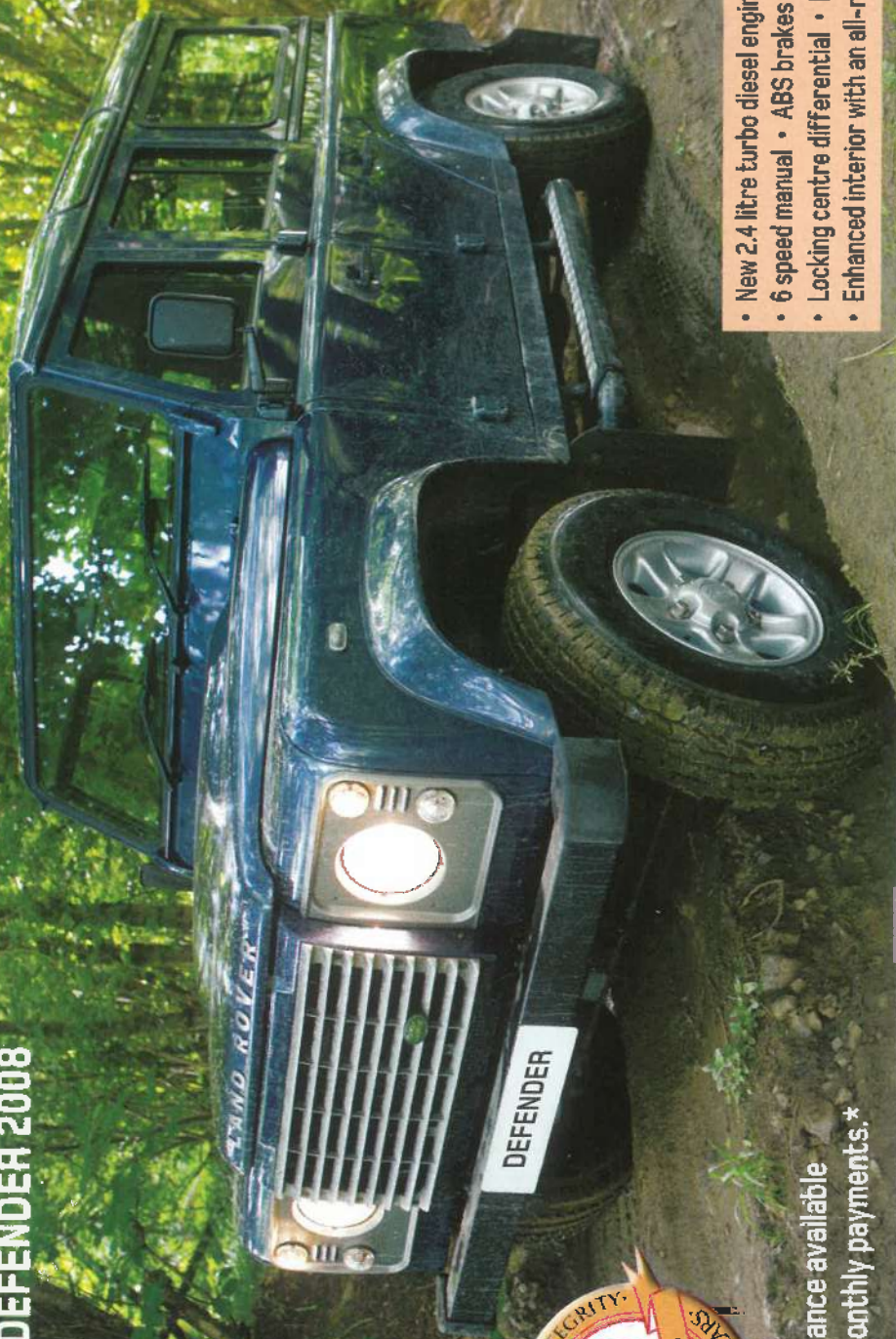
The integration of KFS and KWS into one ministry – a long overdue need – under the Grand Coalition Government, is welcomed.

If all key stakeholders can drive through an Aberdares Ecosystem Master Plan, the investment in all that Rhino Ark has achieved will be better secured.



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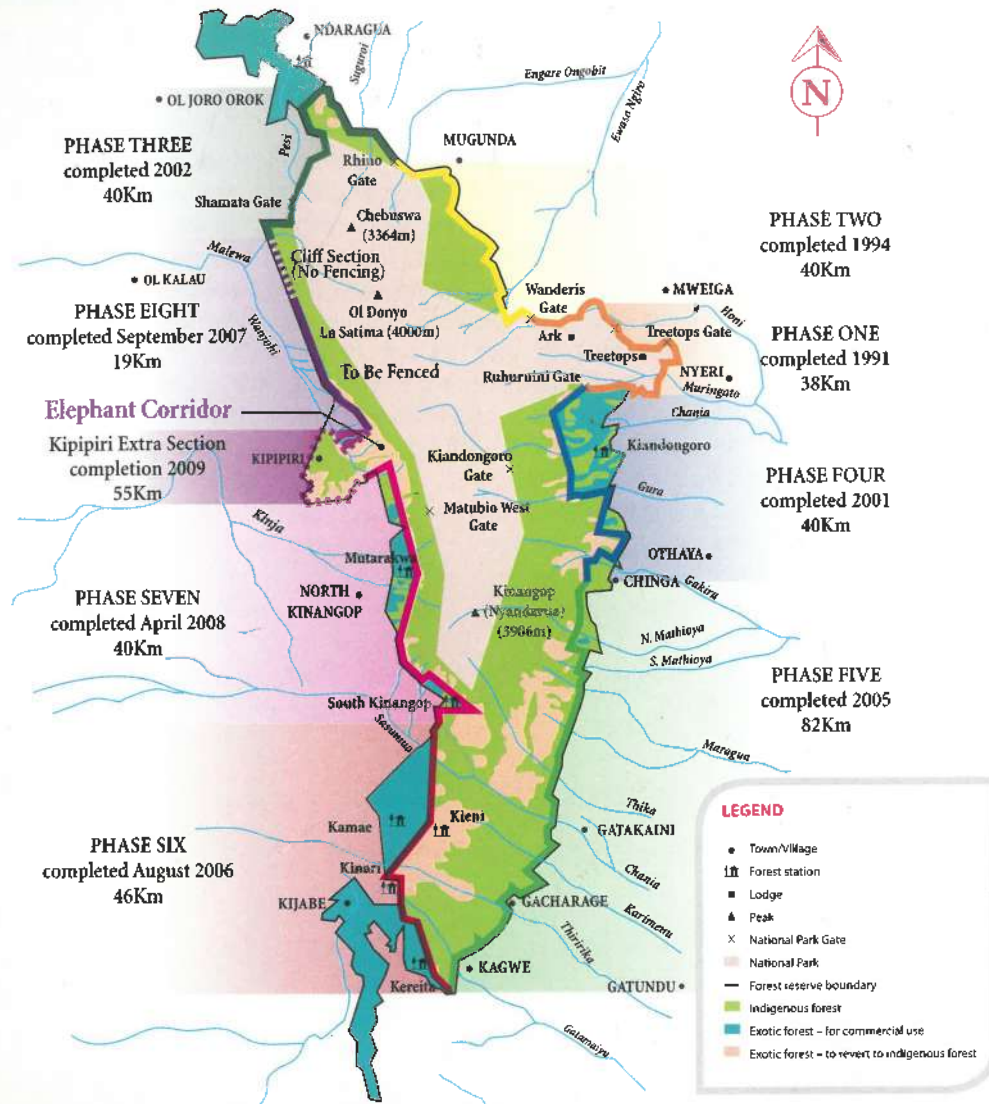
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DEFENDER

Fence Construction Status May 2008

Fence will be 400kms long when complete in 2009



Continued from page 1

...60 Kms Commissioned - only Kipipiri left

indigenous forest dead wood extraction, grass off take and livestock access into water catchments within the fence urgently need to comply to more rigorous guidelines and within the proposed overall plan, were highlighted.

Other activities which needed to fall within the scrutiny of an overall ecosystem plan included: 'environmentally damaging' road proposals, tourism project planning in which local communities could participate and secure additional income beyond farming, sighting and conditionalities of eco-lodge and tourism projects and carbon credit re-forestation opportunities.

Hundreds of forest edge farmers from the Njabini, Geta, Ndonyu Njeru areas attended the ceremony to celebrate the completion of two sections - Phase 7 from Njabini to Nandarasi and Phase 8 which continues through Wanjohi to the escarpment near the Malewa River. The completed distance of the electrified fence is now 348 kms.

Considerable attention within the planning for the Kipiriri Section has been given to ensuring a passage for wildlife and principally elephant in the 4 kms section between the main Aberdares and Mt Kipiriri. It is the first elephant corridor to be included in the long term planning for the future of migratory routes for wildlife between the Aberdares to their traditional savannah range areas. Work on the Mt Kipiriri section starts immediately and will be complete in twelve months.

Mr Kipng'etich confirmed that a further Ksh 40 million for fence materials requested in the 2008 supplementary estimates was now confirmed. This brings the total fund provision from the Treasury to Ksh 122 million. The Kenya Government's endorsement of the 'shilling for a shilling' plan recognises shared fiscal responsibility from civil society taxpayers (through Rhino Ark) and the public sector.

Rhino Ark has raised over ksh 500 million for the project since its inception twenty years ago.

Ksh 116 million raised – new record!

Total funds for fence construction, fence maintenance and some direct funding for the Bongo Surveillance Project topped the previous year's Ksh 109 million to achieve Ksh 116 million.

Of this figure, Rhino Charge was the largest single donor with Ksh 68,676,619 followed by the Kenya Government with a major contribution of Ksh 42 million worth of fencing materials (April '07 Supplementary Estimates Budget).

The Kenya Treasury's support funding continues to demonstrate that Rhino Ark's Aberdare fence is a public/ private venture in which the Kenyan public, and tax payers revenue is being used to complete the project and to ensure its management and maintenance is firmly

established within a legal framework to ensure lasting benefits for society.

What has Rhino Chargers' money been used for principally during this past year?

Some has been needed to obtain quick supplies of a few materials and pay off materials ordered in the 06/07 financial year; Government tender procedures are rigorous, but also take time. In order to ensure the build team are not short of wire, nails, insulators and other small items, Rhino Ark is able to make quick decisions.

A significant sum has gone towards the maintenance of the fence. It has enabled funds for the appointment of Rhino Ark Fence/Community Manger, James Githui. He will be able to move through the communities to sensitise the value of the

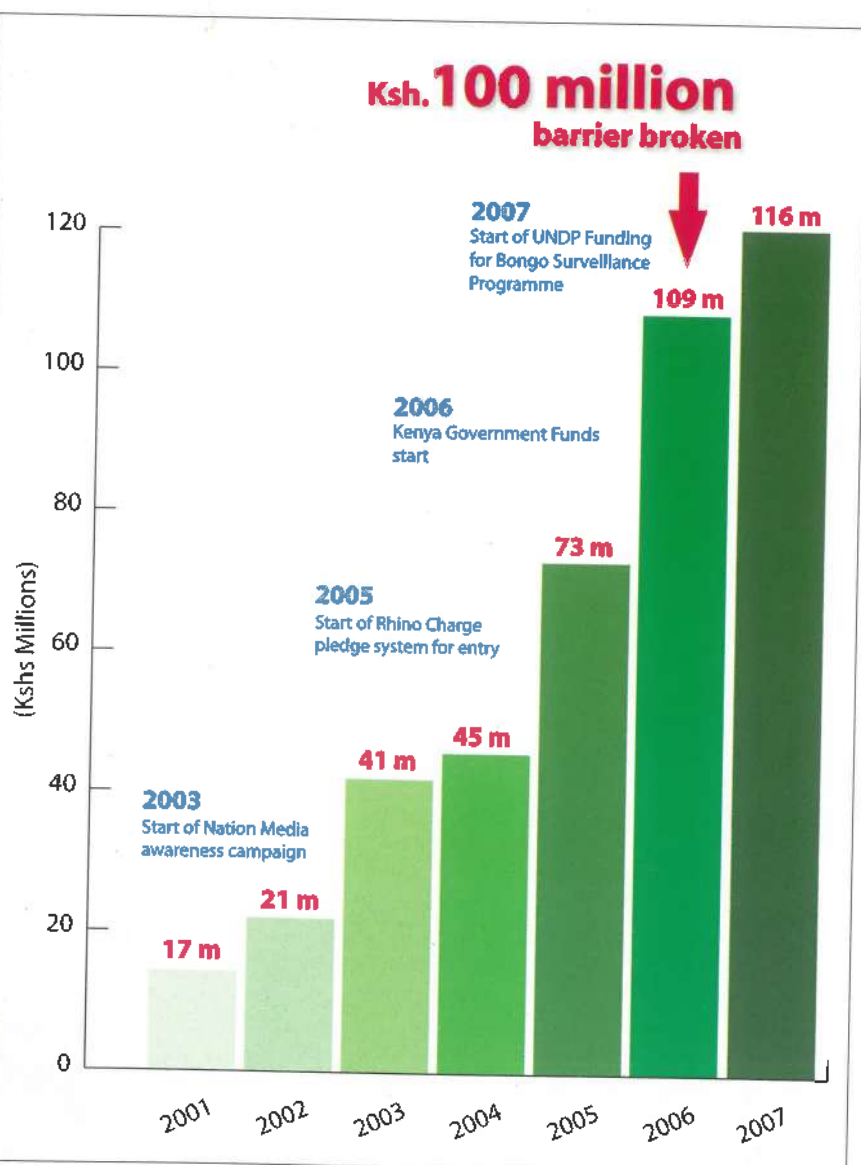
fence and begin the huge task of enlisting their support for fence security and a quick response mechanism, in addition to liaising with the fence scouts needed to patrol the now over 340 kms of fence line.

The Treasury funds are committed totally to provision of materials, whilst Rhino Ark continues to pay labour, fuel and vehicle running costs for the fence build team.

A special achievement last year was a USD 50,000 grant from UNDP especially for the Bongo Surveillance Project. The success of the fence in resolving human /wildlife conflict is demonstrated in the area's stronger security umbrella, thereby enabling a recovery of wildlife numbers and a dramatic reduction in illegal logging.

The Bongo Surveillance Team won the East African Wildlife Society Michael Werikhe Award for conservation last year.

As a result of the work done by the Bongo team – all members of local communities living around the Aberdares – further herds of Bongo have been identified by them in Mt Kenya, Eburru and the Mau Forest thereby strengthening the efforts to take the endangered species activity to higher levels.



Another Ksh 40m from Treasury

Treasury Permanent Secretary, Mr. Joseph K. Kinyua has included Ksh 40 million in the 07/08 current year supplementary budget for the Rhino Ark Fence.

Rhino Ark Chairman of Trustees, Michael Karanja said: "This support provided in payments for essential materials for fence construction and maintenance demonstrates the Government's commitment to the 'shilling for a shilling' concept".

Since 2005 Treasury have committed Ksh 115 million to the project.

The latest allocation is subject to Parliamentary approval.

What is built must stay built!

A fence that costs Ksh 1.5 million per kilometer to build and is valued in material terms at Ksh 600 million (US Dollars 9.6 million) needs quality supervision, maintenance and management every minute of every day and night.

In February last year Rhino Ark launched its *Strategic Evaluation of the Aberdare Fence – Transition from Fence Build to Ecosystem Management*. By February this year a document entitled: *Aberdare Fence Management Strategy Proposal* was handed over to Rhino Ark's Board of Trustees and to the Directors of KWS and KFS.

As reported in earlier ARKives this Proposal puts forward a legal framework, management concepts, and detailed budgeting for a Trust under a Board of Trustees to manage the fence in perpetuity.

The Proposal is the work of a team of managers responsible for the Aberdares from KWS and KFS and with the Rhino Ark's management input over a series of meetings which took place at Mweiga KWS Park headquarters and Rhino Ark's operations base, Rhino Retreat, in the Aberdare National Park.

Rhino Ark wishes to thank the team totaling 18 officers from the two agencies which did the hard work of compiling the policy framework and the budget it needs.

The Trust will enable mechanisms for funds to channel to its own account from Government, strategic conservation donor organisations and Rhino Ark.

Rhino Ark will keep donors apprised of progress for the Trust's legal establishment as developments occur.



Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Officials on site, Phase Seven of Aberdare Fence. From left to right: KWS Assistant Director Mountain Region, Baraza Otungah; Fence/Community Manager Rhino Ark, James Githui; Rhino Ark Trustee, Mike Higgins; Chairman Rhino Ark, Colin Church; Board Members KFS, E.A Ochieng and Lt. General (Rtd) Njoroge and Director KFS, David Mbugua.

New Fence Completion Targets



Section of plastic post fence at Njabini, Phase Seven - now completed and commissioned.

In ARKive November 2007, we reported that alignment issues had put back completion targets by several months.

ARKive is able to report that the issues have been resolved in a series of meetings and discussions with the Kenya Forest Service senior management and its Board of Trustees.

This has enabled Phase Seven to be completed last month (April 2007), the alignment of the elephant corridor linking the main Aberdares with Mt Kipipiri and the fence alignment around Mt Kipipiri all agreed. KFS is in the process of confirming the boundary beacons around Mt Kipipiri. Mobilisation for fencing the

Kipipiri Extra Section begins this month (May 2008).

The distance to be fenced, allowing for some areas of plantation on its lower flatter slopes, will be about 50 kms. Subject to funds raised at the 2008 Rhino Charge and a regular supply of materials from Treasury via KWS/KFS, the Rhino Ark build team is aiming to complete the final fencing during the first quarter of 2009. This target requires two fence build teams to work from both ends of the alignment consecutively.

Once the Mt Kipipiri Extra Section is completed, the 400 km Aberdare fence will be finished. That will be an occasion for a major celebration!

20th anniversary... Chargers gear up, Entries full!

All will be celebrating their achievement at raising funds for the Aberdares and the fence, now nearly finished, and for its management into the future.

Twenty years ago on the rugged slopes of Mt. Suswa just 60 kms from Nairobi, Rhino Charge was born as a unique sporting event. For the literally thousands who have taken part over the years, it is a proud moment. The first event raised just over Ksh 200,000, the minimum pledge amount for every competitor today, although most commit to the higher levels of pledge (Ksh 500,000 and Ksh 1 million) for the limited number of slots for the annual Rhino Charge.

Winners of 1989 Rhino Charge in festive mood. Travers Allison, driver, with team mates, Richard Low, Rowland Walker and Shane Andrade.



Rhino Charge Twenty Years old

As Chargers stagger back into camp at the end of the 2008 event, it will be twenty years since just 40 4x4s pioneered what remains one of the world's greatest off-road events.

Bashing about over sharp lava slopes and thorn scrub on the slopes of Mt. Suswa, 60 kms from Nairobi, little did they know then, but they were the guinea pigs of a new sport – *Rhino Charging*.

From those early beginnings, the basic concept of driving the shortest distance between guard posts using a compass and up to six entrants in each car to do the running, scouting and navigating for the driver, was established.

A beaten up old 1000 cc Suzuki driven by 17 year old Travers Allison with team mates, Richard Low and Rowland Walker logged the least distance and was declared the winner (see picture above).

The next year big rallying names sniffed fun, fame, extreme driving and entered. Having heard of the prowess of the tiny Suzuki, fearless Safari Rally driver George Barbour hired one off the line of a reputable car hire firm in Nairobi and beat other big rally names – Rob Collinge and Jim Heather Hayes. The Suzuki took a beating and for years later car hire firms refused to hire out 4x4's over the June 1 weekend!

Funds raised for Rhino Ark at the first ever event just topped the Ksh 200,000 mark. Last year Rhino Chargers raised Ksh 68,676,619 – over one million US dollars! A single car No. 5 raised Ksh 9,275,754.

Over the twenty years Rhino Charge has raised Ksh 341 million for the Aberdare fence – representing 70% of all monies raised. But equally commendable is that the funds come from thousands and thousands of ordinary folk who support the conservation of the Aberdares by giving something to each entrant.

Rhino Chargers' Briefing May 10

All teams must have at least one team member attend the pre-Charge briefing on May 10th at 11.30 a.m., Ruiru Sports Club.

You will be briefed on Pre-Charge check-in details. Each competitor and guard post sponsor will receive the Rhino Charge Programme and goodie-bags.

All guard post sponsors are to send a representative as well.

Plenty of chilled beer and a curry buffet will be on offer by Ruiru Sports Club.

Raffle Tickets

The 2008 Raffle tickets are ready for collection on request. Most teams have already collected but more are available from Rhino Ark office.





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A full list will be published at Prize-giving

Many thanks to our Raffle Committee:
New Chairperson – Jenny Davey, Henrietta Remnant,
and Belinda Levitan for their voluntary efforts to secure
these wonderful prizes. Rhino Ark wishes to thank
Debbie Evans who retired as Chair of the committee after
serving for four years since the raffle was launched.

Camping – 2008 Charge Tarpo Appointed

Much attention is given by the Rhino Charge Committee each year to ensure that our camping facilities and the area set aside for camping are as Charger- and spectator-friendly as possible. This year will be no exception. In fact following the system introduced last year at Kinyach, there will be two distinct areas for camping.

These are designated *Competitor Camp* and *Spectator Camp*.

Competitor Camp: Once again this year Car Entrants are being requested to submit the names of those in their campsites in advance of entry. The Committee will be asking for these names at the Rhino Charge Briefing (Ruiru Sports Club, May 10th at 11.30 am).

Spectator Camp: This will be in its own identified area and with much more space than at Kinyach. Our camping facilities are always dictated by conditions on the ground and hence vary from year to year. The Committee is constantly looking at improvements.

This year the pre-Charge excitements such as Scrutineering on May 31 will be open to everyone through payment of a Ksh 500 per head Venue Area entry fee (under 18 years old, free entry).

The low cost of staging the Charge is because an army of people give hours and hours of time to ensure it happens. So it is thought that a venue entry charge from Spectator Camp is a fair added contribution to the overall fundraise.

The same wrist band system will be in force – a three colour coded one for a) Competitor camp entrants, b) Officials and sponsors, c) Spectator camp visitors. All persons who enter the check-in gate – including camp staff must wear the wrist bands at all times. Those found without a band by officials and KK Guards, our security service team, will have to pay again.

This year the Spectator Camp will be under the management of an appointed safari outfitter-Tarpo Industries Ltd.

Tarpo will have three separate operating centers:

- A two tier fully equipped camp – the Village Camp and the Maridadi Camp
- The self-service spectator camping area.
- A food and drink outlet – set near and within easy access on foot of the self service spectator camping area and will be open for competitors, spectators, sponsors and officials.

**Tarpo is the appointed Spectator Camp outfitter for the 2008 Rhino Charge. Please contact Shafana or Martha:
info@tarpo.com Tel: (020) 2018655 /0736 958400 for details.**

Tarpo will run a tent bar and snacks outlet near HQ/Scrutineering and on Charge Day June 1, a soft drink and snacks outlet at the Gauntlet.

As has always been the practice, the appointed outfitter can accommodate competitors, sponsors and media teams in their camp.

The Five Million Year Old Mountain

By Dr Abigail Allison

Dr. Abigail Allison studied the extrusive carbonatites of Oldoinyo Lengai for her Ph.D. thesis and was based jointly at the Natural History Museum London and University College London. She is co-writing a paper on the composition and possible origin of recent ashes and lavas being analysed at University College London. She also guides special interest geological safaris in Kenya and Tanzania.

The geology of the Aberdares was first observed by J.W. Gregory, the famous Rift Valley geologist, during his 1893 expedition which revealed that this mountain range was older than Mount Kenya. Rocks which outcrop on the lower Eastern flanks are seen to extend underneath the volcanic ashes and lavas erupted from Mount Kenya.

The Aberdares are approximately 5 million years old.

Picture a broad expanse of weathering basement rocks, gneisses and quartzites 650 million years old, similar to those seen across much of Western and Central Kenya. This gently sloping plain was broken by occasional mountains of harder rock, some of which are still seen today (Taita Hills, Kasigau, Oldoinyo Sabuk).

Around 70 million years ago, just as the Atlantic Ocean was opening up and coinciding with the demise of the dinosaurs, the Earth's Crust in Central Kenya began to bulge. The Rift Valley began as a shallow depression as the crust subsided over the bulge. At around 20 million years ago great faults developed along the sides and later in the base of the Valley.

These fault movements would each have been accompanied by earthquakes. As subsidence occurred lavas were erupted so this valley would have had little vertical expression. Around 12 million years ago the

Rift filled with a very runny lava called Phonolite which breached the valley sides and ran down the flanks. This lava can be seen forming the Yatta Plateau and extends underneath later volcanic rocks throughout the Rift Valley. Volcanoes, including those of the Aberdares and Mount Kenya, formed both within the Rift Valley and on the flanks from around 5-2 million years ago.

The Aberdares are comprised of three main volcanic centres which still form the highest peaks; Sattima, Kinangop and Kipipiri. The oldest volcanic rocks outcrop at the top of these peaks where later ashes and lavas have been removed by erosion. Vertical dykes cut through these rocks and would have formed the feeders for later eruptions of lavas and ashes which are found lower down. It is these dyke rocks which form the spectacular "Dragon's Teeth" approx. 4km North of Sattima. These extraordinary formations have weathered to form serrated crags and prongs which rise above the moorland, and on misty mornings loom menacingly large.

Later ashes and tuffs (cemented layers of ash and small blocks) cover much of the Kinangop and are quarried as building stone. Basalts were then erupted from numerous small cones across Southern Laikipia, many can be seen today, e.g. Nyeri Hill. Occasionally fragments of the ancient basement rocks have been blown out of these small volcanoes, confirming the existence of these rocks beneath the Aberdares. Many of the Aberdares' waterfalls (Chania and Amboni) have formed where these Basalts have been undercut, in places columnar jointing can be seen. It was after the eruption of these Laikipian Basalt that Mount Kenya formed around 2 million years ago.

Around 1 million years ago Earth experienced a cold period during which glaciers were present at the top of the Aberdares. Glacial moraines can be seen in the highest valleys some of which are typically U-shaped e.g. at the heads of the two main branches of the Malewa Ndogo river.



Twin Peaks

The most recent structural event in the area was the development of the Sattima Fault Scarp. This extends about 70km and defines the Eastern edge of the Rift Valley forming one of the principal boundary faults. To the West of the fault the ground drops away sharply to the Kinangop Plateau and Ol Bolessat Plain. As faulting took place the crust to the West of the fault was tilted Eastwards and a lake formed as water was held against the scarp.

The Gusiru, or moorland, has formed on a plateau to the South of Sattima. Its Eastern edge is well defined and is marked by the upper limit of the bamboo forest. The Eastern dip slope of the Aberdares is covered with forest and deeply incised by river valleys. Where drainage is good, usually on the slopes, thick red lateritic soils have developed. Flatter areas with poorer drainage develop black cotton soils. In these soils calcium carbonate nodules or kunkar often form.

This mountain range therefore owes its form to a combination of geological and geographical forces. Volcanic eruptions, faulting and later erosion and glaciation have all shaped the Aberdares. This range now plays host to an ever threatened indigenous forest with important populations of mammals, birds and insects. Our dependence on the water which derives from this mountain chain alone is good reason to protect this extraordinary place; however it is the raw beauty and spectacular scenery which leave one breathless and mean that at all costs the Aberdares must be preserved.



Dragons Teeth

Total Goes 'Bush'



The Total network temporarily grew by one station during the 2007 Rhino Charge in Kinyach, Kerio Valley. A 'Bush' station was set up on site to cater for the Chargers and spectators during the grueling event. The station comprised a huge tent that took a whole day of backbreaking effort to put up, complemented by Total banners, posters, buntings and a mini totem to give it a complete Total station outlook.

A team from Total Kenya, support crew from Mt. View Transporters and Kenya Tents, ran a station for 5 days offering Unleaded Premium, Low Sulphur diesel, lubricants and Totalgaz plus accessories. Impressive sales were made and loads of appreciation given by the motorists on site for the much needed service in the remote area.

This was the third year running that Total has continued to support the Rhino Charge initiative and set up makeshift stations on site. Kudos to the teams involved right from preparations to the eventual rollout at the event.

Total will be there June 1st Weekend to fuel the organisers of the 2008 Rhino Charge for conservation!

Maruti Gypsy for Maintenance



Rhino Ark has expanded its Maruti fleet for maintenance of the Aberdare Fence. Pictured above, Rhino Ark's Colin Church (left) hands over the keys of the new Maruti Gypsy 4x4 to Senior Warden, Aberdare National Park Catherine Wambani (centre). Looking on is Rhino Ark Fence/Community Manager, James Githui (right). Rhino Ark now has three Marutis and one Land Cruiser solely for maintenance work.



Anton Levitan, Chairman Rhino Charge Committee (left) receives keys to a Land Rover Defender tdi from CMC Motors Group, Chief Executive, Martin Forster (Right). This Land Rover Defender will be used for recceing Rhino Charge venues.

CMC Companion for Green Goddess

If the 'Green Goddess' could talk, every Rhino Charger would want to buy it a drink – or try TTK – on her!

Green Goddess – Registration KAD 926T is the 'beast' driven by Clerk of the Course Anton Levitan who creates each year's Rhino Charge Course. It has to find every guard post. It slips, slides, scrambles off luggas, mitaras, gets stuck on rocks, mud and hot sand, but always to prove every guard post can be reached on Charge day.

Green Goddess is a 1990 Ex British Army Landrover, TDI. Rhino Arks' Ken Kuhle and Rhino Charge Committee member, Tarsem Sembhi found it on a slag heap, bent and bruised, discarded by the British Army in Nanyuki after an accident. They had it re-built and it has never looked back.

Today CMC Motors Group has provided Anton Levitan and his Green Goddess a 2006 Model Land Rover Defender tdi to lead the recce team for creating the 2008 Rhino Charge Course. (See picture).

Land Rover has launched its latest in a long line of Defenders at the beginning of this year. The new model has changes that maintain its relevance while enhancing its functionality, versatility and durability. The Defender's roots date back to 1948 (since then nearly 1.9 million units have been sold).

A new 2.4 litre diesel engine offers increased torque and drivability; while the new 6 speed gearbox provides a lower first gear ratio for better off road control, and a high sixth gear for improved cruising refinement.

Inside the vehicle, a new fascia improves ergonomics, whilst new seating improves comfort for all the occupants, from the four-seat Defender 90 to the five-seat 110 and 130 models. A seven seat Defender 110 is also available. Greater ability both on-road and off-road plus increased comfort, performance and refinement are among the major improvements introduced for the new Defender.



Alan McKittrick

McKittrick... a Trustee

Alan McKittrick has become a Trustee of Rhino Ark Charitable Trust. Alan an ardent Rhino Charger, has given 20 years of support to Rhino Ark's activities for conservation of the Aberdares.

Alan has worked with NAS for over 20 years, being responsible for much of NAS Holdings development and diversifica-

tion during the last decade. An engineer by profession, he has had considerable experience in Eastern and Southern Africa in the manufacturing and production sectors and livestock industry.

He has competed in every Rhino Charge since 1989. Rhino Ark is proud to have Alan in its team of devoted Trustees.

Resource Development Manager



Eric Kihui

A plan approved by the Trustees in April last year to broaden the management structure of Rhino Ark required two positions to be filled. James Githui, based in Nyeri was appointed Manager Fence/Community Development in August last year.

The second position of Resource Development Manager has now been filled effective February 1 this year. Eric Kihui joins Rhino Ark having served in a variety of senior management positions (non-uniformed) in Kenya Wildlife Service, including project and assets management, and most recently heading the Productivity Department tasked with ISO 9000 preparation. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) from Nairobi University. In 2003/4 he was a member of the KWS/EAWLS Team which competed in the Rhino Charge.

KEKIKI re-plants



KEKIKI members with tree nursery equipment provided by Rhino Ark.

The KEKIKI Community, comprised of three fence-line communities otherwise known as Kerieta, Kinale and Kamae each initiated indigenous tree nurseries in support of reforestation in the open spaces inside the fence.

Community members spend time collecting indigenous tree seedlings from the forest, preparing and tending the nurseries. Rhino Ark has purchased nursery equipment.

To date, the communities have planted 18,575 seedlings covering an area of 18.55 ha. The seedlings are of various types but similar in the three nurseries and include *Podocaus Liti* otherwise known as *Muthengera*, *Vitex Kinesis* (*Mukoe*), *Prunus Africana* (*Miiri/ Red Stinkwood*) and *Dombeya Burs* (*Mikeu*), etc.



KPLC Donates Ksh 500,000

The Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) has donated Ksh 500,000 to the Aberdare Fencing Project. Mr. Don Priestman, CEO KPLC (right) presented the cheque to Rhino Ark's Colin Church (left). With them was Senior Warden Aberdare Kenya Wildlife Service, Catherine Wambani (middle) who was their host during the event at the Aberdare National Park.

Quattro Charge Wind Fall...

TEN CHARGERS SHARE Ksh 1,783,500

Rhino Charge entrants to the March 30th Rob's Magic Quattro Charge took the top six positions in the expert section. Ten 2008 Rhino Charge entrants took part.

Winner Rommy Bamrah of Car 40 Rhino Charge received a winning bonus of Ksh 160,000 towards his Rhino Charge 2008 pledge having lost only 855 points in the expert section. The remaining nine received cheques of Ksh 130,000.

The event raised a record of Ksh 1,783,500. The prize money as promised by organiser and ex-Rhino Charge veteran winner Rob Collinge, who retired from the Rhino Charge last year, was distributed to the ten 2008 Rhino Charge entries who participated. Smaller cash prizes were given to "budding Rhino Chargers" in the Intermediate, Junior and Quad sections.

A total of 40 vehicles participated before a crowd of 1,500.

Jatinder Mehta, father of teenager Gurmeet Mehta who performed as the best non-Rhino Charge entrant, announced that he would give a further Ksh 216,500 to top up the Quattro Charge total fundraise to Rhino Ark to Ksh 2 million.

Gurmeet also raised Ksh 500,000 for the internally displaced women and children at Mathare. He raised the money with help from his team, - Team Kenya, and donated it to the *Mama na Dada Foundation*. In the same spirit Rob Collinge pledged Ksh 30,000 towards this foundation which is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of the girl child and women.

In the Intermediate Section, Bob Kaugi raced his way to first place having dropped 190 points. Second place was scooped by John Silva, a first time entrant and Safarz Yakub came third.

HOG CHARGE Hog Charge – 10th Anniversary

This year, the Hog Charge will be celebrating its 10th anniversary on 27th April at Kahawa Sukari Ranch, Ruiru. The Hog Charge, a cycling event which raises money for Rhino Charge Car 35, has managed to raise a total of Ksh 10,728,606.43 over the last ten years. Children from different schools team up to raise a minimum of Ksh 10,000 to qualify for entry.

In previous years, the Quattro Charge has raised money for organiser, Rob Collinge's car. Rob promised that future Quattro Charges would raise funds for Rhino Charge cars which enter the event.



Kinyach Builds



The 2007 Rhino Charge Landowner's Access Fee (LAF) of Ksh 2.2 m is to be divided equally between Kinyach's Pokot and Turgen. Each community is to be allocated Ksh 1.1 m in aid of developing their communities. The Pokot have received their share of Ksh 1.1 m.

"We plan to complete two classrooms at Kipnai Primary School, construct eight latrines and two pre-school classrooms with the funds," said Mr. Simeon Kompos, Asst. Chief, Kipnai Sub-Location.

Pictured left are local elders of Kinyach.

Schools Join Bongo Community Project

Part of the UNDP grant issued to Rhino Ark's Bongo Surveillance Project (BSP) is for education outreach to school children in the Aberdare / Mt. Kenya area.

In February, four schools in the Aberdares were nominated to give entries for a Bongo Drawing Competition steered under the Wildlife Club for the Bongo Surveillance Project.

Karumuro Primary (S. Aberdares), Gichami Primary (S. Aberdares), Mbondoni Primary (Mweiga, Nyeri) and Kamburaini Primary (N. Aberdares) participated.

The competition's objective was to create awareness and appreciation of the physical characteristics of the critically endangered bongo as well as an understanding of its habitat.

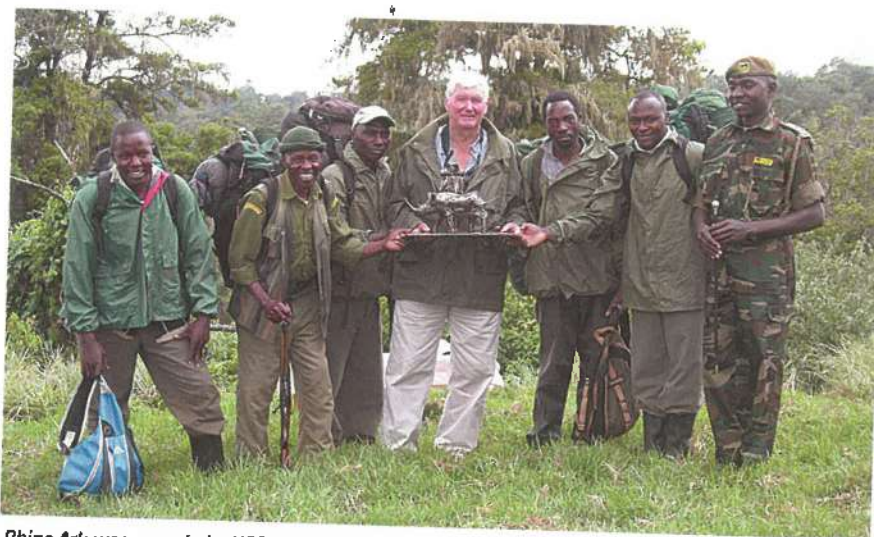
Prizes and certificates were awarded to the top three winners. 85 year-old Ms. Elsie Hall from the UK donated half of the prizes issued to the winners. Ms. Juliette Shears, a volunteer for BSP also donated prizes.

The overall winner will be awarded soon. The top prize is being co-ordinated by Dr. Jake Veasey, a Bongo UK expert and Bongo Director, UK Europe and Middle East Zoos.

The bongo programme is community focused, enlisting people who are

conversant with the forest and with training and leadership skills. These people provide an essential ingredient to the Bongo Project's success to date.

Saving the bongo in turn saves the forest and the environment as a whole.



Rhino Ark was awarded a USD 50,000 grant from UNDP for the Bongo Surveillance Team – pictured here receiving the East Africa Wildlife Society 2007 Michael Werikhe Award for Conservation

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Birds revive in a stable Aberdares By Liz Museo



Jacksons' Francolin By Colin Church

Data gathered from Kenya's Important Bird Areas (IBAs) Status and Trends 2006 report showed there has been an improvement in the number of bird species spotted in the Aberdare Mountains.

Important Bird Areas are sites essential for the conservation of birds at the global, regional or sub-regional level. IBAs also shelter other endangered or characteristic animals and plants and coincide well with biodiversity hotspots identified by other environmental organisations such as Conservation International.

In many forest bird areas such as Mt. Kenya, Aberdares and Kikuyu Escarpment Forests where the *shamba* system was stopped in water catchment zones, the rate of exploitation of the forests has reportedly drastically gone down. But there is still a need for conservation interventions for these areas to be good bird habitats, says the report.



Crowned Eagle by Peter Davey

Notable forest regeneration in the Aberdare Mountains has followed the Rhino Ark fencing project. Positive results in the form of reduced illegal logging; a rise in the number of bongo antelope and reduction in human-elephant conflicts has led to improving habitats and to an increase in the population of animal species – particularly birds, the report states.



November 2008 - Picture by Guy Combes, Aberdares.



Rhino Corner

Best Ranger Picture



The picture was taken by Ranger Vincent Kosgei. He wins Arkive's Ranger Rhino Image Competition.

February 2008 - Picture by Colin Church, Aberdares.



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Film Launch

"Spirit of the Charge" 2007

The 2007 'Spirit of the Charge' film launch, held on 29th November 2007, drew a large number of Chargers, sponsors and Rhino Charge fanatics.

The event's sponsor, the Carnivore provided a grand buffet with nyama choma, live entertainment until midnight, a prize-giving for the top five fundraisers and the film show!

Rhino Ark presented all guests with a goodie bag containing a copy of the Spirit of the Charge DVD and a Rhino Charge cap.

The top fundraisers were Alan McKittrick, Bruce Knight, Nick Hutchinson, John Trundell & Graham McKittrick of Car 5, Mike and Sarah Higgins of Car 22, Mark Tilbury and the Hog Charge Team of Car 35, Ben Woodhams of Car 39 and the Avery's - Sean, Kuki, Patrick, Kieran, and Harry Brainch and Graeme Watson of Car 38. Dr. Perez Olindo, a Trustee of Rhino Ark presented the prizes to the winners.

Diary Date: Thursday 20th November, Carnivore, Nairobi.
Premiere Rhino Charge 2008

Car 5 - McKittrick's team is all smiles after receiving a prize for being the highest fundraisers.



Gai Cullen of car 58 and her fellow team members at the film premiere.



Mike and Sarah Higgins (second and third left) of Car 22 with their party. Mike and Sarah Higgins were the second highest fundraisers.



Rhino Ark UK News

Rhino Charge UK

The 10th UK Rhino Charge will be held at Pippingford Park, East Sussex on 21st September 2008.

Plans are in hand to have a celebration social event on the evening of Saturday 20th September at the site and the organisers are opening up areas of the estate that have previously been inaccessible to provide greater variety for seasoned competitors.

Rhino Ark supporters are encouraged to come along to enjoy the site and spectate even if they cannot enter the event.

More sponsorship has been raised already than in previous years so the position of Highest Fundraiser and thus the Victor Ludorum should be hotly contested.

Further details can be found at:
<http://www.rhinoark.org/aboutrc.htm>

London Flora Marathon 2008

Rhino Ark's four runners in the London Flora marathon this year were:

- Ben Porter
- Kieran Harten
- Paul Buckley
- Oscar McCormack

This event was held on 13th April 2008 in London. Each runner was raising money for Rhino Ark. Last year £4,800 (Ksh 648,000) was raised. The amount raised will be announced in June.



Thank You

Rhino Ark wishes to thank the following people and companies who have provided services or specific donations in cash or kind to Rhino Ark.

KPLC

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Kenya Tourism Federation

Office facility

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Assistance with Bongo
Surveillance team

John Lloyd / Linda Jasmine /

Robin Johnson /

Dr. Maidana Nunn /

Peter & Anne Broomfield

Donation

Goodyear Kenya Ltd

Donated tyres for
Green Goddess and other
Rhino Ark Vehicles

Marie-Claire Webner

Rhino Charge 2008 logo

Steadman Associates

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Gavin Bennet

MC at Spirit of the Charge
2007 Premiere

Carnivore Restaurant

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Recce vehicle for Rhino Charge
(See Story page 11)

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NO. 31

NOV 2007



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