

Proposal to Expand WKNP to Protect Elephants

Class Exercise – Fall 2011

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FANR-GEOG 2200

WCS Representatives

James Berl, Reza Sabzevari, Rose Bloomberg

Goal: Achieve consensus or some sort of compromise

- Proposal: to pay local farmers to move to new areas with money from taxes on oil palms and donations from WCS and other groups.

Main objectives:

- Want park to expand
- Use incentive other than money to compromise with farmers
- Move farmers to decrease conflict
- Help both sides

Potential Problems:

- Villages are going to want to stay on current land
- Farmers have lived there and want to continue living there, but don't want conflict with the elephants
- Oil Palm Company: not wanting to be taxed, thus are going to be against expanding park
- The palm oil production is economically beneficial for entire province

Benefits from park expansion:

- Economic benefits from the increase in ecotourism
- Opens up new jobs for people to work in the park
- Biologists have more to study

Alternatives:

- Alternate jobs for farmers without movement
- Ecotourism could be provide an economic boost alongside palm oil production
- Farmers to plant alternate crop
- Propose the building of a fence along the parks borders
- Have farmers or park employees plant a buffer zone between elephants and their crops by planting favorable crops such as rice or maize inside the park for elephants to feed off of instead of venturing off into the farmers land/crops

Proposal from Biologists from WKNP**Becky Lynn, Kaiser Smith, Amy Ferguson, Jay LeBow****What we care about:**

- The park remain functional
- Wildlife remains protected
- Habitat is sustained
- Conservation of wildlife comes first
- Long-term management in mind,
- Focus on protection of elephants; we don't want them to go extinct!

Question: Should Way Kambas National Park be allowed to double in size to protect elephants and minimize negative human interactions between elephants and humans? Proposal is to pay local farmers to move to new areas with money from taxes on oil palms and donations from WCS and other groups in the conservation community.

Biologists from WKNP are in favor of the proposal!**Pros:**

- Ensure less negative human and elephant interactions: crops would have less chance of being damaged.
- Increasing park size would reduce poacher's ability to find elephants.
- Biologists can conduct more research.
- Increase of positive human-elephant interactions through ecotourism.

Ideas to make it happen:

- Put the crop farms that elephants like the most farthest from the park area to ensure no crop damage because there is no real fence.
- Support ecotourism and consider profits made off ecotourism to go to local farmers and villagers.

-Ecotourism will provide job opportunities for local farmers and villagers as well.

Village Council Representative Group

Chang Lim, Peter Easton, Kathryn Kirkpatrick

We support the peasant farmers moving with pay from local taxes on palm oil.

What we want for our relocated farmers:

- New farms comparable in size to the ones given to the park
- Money to cover moving to the new villages and starting new farms
- The park agrees to hire 20% of the displaced farmers (emphasis on hiring those who are willing to move/support the park growth)
- The park agrees to train those workers in management while working at the park
- Ensure that the displaced farmers are welcomed by the communities they are moved to and no hostility results from the park growth
- The park agrees to place a fence around the new perimeter of the park to avoid elephants attacking the crops of new farms
- Ensure that the displaced villagers make the greatest profit by selling whatever crops they have not sold to the government

Local Peasant Farmers

Alexandra Geronimo, Erin McGonigle, Sabina Mendonca

Pros:

- The elephants won't destroy our crops if we are moved.
- We are getting paid to move.

Cons:

- Is the land we'll be moved to going to be as good as the land we're currently on?
- We don't want to have to start all over between our home and our crop fields.
- Will the community be broken apart? Will we be moved to wherever space is available and spread far and wide?

Ideas:

We would like to suggest putting up a fence around the park to keep the elephants from roaming to farmland.

Our Take:

In the end, the local peasant farmers will be for this proposal simply because we cannot afford to keep losing our crops, so no crops in the same spot versus starting over in an elephant free zone will eventually be worth the move so we can gain a profit again on our crops. The transition will be difficult, but we understand the necessity.

Stipulations:

If we were to move, we would want to be compensated for the loss of crops during that particular season and the cost to of building/buying a new home. We also want to the land we are moved to be ready to be planted on.

We don't want to be placed somewhere where we are too isolated so it makes going to market difficult; we don't want to be any further away than we already are. We also want schools for our children to be relatively close.

Plans of the Ecotourism Company from Jakarta

Logan, Whitt, Michelle, Anna

Although the Ecotourism Company is from Java, it's operating in Sumatra. The company will be bringing in money for both provinces if the Way Kambas National Park is expanded, which should appease the Java government officials.

The Ecotourism Company supports high taxes and park expansion. It encourages the cooperation of farmers and the surrounding community if this expansion takes place.

Villagers from the surrounding village will be employed to serve as guides and fill other employer positions within the park. Tours will be given in the newly expanded portion of the park while the old section of the national park is restricted to the wildlife and park management.

The company believes in economic development because villagers can make more money from ecotourism than farming. Palm oil is not a sustainable source of income—ecotourism is. All work positions—from the construction of hotels to working the restaurants to park guides—will be filled with local Sumatran villagers. The presence of ecotourism will also provide a previously nonexistent market for villagers

The Ecotourism Company's plan is to develop the edge of the park into housing and/or hotels for tourists and areas for moderate consumer developments. This will bring in money for the surrounding communities. This development will serve as an elephant buffer between the expanded national park and the new farms. Biologists are allowed to use this land in order to establish a research center as well.

Once the national park is expanded, new development, jobs to local villagers and economic growth for the country will take place. The government will receive free ecotourism and an opening ceremony in their names.

Don't be bilked by the chicanery of the palm oil companies!

Oil Palm Executives

Megan Tjahjadi, Teca Horokoski, Tiffany Eberhard

Standing: We are against the proposal to double the size of Way Kambas National Park that allocates to relocate many farmers by compensating them using Oil Palm taxes.

- Reasons we are against the proposal:
 - The same problem might occur even if we expand the park.
 - The elephants' population will continue to grow and push towards the park boundaries. Even if the elephant population stays constant, they will find ways to eat farmer's crops that are on or near the National Park. An increase in size does not mean that farmers on the boarder will be any safer from elephant damage.
 - Expansion is a short-term solution. The same problem will occur in the future when they migrate to the new border. Elephants will still have a negative impact on the farmers living in a close proximity to the park.
 - Expansion will also decrease our oil palm plantations. This will result in a lower crop production. Thus, this decreases our profit. With this decrease in profit, we will loose money to pay for employees and necessities. The economy on the island will slow because we are the major business. This will affect not only our company workers, but everyone on the Island of Sumatra.
 - Taxing us is unfair since there are other farmers and businesses on the island.
 - Where are all of the relocated people going to be put? Farmers and business already heavily populate the Island. The parts that are not habituated by people are forests and the only way to create a homes and farms for the people would be to destroy the forest.

- Possible alternative:
 - The Park is split into about two parts: High and low elephant density. Most of the interactions between farmers and elephants occur in the high-density area.
 - We allocate to relocate the farmers on the southwestern border (high elephant density) of the park to the northeastern part inside the park where there is low elephant density. We cannot move the farmers outside the park because the area is already covered by farmland.
 - There are little to no reports of crop raiding in this northern region. This will minimize the conflict on the southern border.
 - An expansion of the park will create more problems, while our proposal to relocate the local farmers into the park will reduce conflicts.

Government Officials from Java Position

Chris Parker, Brenna Ramcic, Audrey Stadler

- In favor of no park.
- Migrants from Java need the extra land in Sumatra to live on and grow their palms.
- More money to be made in palm oil production, wildlife scary and destructive of farms (elephant raids).
- Start up cost of the ecotourism business in the park would be too great of a money risk.
- We are more willing to negotiate with palm oil producers since we already have an established relationship.
- Expanding the park and limiting farm area could potentially cause a migration of farmers back to Java, which is already overpopulated and would have a negative effect on our economy.
- It will be costly to pay all of the farmers to relocate with the park expansion. Many might act more helpless and needy than they are to receive more money.
- Java receives no benefit from wildlife on Sumatra, we believe that they should move the elephants, not the people.
- Potentially could set up an ecotourism “farm” on Java and allow Java to keep the revenue gained from tourism.
- Loss of crops for Java if the park expands.
- Wildlife viewed as pests already.
- Potentially could bribe oil palm industry to hire poachers to kill off the elephants and tigers in Sumatra.
- Possible decline in agriculture trade between Java and Sumatra, less farm land on Sumatra means less farming.
- Java wants to be shown the highest profit, and will change sides indiscriminately.