

INFORMATION TO POST ON NEW VERSION OF ANDEAN TAPIR FUND WEBSITE FROM PAST ANNUAL REPORTS OF THIS 501 C 3

FROM CRAIG C DOWNER, WILDLIFE ECOLOGIST, PRESIDENT OF ANDEAN TAPIR FUND

FOR NANCY REID

FEBRUARY 27, 2018

FROM 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT:

It has been a very active and productive year for the Andean Tapir Fund. Both Craig C. Downer here in U.S. and Alejandro Zegarra in Peru have been very active.

Major support has been received to stop the cruel capture and killing of wild and also some domestic burros in northern Peru. This project has resulted in nearly \$9,000 being sent to conservationist Alejandro Zegarra-Pezo, of Sullana, Piura, Peru, through the Andean Tapir Fund. This began on March 21, and the project is just wrapping up as of the writing of this report. Due to the energetic efforts of the witnesses, police, judges, and Zegarra, at least two burro slaughter plants have been shut down, and several perpetrators of these heinous crimes have been placed in jail and are awaiting trial. Furthermore, an official investigation has been ordered by the federal judge whose jurisdiction extends over this part of Peru.

Several public talks have been given by Zegarra as well as radio and television interviews and reports which have resulted in a great decrease in burro victimization. There is a law protecting the wild burros in northern Peru; and we at Andean Tapir Fund/Wild Horse and Burro Fund have the just satisfaction of knowing we have curtailed much of this burro killing and commerce, in a considerable part of northern Peru. At the root of this has been Chinese merchants who are selling certain products from the dead burros, particularly "Agaio," a gelatinous substance derived from burro hides, which is all the rage now in China. Also the testicles and possibly other parts of the burro body are sold.

Concerning ATF's ongoing efforts for the endangered Mountain/Andean Tapir, Zegarra has continued to visit the highland communities to give talks and to help organize vigilance and monitoring activities to stave off the take-over of the mountain tapirs' last habitats by mining companies. There are groups of vigilantes associated with several of these communities that for years have courageously kept some of the world's largest mining companies at bay and effectively stopped them from having their way with the last cloud forests and paramos and occupied habitats of the endangered mountain tapir. A public referendum several years ago also thoroughly rejected these mining activities, so actually these communities are legally justified in keeping the mining activities out (see enclosed articles by ENS from several years ago, including by Craig). Zegarra has also received reports about traffickers in wildlife including the endangered mountain tapir and has, in coordination with highland communities and their vigilance groups, or *ronderos*, been able to prevent capture of the mountain tapirs, according to his reports. These groups are always asking for more support and, indeed, their efforts are of the most admirable, courageous and effective order. Rest assured that our organization has been a vital part of these significant victories for life on Earth in this spectacular and biodiverse region of the world.

Craig also continues to write letters and participate in documents benefiting the mountain tapir and other tapir species, other equid species, and even rhino species, all of which are threatened by the

human population explosion and gross over-consumption and overwhelming of the natural world, or global ecosystem today. Global Warming is very serious and this is pushing cold-dependent mountain tapirs to higher elevations and drying out the cloud forest and paramo portions of their habitat. Often in the highland paramos, these tapirs find themselves persecuted by local and trophy hunters, a situation being exacerbated by the expanding human population, not only locally, but worldwide. Such has already occupied many open areas such as the high-elevation paramos as well as wooded areas with their cultivations and then their livestock, after the soils are exhausted by the former.

Recently, Craig has renewed contact with the Sangay National Park ranger who assisted me, Mario Maza, and he has introduced Craig to the new park superintendent Christian Clavijo, who has extended a warm invitation for Craig to return to the park to see how the mountain tapirs and their habitat are doing, telling him that he would be treated as a sort of “living legend” after his many years of conservation work here concerning the endangered Mountain, or Andean, Tapir and its habitat.

Craig would like to and should return to Sangay due to his many years there investigating and working for the salvation of this endangered species and its habitat, and, so, of really hundreds, perhaps even thousands of similarly endangered species of animals and of plants that all go together and whose last true homes on this Earth are found here. Craig will keep you informed as dates open up and possibilities present themselves concerning his intended return visit to Ecuador. The park superintendent said he would like Craig to give a major conference concerning the mountain tapir to professionals working in conservation as well as the public upon his return.

On May 12th, Craig gave a talk at the C.C. Meneley Elementary School in Gardnerville Ranchos, Nevada. This afternoon program from 1:30 to 3:30 PM was on the endangered mountain tapir, and Craig used his color slides from years ago and the Kodak slide projector he had formerly used in Ecuador and elsewhere. His talk and pictures were very well received by several classes and teachers and their aids who later wrote/spoke to him with their numerous thank-you's, including many drawings depicting the amazing tapirs in their spectacular Andean habitat. Craig was also asked about the wild horses and burros of America and honestly responded concerning their unfair treatment and need for restoration to viable numbers.

Craig have also been invited to an Endangered Species event in Sacramento, CA, on Saturday, August 12, where he was one of four major speakers and spoke both about the endangered mountain tapir in the Andes and the endangered wild horses and burros here in our own country. There was a rally on the steps of the state capitol on its north side from 10:30 am to 3 pm. Later in the afternoon a special reception at a wine shop was held to raise funds for endangered species. – This event took place and Craig gave his excellent speech and answered questions and formed new contacts. He spoke a lot about the plight of all endangered species but gave some particular examples concerning the Mountain Tapir, as well as the Wild Horses and Wild Burros.

The endangered mountain tapir and their beautiful cloud forest and paramo habitat continue to be destroyed and the tapirs hunted out or perishing simply because of habitat destruction. This must be reversed by a change in values, attitudes, life styles, by people! True enlightenment respecting this and a true Reverence for All of Life must dawn within the human consciousness and conscience. And the same can be said about the magnificent wild horses and wild burros of America. Their habitat is being destroyed and they are being removed and eliminated from their rightful natural homes on the public lands. This situation must change, but it will require real commitment on the part of those who both

appreciate and care for these animals and their rightful place in our world.

FROM 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT:

This past year has certainly been one of the most successful years for the Andean Tapir Fund in terms of progress for the animals, particularly the wild horses, under its expanded mandate to include all the mammalian Order Perissodactyla (Tapir, Horse, and Rhinoceros families). And 2016 also marks the 20th anniversary of the Andean Tapir Fund – and I am proud of all our many accomplishments during these past two decades, both for the Mountain Tapirs and now for the Wild Horses and the Wild Burros.

Mountain Tapir Project, northern Peru & elsewhere

ATF continues to support and oversee this decade-long project in northern Peru to protect and preserve the endangered mountain tapir and its Andean forest and paramo habitat. Conservationist Alejandro Zegarra-Pezo continues to visit the highland areas where the mountain tapirs still survive. He gives talks and coordinates activities by communities to fend off threats to the mountain tapirs and their habitat. So far, our efforts, co-joined with these communities, have been able to stave off the wholesale occupation of these last remaining Andean, including cloud forest and paramo habitats. (Paramo is the “living sponge” moorland above the tree line.) This success has been due to the great valor and courage of the many Andeans working together to prevent unscrupulous mining companies – including some of the world’s largest – and also dishonest officials and elected representatives from sacrificing Peru’s most valuable natural heritage for short-term monetary profit, mainly revolving around keeping the GNP and the affluent lifestyles of the *latifundia* (privileged elite class) going. As official members of the Andean Tapir Fund, we should be proud of our ongoing victory here, but not without acknowledging the real Andean heroes whose courageous self-sacrifice has made this possible.

Recently, ATF has also been supporting Sr. Zegarra’s efforts to stop the ongoing cruel killing and skinning of the wild burros occurring in the deserts of Piura. This has been instigated by Chinese buyers who want the skins and the testicles for the Chinese market. What they are doing is against Peruvian law.

During the past fiscal year in question, I had the opportunity to give talks, write articles, and be a guest on radio programs, as did Alejandro Zegarra in Peru. I was on the public radio station out of Great Falls, Montana, twice concerning the wild horses (KGPR) and these programs have been archived for continued public listening. This is on the Voices and Views program. Alejandro has spoken in the frontier provincial town of Ayabaca on the *Voz de los Andes* station and elsewhere. An illustrated article of mine on the endangered mountain tapir was published in the “*Rumbos de Sol y Piedra*” Spanish-English magazine out of Lima, again defending the endangered Mountain Tapir and signaling its importance. I also had major photo-illustrated articles on the wild horses and burros in the [trueCowboy](#) online magazine out of s. Calif. in the

Sept-Oct. and again in its Nov-Dec. editions and also in the February edition of Horse Talk magazine out of Texas, which has a very large readership.

I would like to plan a return trip to the Andes, including both Peru and Ecuador, to see how the mountain tapirs and their habitat are doing and to check up on Andean Tapir Fund's northern Peruvian mountain tapir and sanctuary project, going on now for over a decade. I am making enquiries now concerning the possibility of my going to Peru and taking the 3 pieces of equipment to deliver as well as to spend time with the two projects, one the ongoing project in the northern Andes of Peru and the other being the Shipibo project in the Amazon basin near Pucallpa, to which Andean Tapir Fund has been instrumental in sending some much needed equipment.

FROM 2014 – 2015 ANNUAL REPORT:

Summary of Peruvian Mountain Tapir project progress: During this entire fiscal year, I have continued to monitor, advise, and send support to Sr. Alejandro Zegarra-Pezo for the northern Peruvian project for the endangered Mountain Tapir and its equally endangered habitat in the northern Andes, including the creation of a nature reserve. Every few months I send more money to the project care of Zegarra via the Andean Tapir Fund; and he issues reports of his progress and ongoing threats to the tapirs and their habitat and how they are being countered, as well as receipts for expenditures. As here in U.S., the problems are basically the same: giant corporations trying to rape the last natural areas left and smug materialistic officials and people wanting to profit at Mother Nature's expense. We must continue to fight for the preservation and restoration of the magnificent Andean forests and paramos (aka moorlands) and learn to live in harmony therewith. In one of Alejandro's reports, he noted that in the Rio Chira, which flows through his home city of Sullana, contamination had reached such a level that it was causing an epidemic among the local population. So much of this relates to the condition of the highland watersheds, and this is what we are also fighting for when we are fighting for the preservation of the mountain tapirs and their habitat. (See various copies of Spanish reports, etc.) In general, I am satisfied with Sr. Zegarra and his team of Peruvian collaborators and the progress they have made this year. They have helped stave off major ecological disaster by impeding the wholesale takeover of giant international mining cartels and have kept Peruvian officials honest as concerns their duty to protect the endangered Mountain Tapir and so many other species of plants and animals that go with it.

I prepared for trip to the desert island of Bonaire (in Dutch West Indies off north coast of Venezuela, area 111 square miles) to help the unique Bonairean Wild Donkeys. On Friday 7/11, I flew to Bonaire arriving at Kralendijk airport on the evening of Sat. 7/12. I remained in Bonaire for over two weeks, flying back on Sun. 7/27 arriving 7/28. I was hosted by Al Catalfumo, owner of the Black Durgeon Inn. During this time I conducted an ecological evaluation of Bonaire and a biological evaluation of its unique race of donkeys. This I did for the NGO: Citizens for a Better, Safer and Animal Friendly Bonaire. I gathered ca. a dozen genetic samples and sent these to Dr. E. Gus Cothran at Texas A & M University for evaluation. Genetic evaluations have indicated that these are a pure strain of Nubian Wild Ass. As such, they should be protected as a critically endangered species, for so they are classified by the IUCN Species Survival Commission and listed in their Red Data Book. In addition to Mr. Catalfumo, I was also hosted by a group of donkey defenders including Americans, particularly Mrs. Rona Alquilar (the daughter of Mr. Catalfumo), native Bonaireans, Dutch citizens, including a lady of Iranian descent:

Asefeh Eskendari – now how’s that for a name! I interviewed many people concerning the donkeys and the island ecosystem.

I interviewed the governor of the island, a native Bonairean, the head of Bonaire’s Parks and Wildlife Department, as well as several rangers and a wildlife biologist. I prepared a report and gave a public speech for which the report served as guide. The report was published as a Wikipedia article, and -- I was told -- was translated into Papamientu, the unique language of these islands, and published here in this and English. I believe my visits with many entities here (human, donkey, etc.), the meetings and talk, and the published article – all combined to produce a positive effect for the wild donkeys and, of course, in combination with the sustained efforts of many other individuals and organizations, whose efforts far outweigh my own and have been sustained over many years. We caused some of the extremist “ethnic cleansers” to back off a bit, but the struggle continues to secure the place of these wonderful animals on the beautiful coral-reef-surrounded Bonaire, where they have lived for ca. five centuries. (See copy of my article for fuller details, a summary of which is at this link:

https://speciessurvival.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/2/5/30251607/summary_of_report_on_bonaire_7-24-2014_craig_downer.pdf). I remain in communication with this team and am willing to return. I have written several official letters to support these donkeys during the past year and attended telephone/Skype meetings on their behalf. The coral reefs surrounding Bonaire are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a mecca for divers from around the world. Fortunately I was able to do some snorkeling among the reefs while I was there. As with coral reefs all over the world, these too are being seriously impacted by pollution and Global Warming and must be treasured and preserved by all means.

3/3-8: With support from F of A, I attend the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (PIELC) at the University of Oregon (School of Law) in Eugene. I had last attended this now quite renowned conference way back in the early 1990’s when I was fully engaged in my mountain tapir study in Ecuador. And it was great to be back among dedicated ecologists & environmental activists. This has grown to be the world’s preeminent environmental law conference & gives a platform for causes from all over the world. Dr. John Bonine, one of its founders, is still central to its ongoing success, & it was good to see him again. We listened to many fine talks, videos, power points & discussions on diverse yet interrelated topics. On the afternoon of Saturday March 7th, I was part of a presentation.

FROM 2013 – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT:

Again this past fiscal year has seen an intensification of activities and a perfecting of strategies for saving and restoring both the endangered mountain tapir and for doing the same for the persecuted and dwindling wild horses and equally as endangered wild burros, or donkeys. I appreciate our annual meeting of the board which took place in Carson City on Thursday the 26th of June, 2014, and the lively discussion and interest shown by ATF Secretary Kathryn Thomas and her sister Margaret.

As I explained to them, I would soon be called upon to go to the tropical desert island of Bonaire in the Dutch East Antilles, a trip from which I have just returned, having been gone for over two weeks. Though this will be covered in next fiscal year’s report, I will just say that it was in many ways a success and that I got to know these critically endangered donkeys and met many influential people, from the Governor on down; and I made a report and gave a speech to an enthusiastic audience. My report and speech summary/handout (see enclosed) are about to be posted in my new website:

www.thewildhorseconspiracy.org. Earlier I had written the Governor and Island Council and helped to

get a delay in the now resumed donkey elimination project. I believe that the donkey supporters are about to take legal action and can use my reports and recommendations.

Before I forget, I must tell you that this past year has seen some major accomplishments from our organization, both for the mountain tapirs and for the wild horses and burros. On the mountain tapir front, the just-breaking news is that there has been declared a national Archeological Reserve called "Aypate" in the northern Peruvian area we have been fighting for many years to preserve; and this area has also just been declared a World Heritage Site by the international UNESCO organization in Paris. This bodes very well also for the declaration of the Cerro Negro Nature Sanctuary; and our friend and colleague Alejandro Zegarra-Pezo is very enthused about this. I will be sending him some more support shortly for this purpose, if requested funds come through. We can feel confident that the Andean Tapir Fund has played a significant role in this happening.

Another big achievement has been the publication of my peer-reviewed scientific article entitled: "The horse and burro as positively contributing returned natives in North America." This was published on January 30th, 2014.

On Saturday, May 3rd, I was hosted on the Vicarious Traveller's program out of Point Reyes Station, California, between 9 & 10 AM with host Vicki Leeds, who owns and runs a horse riders'/owners' shop there and whom I met in person. This was on KWMR 90.5 FM and is a popular and long-standing program that reaches much of the Northern Bay Area community.

On Thursday, April 17th, 2014, I was hosted on Chris Holmes' Southern Utah Forum from 4:15 to 5 PM, KSUB public radio out of Cedar City. I had been requested to lend a voice of reason, fairness, and compassion on the side of the wild horses.

8/27/13: Hosted by Rachel Kaub on popular New Mexican public radio program out of Gallop. 1:30-2:30 PM. This program turned out very well and has been incorporated into our new website and shared broadly elsewhere. Excellent comments on this.

6/18/14: Between 3-4 PM, I was again hosted by Voices and Views Program, KGPR radio, Great Falls, MT. Re: saving whs & wbs, also some on mtn. tapir and this part of Andean Tapir Fund mandate. Excellent session. Host had carefully read my book and with keen interest and wants to help the cause.