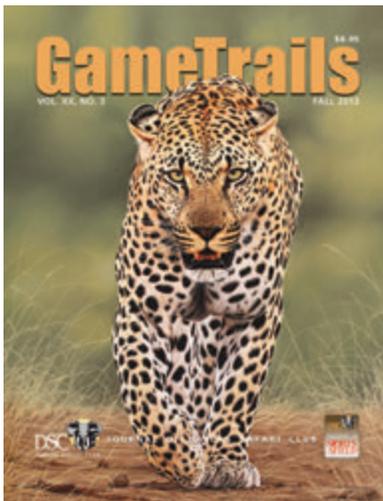




# GETTING THE WORD(S) OUT

BY STEVE WAGNER



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GAME TRAILS FALL 2013

Media tour aims to help the American sportsman and public understand how hunters generally—and DSC specifically—buoy conservation in Africa.

In just the past five years, DSC has granted nearly \$600,000 for worthy projects in Africa. The organization's hard-won dollars are distributed worldwide but no international destination receives greater sums than the Dark Continent. Last May, DSC and several partners worked together to host two journalists covering these vital contributions as part of larger stories on how American hunters impact conservation, education, advocacy and even the culture of today's Africa. Andrew McKean and Frank Miniter, both of whom work for magazines with large circulations, went along to see firsthand the importance of hunting.

DSC Executive Director Ben Carter accompanied the journalists and believes the 10-day tour provided both writers with eye-opening experiences and valuable contacts to help them tell a story that's not told nearly enough.

"The magazines and websites that these guys represent reach millions of people, hunters and non-hunters alike, and can deliver a crucial message," said Carter. "Not only are American hunters the first, best stewards of wildlife and wild places here at home, they're also the keystone contributor to conservation abroad. Most sportsmen, not to mention the general public, forget that fact. But, the truth is, if it weren't for hunters visiting from the United States, many species and habitats – as well as human communities – in Africa would be at risk."

He added, "It's important to keep that message at the top of minds because it strengthens the brand of hunters worldwide, and because it reinforces the mission of DSC."

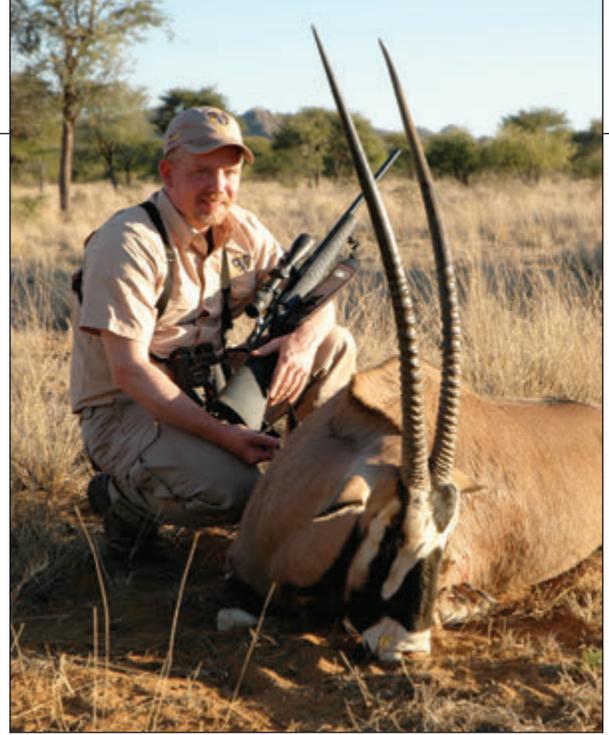
#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRIP:

- Showcasing the inaugural class of Professional Hunting students at Southern African Wildlife College at Kruger National Park. According to college CEO Theresa Sowry, students are now in their final semester, and they're hoping the coursework will help them break into the hunting industry from mostly disadvantaged backgrounds. DSC is the largest supporter of the program.
- Office interview with officials from the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Secretary Simeon Negumbo and Director Elly Hamunyela oversee conservation programs, wildlife permitting and control, CITES management, etc.



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- Plains game hunting with Hunters Namibia Safaris, plus ample discussion with owners Joof and Marina Lamprecht regarding their country's history of trophy hunting and its positive impacts on conservation, employment and economics.
- Lunchtime visit to Otjivero Primary School, where 320 children receive hot meals prepared daily with venison (and firewood) from Hunters Namibia Safaris. This trophy hunting-based system is the only regular source of protein for kids in this impoverished village.
- Overnight and tour of Eagle Rock Hunting Academy, a finishing school for license-seeking professional hunters in Namibia, hosted by founder and chief lecturer Volker Grellman. Regarded as the father of the Namibian hunting industry, co-founder of the Namibian Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA) in 1974 and the owner of Anvo Safaris, Grellman also is a veteran PH. He once guided legendary *Outdoor Life* writer Jack O'Connor on a kudu hunt, one of the earliest media promotions of hunting in what was then called South-West Africa. Along with that delightful story, Grellman offered unique historical insights on the development of hunting and its benefits.
- Plains game hunting with Coenraad Vermaak Safaris. In 1978, Coenraad helped found the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa (PHASA). Today his son, Hans, runs the business and is currently serving as PHASA president. Hans spoke to the writers about looming challenges to trophy hunting, and therefore to conservation, across Africa.
- Campfire debates over rhino poaching, overharvest of young male lions, anti-hunting agendas in Africa, as well as DSC's ongoing contributions to counter each—often in partnership with NAPHA and PHASA (see sidebar for details).



*Miniter took a gemsbok during the fact-finding trip to Namibia*



*Johnny Hogobeb, PH with Hunters Namibia Safaris, brought Andrew McKean into range for this gemsbok.*



*Ben Carter and giraffe*

Search online for articles in editions of *Outdoor Life* written by editor Andrew McKean, and in *Forbes* and the NRA's *American Hunter* by Frank Miniter.



*The author and a red hartebeest*

- Exploring Bushman's Fountain, an oasis spring that pools in a rocky outcrop at Rooipoort Nature Preserve, a Coenraad Vermaak Safaris feature concession. Indigenous tribes used to ambush game here and they honored their animals by etching images into the rocks. More than a thousand shapes of hartebeest, wildebeest, eland and other species can be found, a sort of timeless homage to this land's native bounty—and, by extension, to the modern conservation work that sustains it today on many African landscapes, thanks to hunters.
- Others who generously provided support for the trip include Thompson/Center Arms, Trijicon, Hornady and Life Form Taxidermy.

A thread that repeatedly wove its way into many discussions was the DSC annual convention and expo, the event that generates much of the funding for DSC grants. "Neither of the writers had been to our convention before, but during the course of this trip they became fully aware of its importance," said Carter. "Our exhibitors, donors, sponsors, members, attendees—and especially our volunteers—are part of something really special. It was gratifying to be with journalists seeing and hearing firsthand about the difference that DSC in making in Africa, thanks in large measure to our convention and expo." **GT**

### DSC GRANTS FOR PROJECTS IN AFRICA

Historically, approximately one-third of all DSC grants are awarded for projects within Texas, while two-thirds are awarded for projects elsewhere in North America and worldwide. Africa receives the majority of DSC's international grants.

### DSC GRANT TOTALS, 2009-2013

2013—\$164,900	2010—\$29,500
2012—\$219,097	2009—\$50,000
2011—\$134,000	5-Year Total—\$597,497

*For a list of sample projects, visit [www.biggame.org](http://www.biggame.org), or contact the DSC office.*



# How Much Venison Do Hunters Harvest?

DSC funds study to discover the importance of wild meat on food supply and its cultural impact.

A study launching this year will measure the actual amounts of venison and other wild protein harvested annually in North America. Researchers will assess the nutritional, cultural and economic values of this harvest, as well as the ecological costs of replacing this food through standard agriculture and domestic livestock production.

DSC is the founding sponsor of the project, pledging \$200,000 over the next two years. DSC officials hope other sponsors will come aboard to help advance the study.

“This research isn’t just fascinating. It’s critical to help modern society understand the full scale of hunting on this continent, and of the natural, organic, sustainable food that today’s hunters provide for their families,” said Ben Carter, DSC executive director. “Additionally, this research will help all of us understand the hidden costs when hunting traditions are eroded – or attacked.”

Every year, some 40 million citizens in the U.S. and Canada harvest protein sustainably from forests and fields, streams and lakes. The study will show

just how much wild protein the two nations provide annually, and its real value to our society.

The “Wild Harvest Initiative” will be conducted under the direction of research biologist Shane Mahoney, founder and CEO of Conservation Visions Inc.

Mahoney said, “The harvest and consumption of wildlife has been an integral part of the human story throughout the entirety of our existence. Agricultural and technological progress have certainly altered our direct dependence and engagement in this process, but in many regions of the world, including the U.S. and Canada, human populations continue to rely on wild harvest for a significant part of their diet.”

Harvest research will enable better understanding of the economic effects of resource management approaches, validate policy and governance structures, and empower best practices for providing sustainable use of wild protein to as many people as possible.

The five-year initiative is scheduled to begin later this year. To assist or learn more, visit [www.conservationvisions.com](http://www.conservationvisions.com). **GT**

# 5 MIL+

Over \$5,000,000 granted over the last 5 years for Conservation, Education, and Protecting Hunters' Rights.

It's who we are.  
It's what we do.



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Next DSC  
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January 5-8, 2017  
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