

NORTHERN
RANGELANDS
TRUST



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COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP
Il Ngwesi Group Ranch
Kalama Community Wildlife Conservancy
Lekurruki Group Ranch
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy
Ltungai Community Conservancy
Melako Conservancy
Naibunga Trust
Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust
Ngare Ndare Forest Trust
Sera Conservation Trust
West Gate Community Conservancy

PRIVATE MEMBERSHIP
Borana Ranch
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy

INSITUATIONAL MEMBERSHIP
Isiolo County Council
Kenya Wildlife Service
Laikipia Wildlife Forum
Samburu County Council
Samburu Wildlife Forum

Martha Fischer
Curator of Mammals, Saint Louis Zoo
1 Government Drive
St. Louis, MO 63110, USA

3 February 2006

Dear Martha

Re: Response to Anthrax Crisis in Grevy's zebra, Northern Kenya

Over the past six weeks there has been a severe outbreak of anthrax within one of the three remaining priority populations of Grevy's zebra in Samburu district of Northern Kenya. There is no recorded evidence of any previous epidemics at this level and the implications of a continuation at the present levels of mortality could have a severe impact on the remaining population.

As of today 41 animals have died and it is anticipated that other animals will have died outside of the present reporting program. Within the worst affected area, approximately five to ten Grevy's zebra a week are dying. Anthrax has been confirmed as the cause of death in these animals by two independent organizations.

Based on this information advice has been sought from several world authorities on anthrax and there is strong consensus that a vaccination programme should be implemented as soon as possible. As the vaccine has never been administered to Grevy's zebra, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) undertook a trial vaccination within a captive situation on Lewa Wildlife Conservancy; there were no adverse reactions recorded. KWS have now decided that they will go ahead with a broader vaccination program of the remaining population.

We have been asked to help coordinate this programme between Kenya Wildlife Service the County councils, communities and private sector conservancies. To date an expansive program to vaccinate domestic stock has been undertaken by the government with financial support from the NRT. This is purely a holding situation and now full focus needs to be applied to providing the best possible protection to Grevy's zebra within the area of the outbreak.

This clearly should now be treated as a crisis facing Grevy's zebra and every effort to expedite this vaccination will help to save further animals. The costs of this exercise are considerable and beyond the means of any existing conservation budgets. I believe that it is in all of our interests that we coordinate our efforts to raise funds to get this operation started with immediate effect.

I attach a proposal outlining the vaccination programme and associated budget together with a list to all whom we have circulated this request to.

Yours sincerely,

Belinda Low