



Results of Election of Board Members

Twenty-two ACE members sent in their email ballots to select the upcoming 2023-2024 Board. The following list is the winners of the vote plus the returning member to make up your new board. Thank you for all of those members who voted.

Jane Barron
Barbara Cebula
Jenny Reineck
Susan Smith
Donna Mayer Todd
Gene Todd

The board looks forward to working with ACE members to make the upcoming year a success in our mission to save the four species of great apes.



Update on the Tapanuli Orangutan

We first reported on this new species of orangutans in the January 2017 ACE newsletter, and then updated in the January 2020 newsletter. This article will provide the latest information available on trying to save this rare orangutan and its habitat.

The Tapanuli orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*) was discovered in 1997 in an area known as Batang Toru in northern Sumatra. The population of about 767 individuals are divided between three sites. It is estimated that if the population loses more than 1% of adult animals per year, it will go extinct in the foreseeable future.

Researchers found that, historically, the Tapanuli orangutan inhabited a much larger area, and occurred across a much wider range of habitat types and at lower elevations than the

mountainous Batang Toru forest that they inhabit today. By the 1930s Sumatra had already lost 52% of the forests. Estimates today state that the orangutans live on just 2.5% of their historical range, and attributes it to loss of habitat and hunting. The combination of historical fragmentation of forest habitats and unsustainable hunting likely drove the apes to the higher-elevation forests. Some scientists believe that this species of orangutan is not specifically adapted to living at high elevations.

In addition to this, there are other problems with the survival, but the main problem is the \$1.6 billion hydro-electric power structure that would cut across the Tapanuli orangutan's largest subpopulation and effectively act as a wall blocking connectivity in the already fragmented forest areas. This "wall" (or dam) would destroy any chance for breeding or biodiversity between the three groups.

The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) requested the Indonesian government conduct a risk assessment on the habitat by an impartial third party. The project was halted not because of the request but instead because of COVID. The developer has requested that the launch of the project be postponed from 2022 to 2025 due to the fact that most of their workers are Chinese who can not currently travel to Indonesia.

Additional pressure has been put on sources funding the project. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Asian Development Bank concluded that the potential environmental impacts of the project were too high. The Bank of China and the Asian Development Bank have declined to fund the project due to environmental reasons also. But this is not stopping the project since Batang Toru project is still reaching out to others and using misleading arguments to support their case that there will still be plenty of habitat for the orangutan.

The Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry has the authority and legal obligation to ensure that the dam infrastructure will not harm the species and has ruled accordingly.

However, it seems that their opinion to halt the dam based on environmental law has been dismissed by more powerful forces in the government.

All of these groups continue to press the government to review the project. "Canceling the hydropower plans and moving the project, or an alternative option to generate energy, to another, lower-risk location, would show the world that Indonesia takes its international sustainability commitments and national environmental legislation seriously."

"The most endangered great ape species in the world deserves the highest level of protection." Without it, scientists believe this orangutan will become extinct in a few generations.

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species has given the Tapanuli orangutan the status listing of Critically Endangered. Red List reviews are done twice a year, but we do not know if the tapanuli orangutan is under current review.

The above information was taken from *Crossroads Blog/Open Letters to IUCN Members* by Erik Meijaard and Serge Wich, July 20, 2020, and *Historical data point to "imminent extinction" of Tapanuli orangutan*, by

Hans Nicholas Jong,
Mongabay Series: Great Apes, Indonesian Forests,
January 7, 2021.



Virtual Race

The souvenir shirt from the Run Bonobo Run Virtual Race proved to be a popular gift item for Christmas. Do you think it was the cute design by Carol Haile? If you didn't get one as a Christmas gift and would like to have one - plus support ACE in this fashionable way - we still have shirts available. To order one (or more), go to apeconservationeffort.org and place your order. We will be glad to drop it in the mail to you.



Donna and Gene's selfie in their "Run" t-shirts



*Make the most of today.
Time waits for no man.
Yesterday is history.
Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift. That's why they call it the present.*

Alice Morse Earle



Results of ACE sale at Holiday Bazaar

By Susan Smith

After a two year absence (thanks COVID), ACE was able to participate in the Holiday Bazaar event at the Zoo Atlanta Volunteer MEGA update. Merchandise for sale included ape painted ornaments, animal ornaments, notecards, Run Bonobo Run t-shirts, etc. Sales were great and ACE made \$670 for our general fund.

Also we want to thank Josh Meyerchick and Lynn Yakubinis for working with Kidogo and Biji, primarily, to give us the ape-painted ornaments to sell. Of

course thanks goes to Kidogo and Biji for their artistic work. Also we want to thank several ACE members who donated items to add to our sales. All of these efforts helped give us the inventory needed for a successful event. This was a great way to end the year.



Results of GAGives on November 29

By Donna Mayer Todd

This year's GA Gives on GivingTuesday provided ACE with a successful awareness tool and fundraiser once again. It is part of a brilliant national and international platform that was celebrated by the CEO of Giving Tuesday by saying, "The most magical part of Giving Tuesday is that it's made possible by the many and not the few; everyday people's kindness, acts of generosity, and

commitment to a better world fueled this day of good."

That's heartwarming and life affirming, isn't it? Many good people doing good things for the good of the community. And here are some of the results achieved: the GivingTuesday Data Commons estimates that giving in the United States totaled \$3.1 billion on GivingTuesday 2022, representing a 15% increase compared to GivingTuesday 2021. Georgians rose to the challenge, donating \$29 million for the benefit of our state's nonprofits. Also, **37 million adults** in the U.S. participated in GivingTuesday in some way. And this was in the midst of a triple pandemic and steep inflation and economic volatility!

As for ACE, we received donations totaling **\$1675.00** through **GA Gives on GivingTuesday**. That's a small increase over 2021 and a healthy contribution for great ape conservation. Donations for ACE came from 12 people, mostly members, but we did receive 2 donations from folks outside the organization. These two are probably friends or family of a member who shared their passion for the great apes and the mission of ACE. Thank you to all of us who supported ACE through GivingTuesday. In order to further grow

our success in this event, it will take more of us participating. We can easily see how that can multiply among our personal circles of friends. A very special thank you to our dedicated ACE member who wishes to remain Anonymous, and who provided the matching funds for our donations. That has been a huge help each year!

The success for ACE of GivingTuesday and its growth year to year comes through the connections we each make, and the stories we tell about ACE and why we support it. New supporters, even for the one day, may further spread the word about the mission of ACE and may return again for another event.



Results of HoneyBaked Ham Gift Card Sale

By Susan Smith

As 2022 draws to a close, so does the 2022 HoneyBaked Ham gift card campaign. We want to thank those who purchased gift cards. ACE received 20% of the total sales, and this year we brought in \$285 for our general fund.

Your chance to participate in this fundraiser will return in the Spring of 2023. The Spring campaign will begin in mid-March and run through the end of May. This timeframe will cover all those Spring events - Easter, Mother's Day, graduations, bridal showers, - where HoneyBaked Ham and sides can be part of the celebration.

Detailed information and a flyer will be sent out the first part of March. Again, thanks for supporting ACE.



Update from DFGFI

Increasing our conservation efforts

Since we (DFGFI) celebrated our 50th anniversary in 2017, we have significantly expanded our conservation programs. Now, five years later, we are proud to report that since then we have:

Doubled our field staff in Africa,

Tripled our African research staff and increased the reach of our community programs to impact 30,000 people,

Built our new campus in Rwanda, and

Expanded our Congo protection area by 250% to more than 2,400 square kilometers.

*Taken from Dian Fossey
Gorilla Fund
Gorilla Journal
November 2022*



Did you know?

On October 13, 2022, Susan Smith presented a program about Ape Conservation Effort to the Georgia Power Ambassadors, a service group of retired and active Georgia Power employees. Thank you Susan for spreading the word about ACE and our mission.

"When you realize the value of all life, you dwell less on what is past and concentrate more on the preservation of the future."

*Final entry in Dian
Fossey's diary on
December 26, 1985.*



2023 ACE Board

Jane Barron
Barbara Cebula
Jenny Reineck
Susan Smith
Donna Mayer Todd
Gene Todd

Primary contact:
info@apeconservationeffort.org

Gorilla Golf:
gorillagolf@apeconservationeffort.org

