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ERP AIR WING QUARTERLY BULLETIN

Mission Update

Welcome to our latest update, where we highlight the tireless efforts to protect Africa's most endangered wildlife. From the remote plains of Namibia to the innovative technology powering our Air Wing project, ERP continues to push the boundaries of conservation. In this edition, we share the remarkable story of our anti-poaching units, the progress of our international partnerships, and how you can make a direct difference for elephants and rhinos through ERP Mercantile and the ERP Canvas Lodge.

Poachers Beware

Across Africa, fewer than 7,000 black rhinos remain in the wild, making them one of the continent's most endangered animals and a constant target for organized poaching syndicates. "The threat is very real and very imminent," says Tinus Hansen, Managing Director of ERP Namibia. For Hansen and the rangers he leads, that threat is part of daily life. "The syndicates are always looking for opportunities," Hansen says.

Across roughly 500,000 acres of rugged land in south-central Namibia, ERP's anti-poaching rangers patrol one of the most remote rhino sanctuaries in the region. The area lies more than 400 miles south of the capital city of Windhoek, in a vast and rugged landscape that provides both refuge for wildlife and challenges for those protecting it. The reserve is protected by 13 anti-poaching rangers organized into small field patrol units known as APUs. Each unit operates as a

mobile patrol on the ground, equipped with specialized field gear and communications technology, and in some cases supported by a trained tracking dog. Six highly trained dogs assist the patrols as they move through the sanctuary, helping rangers track movement and navigate the difficult terrain.

The isolation of the area makes it harder for poachers to access, and Hansen notes with pride that no poaching incidents have occurred on the reserve since ERP became involved. But the absence of incidents does not mean the danger has passed. “We’re certainly not going to rest on our laurels,” he says. Two public highways cut across the property, creating potential access routes through the reserve. To monitor these entry points, ERP has installed a network of cameras and license plate recognition systems. These systems feed into a secure digital communications network established in late 2025, allowing encrypted radio communication between patrol units and transmitting real-time data to a monitoring station. Drones are also used to patrol certain areas from the air, and ERP is preparing to launch an Air Wing, which will deploy fixed wing aircraft capable of longer-range observation missions.

Despite the growing role of technology, Hansen says the most important line of defense remains the people on the ground. “There’s no substitute for well-trained rangers when it comes to responding to threats,” he says. The 13 rangers currently serving in the reserve completed five months of intensive training before joining the force. Their journey began with more than 600 applicants, which were reduced to 150 through initial screening and background checks. Those candidates then underwent psychometric and aptitude testing before facing a 36-hour field endurance exercise that Hansen compares to the US Navy SEALs’ Hell Week. Fewer than half completed the challenge. Only then did the full training program begin. By the end of the process, just eight to 10 percent of the original applicants qualify as anti-poaching rangers.

“It’s a very demanding selection process,” Hansen says, characteristically understated. Once deployed, the armed APUs patrol the reserve continuously. A significant part of their training focuses on de-escalating encounters with poachers whenever possible. A kinetic response, Hansen explains, is always the last option. In most cases, the rangers intercept and detain suspects until law enforcement arrives, a process that can sometimes take several hours given the remoteness of the sanctuary. For Hansen and his rangers, the work is ultimately about one thing: ensuring that black rhinos continue to roam this landscape.





Air Wing Challenge Grant Deadline Approaches

The ERP Air Wing is making strides toward its goal of raising \$250,000 by June 30 to qualify for a matching grant from the South African-based holding company Group Elephant. The ERP Air Wing took possession of its first airplane, an NX Cub by CubCrafters, last July and hopes to purchase a second airplane later this year. "Our plan is to have two airplanes fully operational at a base in Namibia by early 2027," stated Tom Haines, ERP Air Wing Program Lead. The fundraising campaign seeks to raise \$2.8 million that will eventually fund a total of four airplanes to fly anti-poaching and herd monitoring missions and establish a base with a hangar and conference room.

"Here's your chance to double your impact," explained Don Weinbach, ERP Air Wing Development Director. "Every tax-deductible dollar from donors will be matched by Group Elephant. One hundred percent of these funds will be put to work protecting the endangered black rhinos and desert-adapted elephants in Namibia while also helping to lift the people living near the ERP reserves out of poverty. The need is huge. Time is short. Your assistance now will make a meaningful difference for years to come".

California Organization Supports ERP

Elephant Cooperation, based in San Clemente, California, has committed \$50,000 toward the ERP Air Wing while also amplifying ERP's mission. "We are truly excited about this matching campaign and glad to support such an impressive organization as ERP," said Scott Struthers, founder of the nonprofit Elephant Cooperation. "Our mantra is 'cooperate to coexist,'" he continued. "Elephant Cooperation takes a 'cooperative' approach of researching, vetting, and funding organizations with existing programs, such as ERP. Our shared mission is saving the African elephant. Our goal is to create healthy, balanced, self-generating communities where both animals and people live in harmony. We are pleased to see these same goals at ERP".

Entrepreneur Struthers started Elephant Cooperation in 2016. "The vision to protect African elephants has led to millions of dollars raised, partnerships in more than 12 African countries, over 6,500 children receiving education, feeding over 300 families, and protecting over 66,500 elephants," he said. "ERP's work in South Africa and Namibia dovetails beautifully with Elephant

Cooperation's goals," remarked Quintin Smith, ERP director. "Their contribution moves us closer to our matching goal from Group Elephant and directly impacts our effort to protect these magnificent creatures".



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Out and About

The ERP Air Wing's NX Cub was front and center at the Buckeye Air Fair in Buckeye, Arizona, outside Phoenix in February. Brian Williams, a Group Elephant employee and seasoned pilot, flew the airplane to the show and, along with ERP Global Ambassador Casey Kelley, staffed the airplane during the busy weekend event. The two answered myriad questions about the airplane and its planned role in fighting poaching in Namibia. ERP plans to ship the capable backcountry airplane to Namibia later this year. Look for the airplane at more events this spring in the Southwestern US and California.

Also Out and About, look for Tinus Hansen, managing director of ERP Namibia, and Tom Haines, ERP Air Wing project lead, at EAA AirVenture in late July. The two will be meeting with industry leaders, conservation and public-benefit flying organizations, and aviation leaders at the event in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. AirVenture is the largest aviation event in the world, with some 600,000 people or more likely to attend the weeklong extravaganza. ERP has requested a speaking slot to continue educating pilots about the ERP Air Wing and its mission of conservation through aviation. Check the AirVenture website closer to showtime for time and location of the seminar.



How you can Buy a Difference

ERP Mercantile is more than just an online store—it's a mission-driven marketplace dedicated to protecting some of the planet's most iconic wildlife. With the motto "Buying a Difference," every purchase helps support conservation efforts focused on elephants and rhinos, two species facing serious threats from poaching and habitat loss. By offering thoughtfully curated products, ERP Mercantile allows customers to shop with purpose. 100% of the trading surplus goes toward

initiatives that protect wildlife, support conservation organizations, and raise awareness about the urgent need to safeguard these magnificent animals. At ERP Mercantile, every purchase is an opportunity to make a positive impact—because when you shop, you're not just buying a product, you're helping protect the future of elephants and rhinos.



[Shop Now](#)

ERP Canvas Lodge

Step away from the everyday and immerse yourself in the untamed beauty of Africa at ERP Canvas Lodge, located within the pristine Melorane ERP Game Reserve. More than just a getaway, your stay is an invitation to disconnect, explore, and reconnect with nature, all while contributing to meaningful conservation and community projects. At ERP Canvas Lodge, every detail is designed to let you focus on the magic of the bush. Your stay includes luxury canvas tent accommodation, all meals paired with a selection of house drinks, guided bush walks with K9 rangers, and behind-the-scenes conservation experiences.

Each canvas tent is thoughtfully designed to harmonize with the surroundings, providing an intimate connection with nature without compromising on comfort. You will enjoy spacious sleeping areas, a private veranda ideal for sunrise coffee, and en-suite bathrooms with hot bush showers. Your stay promises a unique blend of adventure, tranquility, and refined luxury. ERP Canvas Lodge operates on a nonprofit basis, with all profits directly supporting ERP's conservation initiatives and the nearby Barokologadi community, meaning your experience has a real and lasting impact.



Conclusion

At ERP, we believe that conservation is a collective effort that extends beyond protecting animals; it is about uplifting communities and creating a sustainable future for all. Whether you choose to support our Air Wing campaign, shop at the Mercantile, or find restoration at the Canvas Lodge, your contribution has a tangible impact on the ground. Thank you for being part of this journey to ensure the heartbeat of the African wild is heard for generations to come.



Join the Cause. Donate Now

100% of all charitable donations made to ERP go directly into our field projects. In order to make a donation via an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), visit us @ www.erp.ngo

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ERP.NGO | 4780 Ashford Dunwoody Road Suite 540 #617 | Atlanta, GA 30338-5504 US

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