

# ZIMBABWE CONSERVATION TASK FORCE

12th November 2007

## IMIRE BLACK RHINO TRAGEDY



It is with utter shock, horror and disbelief that we report the massacre of 3 black rhino at the hands of poachers on the night of the 7th November 2007 at Imire Safari Ranch.

Just over 20 years ago, Imire Safari Ranch became the guardians of 7 orphaned black rhino. The purpose of this was to try and increase the population of the endangered species and over the past 2 decades, the Travers family have lovingly reared and bred these animals, successfully releasing 13 black rhino back into Matusadonna National Park.



Last Wednesday night, the 7th of November, 4 armed poachers dressed in camouflage

uniform, assaulted and tied up the rhino guards and opened fire on the 3 adult rhino in their pens. All 3 were killed - Sprinter, a male, DJ, a female who had recently given birth to a calf and tragically, Amber a pregnant female who was due to give birth in a week. Amber's unborn calf also died.



The 3 rhino had been dehorned 6 weeks ago in an effort to make them less attractive to poachers but nevertheless, the poachers tried to hack out the inch of new horn growth from one of the rhinos before being frightened off by the sound of a car approaching.

Imire Safari Ranch are now left with 4 orphaned rhinos including DJ's 6 week old calf and they are offering a reward to anyone who can lead them to the despicable people who were responsible for the massacre. They have circulated the following appeal for funds for a reward:

Imire Safari Ranch

*"What is man without the beast? If all the Beasts were gone man would die from Great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts soon happens to man... All are connected". – Chief Seattle*

#### REWARD FUNDING

Reward funding required towards the arrest and conviction of the persons responsible for the brutal killing of our 3 Black Rhino at Imire Game Park on the night of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

"DJ", mother of 7-week-old "Tatenda" (now orphaned), "Sprinter" (father of "Tatenda") and "Amber" (pregnant mother and ready to give birth). They were shot while in there bomas. In 20 seconds, our Black Rhino breeding stock were annihilated.

Obviously the bigger the reward the better the prospects of these culprits being brought to JUSTICE all funds will be carefully monitored and invested until such time the reward is paid or refunded to those who have contributed.

All funds made payable to Imire Game Park  
Zimbank Marondera Branch A/C # 4573 399451001

Contact: Mike or Sheila Thompson,  
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Please forward to everyone, everywhere.

The photos in this report are of a black rhino at Imire Safari Ranch which we were very fortunate to see a few months ago.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the Travers family and their team for their tragic loss.

Johnny Rodrigues  
Chairman for Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force