



Wild Dog Report - March 2008

THE NORTHERN TULI WILD DOG PROJECT

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A meeting was held at Tuli Lodge on 8 March for selected community leaders. These people were invited in order to officially introduce the wild dog project to them, and request their cooperation with the community work. Rex presented a PowerPoint presentation (I could not attend the meeting). Despite sending out official invitations, only three representatives showed up and this was somewhat disappointing.

After this meeting, we commenced with the community meetings. In some instances we were requested to first present the talk to the VDC and then return at a later date for the *kgotla* meetings. We had an experienced community liaison officer from Cheetah Conservation Botswana, Thabang, come spend the first week with us. He was a great mentor to Rex and most certainly added great value to the community project. Several meetings were held during the month and after this was done, Rex visited all lodges and camps within the reserve to give them the same talk. This went very well and Rex is doing a good job.





We also laid out the biofence after much rerouting to meet various objectives. We fetched the scats at Venetia while Tico McNutt flew in from Maun with 70kg of scats and urine markings, and spent one night at Mashatu. We set out immediately and laid out several kilometres worth. I completed this over the next few days. This will most certainly be an exciting experiment.

The alpha pair started mating early in the month and continued for several weeks. The alpha male was very aggressive, especially during the early stages, towards the other adult males. Hopefully the female successfully conceives and finds a safe den within the reserve. This may be a very important aspect, as it will limit the dogs ranging activity once they are released.