

## PLEASE HELP US SAVE BAD BULL

We have a serious dilemma in Amboseli. The oldest and biggest bull in the population, M126, otherwise known as “Bad Bull”, is causing problems in the farms in Kimana. Bad Bull is an Amboseli institution, well known and highly respected by all of us who work on the project, and made famous in several of our books. Not only is he the oldest and biggest bull in Amboseli but he also holds that position in Kenya and almost certainly in the rest of East Africa. Estimated at 64 years old he is magnificent, standing almost 12 feet at the shoulder and with tusks weighing well over 100 lbs each. He is the father of dozens of the calves born in Amboseli over the last 25-30 years.



Bad Bull was so named because he charged my vehicle when I first sighted him back in 1976. I have had a healthy respect for him ever since. Needless to say, elephants are not morally bad or good. He was doing what he thought he should do—get rid of a troublesome intruder, in other words my vehicle.

Now he is causing serious problems by going into the Kimana farms at night and the eating the crops. The farmers are demanding that Bad Bull be shot. We have to find a better solution. These farms are surrounded by an electric fence but the community has failed to maintain it. The current stopped going through the wires months ago and the elephants soon learned that they could push over the posts without getting shocked and walk in and find a highly delicious and nutritious meal. Bad Bull is not the only elephant who crop raids at Kimana and therefore shooting him is not going to help in any case.

The Kenya Wildlife Service is under a huge amount of pressure to “do something” but they are very short of funds. The Senior Warden does not want to kill Bad Bull if it is at all possible to avoid doing so. I have now stepped in to offer to pay for the rehabilitation of the electric fence. I know this is just a fire fighting action, but I can't let this grand old bull be killed. Once the fence is fixed we can then work with the community to try to engage them in maintaining the fence and taking responsibility.

The rehabilitation of the fence is going to cost \$8-10,000. I am trying to get other organizations to contribute and we already have pledges from two amounting to \$3,000. I need my good and loyal donors to help make up the rest. This is important. Not only will it save Bad Bull but it will also help these farmers, who are truly suffering significant losses, and it will prevent potential injuries and deaths to people and wildlife. Donations can be sent to The African Elephant Conservation Trust, 10 State Street, Newburyport, MA 01950.

Human-wildlife and particularly human-elephant conflict is the single most important conservation issue in Africa. We have to find solutions. This is one situation we know how to rectify. Please help me do it.

*Cynthia Moss*  
*17 September 2003*  
*Amboseli National Park*