

Establishment of the Andean Cat Conservation Center

San Pedro de Atacama, Chile

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Small Cat Conservation Alliance

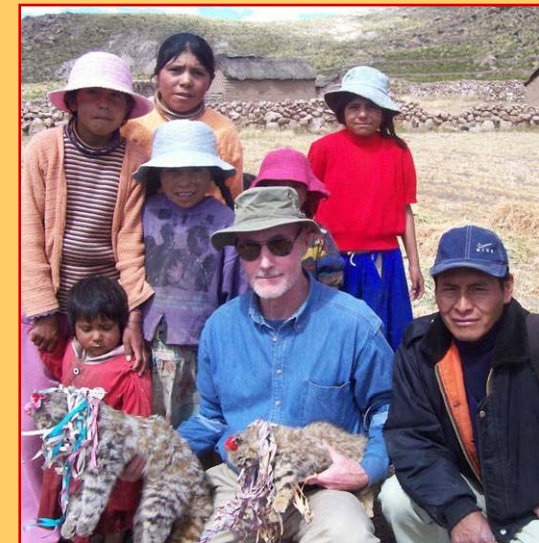
Why now?

The Andean cat is the only endangered cat in the Americas. Estimates are that fewer than 2000 individuals exist. During the past decade my colleagues in the Andean Cat Alliance* (AGA) and I, enabled by your generous assistance, have significantly improved our understanding of the geographic distribution of the Andean cat (below in red). Armed with this hard-won information, in addition to a much improved appreciation of potential threats to the cat, we are now able to identify several areas where the population of Andean cats is significant, as well as where local communities are supportive of conservation actions (below in yellow). (*AGA is a WCN partner organization of over 40 people working in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru.)



What threats must be addressed?

Conservation actions must address five threats. First, many indigenous people attribute supernatural powers to wild cats; furthermore, they believe these powers can be harnessed by killing, decorating, and displaying the dead cat. Because Andean cats show no fear of people, they are easily killed. Second, in some areas people eat mountain viscachas, the principal prey of the Andean cat. Third, mining activities threaten valuable habitat. Fourth, introduced exotic species are an emerging threat. Fifth, global warming is causing rapid loss of glaciers whose waters maintain the only feeding areas of mountain viscachas. Engaging the local people, working with mining companies to mitigate impacts, and monitoring introduced species and global warming are essential to ensuring the survival of the Andean cat.



Securing a future for the Andean cat



Working with the local indigenous people and monitoring the impacts of global warming on the Andean cat and its prey are the only ways to ensure that the Andean cat will continue to exist in the wild. The logical next step is to have a permanent physical presence in the area.

We do not need to purchase land. The Small Cat Conservation Alliance (SCCA) has agreements with Fundación Biodiversitas, a Chilean non-profit, and CONAF, the government agency responsible for managing national parks and production forests. CONAF has agreed to allow us to renovate a building in their already functioning compound at San Pedro de Atacama. **This is an unprecedented opportunity to create the first Andean cat conservation center.**

Conservation Center

CONAF's compound is 6 acres in size; the building we've been offered is nicely sized at 23' x 73'. In addition to renovating the building, we also require a 4WD vehicle.

Help Now! Donations:
 Wildlife Conservation Network
 Andean Cat Monitor Station
 25745 Bassett Lane
 Los Altos, CA 94022 USA

What will it cost to become operational?	
4WD vehicle	12,000
Building renovation (materials, labor, transportation)	55,000
Furnishings	7,000
Shipping solar arrays from CA to Chile	8,000
What is the total cost?	\$82,000
Small Cat Conservation Alliance will provide the first	21,000
How much is needed now?	\$61,000
What has been donated already?	
WCN partner Steve Gold has already received solar equipment worth \$35,000 that will be ready for shipment in the fall	



What about operating costs?

Operating costs will be supported by the Small Wild Cat Endowment Fund that is currently generating about \$10,000 annually. By having our own building, SCCA will have a

site where scientists and students may visit, study, and work. All who use the facility will be strongly encouraged to employ local people to help with their studies/work, thereby gaining needed assistance while furthering SCCA's good relationship and influence with the local population.