



D.A.R.T. REPORT
(Dete Animal Rescue Trust)



REMOVING TELEPHONE WIRE
UPDATE No.8 - 15th October 2020
INSIDE HWANGE NATIONAL PARK

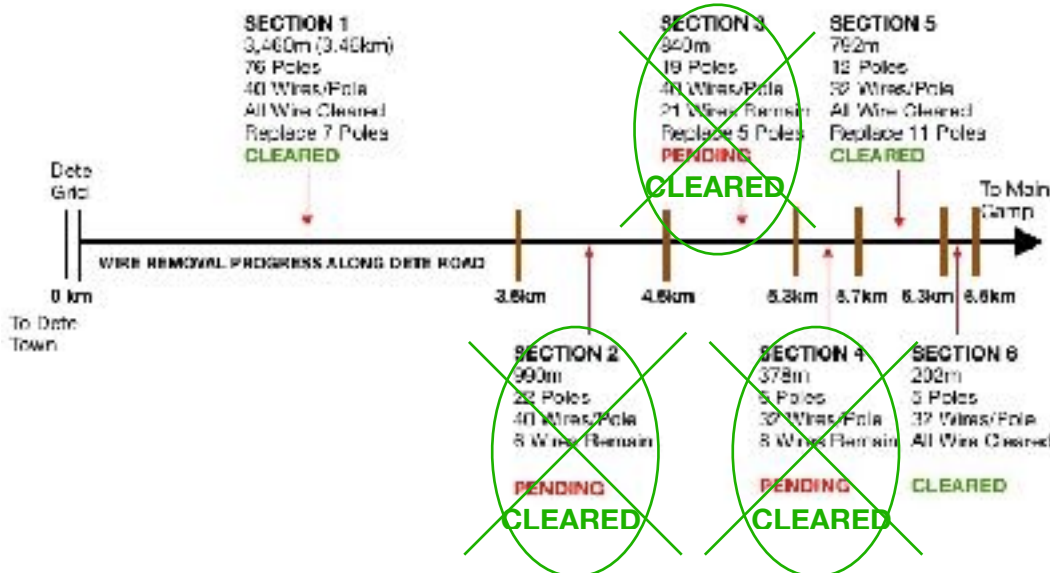
Since the departure in mid-September of the Vic Falls guides and ZPHGA volunteers, the D.A.R.T./Ukhozi Team had been working alone on the time-consuming task of replacing many old, rotten telephone poles in many sections before they could start removing the decommissioned telephone wire.

At the beginning of October however, the team welcomed the arrival of Mr Alec Sibanda, Mr. Crispen Ndlovu, Mr Japhet Ndlovu, three volunteer guides from the town of Dete.

Thanks to this invaluable assistance, the team was able to move much faster and FINALLY RECOVERED ALL the telephone wire from the most challenging and daunting sections where the many fragile poles had slowed the Team's earlier progress.



TELEPHONE WIRE REMOVAL PROGRESS ALONG DETE ROAD



In the progress map for the Dete Road (see Report No.7), the "pending" sections have now been **CLEARED** of phone wire.

DETE ROAD WIRE RECOVERED

Section 2 (6wires remained/pole)
22poles = 21gaps x 50m=1,050m
6wires x 1,050m=6,300m (6.3km)
Weight = 108kg/1000m = 680kg

Section 3 (21wires remain/pole)
Total Wire = 18,900m (19km)
Total Wire Weight = 2,041kg

Section 4 (8wires remained/pole)
Total Wire = 2,000m (2km)
Total Wire Weight = 216kg

TOTAL = 27.3km (2.9 Tons)

INSIDE THE NATIONAL PARK FROM MPOFU ENTRANCE GATE

After the completing the difficult sections along the Dete Road, the Team turned their attention to an equally challenging section **INSIDE** the National Park from Mpoфу Entrance Gate to the "White Road" (see map below)

With thanks to Area Manager Mr. Brighton Joroma, a National Parks Ranger was allocated to protect the team and overnight accommodation was provided at Main Camp while the Team worked inside the National Park.

In this **3.15km section**, a total of 20x old telephone poles had to be replaced.

Thereafter a total of **50.4km of wire** weighing approximately **5.2 tons** was recovered & removed from the area

INSIDE THE NATIONAL PARK FROM MPOFU ENTRANCE GATE



Having been alerted to the presence of more telephone wire along a 14km stretch that had supposedly been cleared by others some time ago, the D.A.R.T./Ukhozi team went to inspect it. This was quite an adventure!!

While most of the telephone wires had been recovered, we DID find a lot of forgotten wire. Our progress was slowed not only by the many fallen poles we found littering and blocking the road but also at other sections where the acacia & dichrostachys bush regrowth had rendered the road totally impassable. In the end we were forced to drive along the railway line with one set of wheels on the ballast.....

FALLEN POLES BLOCKING THE ROAD; ROAD IMPASSABLE; NO CHOICE BUT TO DRIVE ALONG RAILWAY BALLAST



To our surprise none of the 5-strand telephone support cables had been cut off the poles or removed.



We **didn't bring a ladder** because we didn't expect that the support cables had not been removed from the poles.

These 5-strand steel cables are highly prized by poachers to make buffalo & giraffe snares so we couldn't leave them behind and **without a ladder**, some innovative plans were made to cut & remove these potentially lethal wires



After cutting & collecting all the 5-strand support cables, the Team found & rolled-up many untidy "bird's nest bundles" of wire. Along the way many long-forgotten rolls of telephone wire abandoned beside the road were also collected.

Tues 13th Oct was the last day Iganyana Lodge prepared & delivered their much appreciated bush lunches. The Team was then handed the remnants of the donated produce and the Ukhozi Team will once again have to cook for themselves !!

PROJECT UPDATE - The removal of 78km wire by the Ukhozi Team & Dete Volunteer Guides (1-15th Oct) brings total phone wire now recovered to:

TOTAL 623km WIRE REMOVED
TOTAL WEIGHT 26.3 Tons

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL DONORS & SUPPORTERS

The Phone Wire Removal Initiative would again like to thank everyone who has and still continues to physically assist the D.A.R.T./Ukhozi Team by generously giving up their valuable time or kindly donating financial or material resources and support to the ongoing success of this important conservation project including:

- HWANGE CONSERVATION SOCIETY-(UK)
- SOUTHERN AFRICAN CONSERVATION TRUST
- FRIENDS OF HWANGE
- SAVE AFRICAN RHINO FOUNDATION
- JULIET JOHNSTONE of Cawston Block - for providing meat and fresh vegetables to the volunteers
- MARK & ANTHONY RANDALL - for providing cabbages
- BRENT LEROUX - for providing fresh vegetables
- BONSA SPAR - for providing 2 x 10 kg bags of meali meal
- FOREVER AFRICAN SAFARIS - for providing procurement and logistics
- TERRY & SHEONA ANDERS & Iganyana Tented Camp - for providing accommodation, supplying and logistics of meals and camp staff
- JAMES & JANINE VARDEN of Ride Zimbabwe Horseback Safaris
- JOHN LAING of Batoka Lodges for recruitment, coordination and transportation of Vic Falls Guides
- ZIMBABWE NATIONAL PARKS - Especially Area Manager Mr. Brighton Joroma, Senior Wildlife Officer Mr. Augustine Gomba, Senior Ranger Chipangure and the many Rangers who have provided security protection.

