

## **Woodland Park Zoo conservation program honored again** ***Grant received to expand conservation area***

SEATTLE-Woodland Park Zoo's international field conservation program, the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP), again has been recognized for its ground-breaking work to save species, habitat and communities in Papua New Guinea.



TKCP – which has been working for 20 years to protect endangered species and a diverse and valuable habitat, has partnered with the Rainforest Trust, receiving \$222,650 for a five-year initiative to expand the YUS Conservation Area which the program helped to establish in 2009. The project will lead to the declaration of a 391,000-acre, Landscape-level Community Conservation Area encompassing pristine cloud forest, coastal and marine areas, and more than 50 indigenous villages in the mountainous Pacific Island nation.

The habitat includes the existing 187,000-acre Yopno-Uruwa-Som (YUS) Conservation Area established Papua New Guinea in 2009. Funding from the Rainforest Trust will help TKCP strengthen the local management of the protected landscape, including training for the country's first Conservation Rangers to patrol protected areas and monitor wildlife in the area.

The Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program was created by Woodland Park Zoo senior conservation scientist and TKCP Director Lisa Dabek in 1996. Its mission is to foster wildlife and habitat conservation and support local community livelihoods in PNG through global partnerships, land protection and scientific research. Dabek, who has a PhD in animal behavior and conservation biology, said, "Over the past 20 years, the program has grown and evolved into a holistic program supporting habitat protection for a wide range of threatened species, as well as initiatives to enhance local community livelihoods and access to government services. Thanks to funding and support from organizations such as the Rainforest Trust we've been able to further strengthen the YUS Conservation Area for the protection of tree kangaroos and other endangered species."

In addition to funding from the Rainforest Trust, TKCP was recently awarded \$2.6 million from the United Nations-sponsored Global Environment Facility (GEF) for a corresponding five-year project in collaboration with PNG's National Government, supporting its efforts to strengthen the management of protected areas in collaboration with indigenous communities throughout the country. As the first and only Conservation Area in Papua New Guinea, the YUS Conservation Area and TKCP will serve as the model to guide the development of national policies for protected area management.

TKCP is a leader in applying a multidisciplinary approach to conservation and has received several accolades, including the Association of Zoos & Aquariums' (AZA)

International Conservation Award in 2002 and 2014 and the United Nations Equator Prize in 2014. Dabek has also been nominated for the prestigious 2016 Indianapolis Prize, in recognition of her contribution to wildlife conservation.

Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, award-winning Woodland Park Zoo is famed for pioneering naturalistic exhibits and setting international standards for zoos in animal care, conservation and education programs. Woodland Park Zoo is helping to save animals and their habitats through more than 40 field projects in the Pacific Northwest and around the world. By inspiring people to care and act, Woodland Park Zoo is making a difference in our planet's future ecological health and sustainability. For more information, visit [www.zoo.org](http://www.zoo.org).

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