



## 2023 MEDIA KIT



**Wildlife Biologist Planned Travel by one of *Fodor's* Top 10 Tour Operators for Africa**

The Wild Source  
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## FACT SHEET

### History

The Wild Source was founded in 2008 by wildlife biologist and African big cat researcher Bill Given. He started the company to apply wildlife biologist knowledge to developing safaris that would be tailored specifically to the wildlife interests of each traveler, using that expertise to create itineraries based on wildlife behavior.

### Mission

The Wild Source is a mission-driven safari operator. We specialize in wildlife biologist-planned safaris, using travel as a conservation tool to empower local people and conserve wildlife and wild places. We are known for our remarkable guiding team, serious wildlife viewing, and creating camp ownership opportunities for local people.

### Location and Staff

We provide the convenience of a Golden, Colorado-based planning office but also have a full Tanzanian registered ground operation with an office in Arusha. The Wild Source employs a staff of 7 in Colorado and over 20 in Africa, and we have our own guides and camps.

### Partnerships

We have partnerships with many major camp owners to be able to offer the full range of possibilities for each itinerary. Our special community spanning two continents makes The Wild Source uniquely positioned to create and deliver a safari that exceeds clients' dreams.

### Custom Wildlife Biologist Planned Adventures

The Wild Source specializes in custom itineraries crafted to best fit the desires and dreams of each individual client; thus, we do not offer set itineraries but rather work with you to design your ideal safari.

# DISRUPTIVE EMPOWERMENT

## The Problem with Traditional Safaris

Ecotourism, voluntourism and traveling with a purpose continue to gain popularity with consumers, and the safari industry in general likes to tout its efforts in wildlife conservation. However, most of the benefit of safari tourism still goes to foreign owners and operators, which usually report job creation as the biggest positive contribution. At many luxury camps, expats are employed as managers and are paid two to three times what a local counterpart receives. Most would agree the safari guide is the essential factor in the safari experience, yet it is common for a guide's monthly salary to be equivalent (or less) than the cost of one bed night sold in a luxury camp.

In the prevailing safari world, the compensation for guides does not recognize their vital importance. At traditional earning levels it is rare to be able to earn the capital needed to become safari camp owners. Some successful guides can purchase (or more often) finance a vehicle to start a freelance guiding business, but there are many barriers to entry including: how to market and compete for clients that come mostly from other countries, how to communicate and plan for guests when the guide works exhaustive days in the bush, and the challenge of staying operational with one or two vehicles in heavy use. Perhaps the largest barrier: using safari camps with a freelance guide costs more for tourists than using a camp-based guide, creating an economic disadvantage for guides to overcome. **And, ultimately, lasting wildlife conservation can only be achieved if local people receive substantial economic benefits.**

## The Innovation: Disruptive Empowerment

Disruptive empowerment in the safari industry is a solution-based approach to conservation tourism by moving **beyond job opportunities to ownership**. The Wild Source and wildlife biologist founder Bill Given have partnered with top local safari guides in Tanzania, Botswana and Kenya to create safari camps that include local guides as significant owners. The Wild Source has also provided strategic business support to remove barriers to success for the guides' 100 percent-owned entrepreneurial freelance guiding ventures, including negotiating deals based on our buying power that reduced or eliminated the economic disadvantages of being a freelance guide. Both concepts were born out of realizing the guides are the heart of every great safari experience; promoting them leads to a competitive advantage in attracting travelers.

The result is The Wild Source's Disruptive Empowerment model, where the skills and experience of the local expert guides become the capital that earns ownership shares, while the other partners raise the investment funds. The guides involved are earning significantly more money and are invested in long-term ownership, thus able to support themselves and their families with more choices in life – **a formula that can lead to lasting wildlife conservation as it becomes clear that the wildlife resource is delivering lucrative compensation.**



## GUIDE-OWNER OPERATIONS & WILDLIFE BIOLOGISTS

### Tanzania – The Wild Source Tanzania and Njozi Camp

In 2009, The Wild Source partnered with local Tanzanian guide Deo Magoye, who is 100 percent owner and Managing Director of The Wild Source Tanzania – a full ground/guide operation. When the partnership began, Deo owned one safari vehicle. Deo now owns a fleet of seven vehicles and employs a team of exceptional Tanzanian guides. And in 2019, The Wild Source coordinated investment from two wildlife biologists, Bill Given (The Wild Source founder) and Kathy Frost, enabling Deo to fully own Njozi Camp. In another initiative, Njozi Camp is the first (and currently only) Tanzanian safari camp to employ local wildlife biologists. The biologists conduct big cat research (under Bill's tutelage as he has been a big cat researcher for years) and engage camp guests in the project. The biologist program allowed The Wild Source to create jobs that were not previously part of the safari industry and build critical local capacity in the wildlife biologist field that is needed for long term conservation.

### Botswana – Bushman Plains

Bushman Plains is the only safari camp in the Okavango Delta that is majority owned and operated by native people, specifically the Bushman (DNA studies say they are the First People). The Bushman owners were the last generation born in the bush to hunter-gatherer parents, and then the first generation to be settled to a village and receive formal education. They went on to be safari guides, and now the only local people owning a safari camp – which is located within their heritage lands. When this band of Bushmen received the necessary permits to start a camp operation, Bill was the only outsider invited to participate. Bill and The Wild Source were able to raise the capital needed to create and support the camp operation, while keeping it a Bushman-driven project maintaining their majority ownership stake.



## Kenya – Enaidura Camp and Lalashe Guide Co-Op

Enaidura Camp includes two legendary guides, Johnson Pingua ‘Ping’ Nkuku and Paul Kirui (of Maasai and Dorobo heritage, respectively) – both listed as Top 25 Guides for all of Africa by *Conde Nast Traveler*, and one is Chairman of the Kenya Guides Association. They have 25 percent ownership based on the above detailed Disruptive Empowerment. The Wild Source also helped start the Lalashe (‘my brother’ in Maa) Guides Co-Op, where we help these entrepreneurial guides succeed in owning freelance guide businesses by providing access to special vehicles, marketing/reservations support, and help negotiating away some economic barriers at Kenyan safari camps to allow the guides to compete on better footing.

## THE WILD SOURCE DIFFERENCE

### Extraordinarily Unconventional Safari Experiences



#### World Class Guiding

As a tour operator founded by safari guides, we know the experience, knowledge, and passion of your guide is the backbone of the entire safari experience

[Learn More](#)



#### Wildlife Biologist Background

Our founder Bill's biology background informs our planning decisions. Meanwhile, our Tanzanian biologists are actively conducting field research in the Serengeti.

[Learn More](#)



#### Revolutionary Partnerships

We are committed to empowering local safari guides to gain ownership of camps that traditionally only benefit foreign expat owners

[Learn More](#)



#### Custom Planning

Our planning team has the personal “boots on the ground” experience and deep knowledge of wildlife destinations to plan the best safari tailored to your interests.

[Learn More](#)



## SPOKESPERSON BIOS

### Bill Given, Founder and Wildlife Biologist

Bill has always been passionate about wildlife and wild places. Growing up in the Washington, D.C. area he had to cut his teeth on *Wild Kingdom*, the *Adventures of Jacques Cousteau* and trips to the National Zoo. The result has been a career as a wildlife biologist, followed by the unique invent of wildlife biologist planned safaris.

Bill's first safari came as the result of landing a bigger than expected endangered species survey contract, providing funds to fulfill the safari dream. Usually when you want something so badly it cannot live up to the expectation. In this case, Bill was blown away by the experience: the wildlife, the wilderness and the people. As he discussed animal behavior and his wildlife experiences a couple of guides and guests told Bill he should be guiding safaris. Bill followed the sage advice and started leading small group trips as a Biologist Guide.



Bill conducting lion research (the lion is tranquilized).

Subsequently Bill was recruited to conduct research on African lions in Botswana. As word of mouth spread there were far too many interested clients to fit on the few trips a year that Bill could personally guide. The formation of The Wild Source ensured that everyone had the opportunity to benefit from Bill's knowledge and passion to plan amazing safari experiences with the Wildlife Biologist approach.

Working for two decades as a Wildlife Biologist, Bill has conducted studies on a diverse array of species ranging from endangered butterflies and jumping mice to owls, Mexican wolves and African lions. Currently, as a Research Associate of the Denver Zoo and member of the Botswana based Kalahari Research & Conservation group his focus is as the Principal Investigator of a lion research project in Botswana. The study is an effort to determine the effectiveness of translocating lions from cattle areas back into protected reserves. Bill is also applying a powerful technique, conditioned taste aversion, for the first time on African lions and if successful it could be a revolutionary conservation tool for predators around the globe.

## Emily Hancock, Senior Safari Specialist & Marketing Director

Born and raised in Colorado, Emily is an avid traveler, outdoorswoman, and adventure enthusiast. She has been on safari in Tanzania and Kenya where highlights included witnessing a cheetah hunt in Ndutu and spotting an endangered rhino in the Ngorongoro Crater. She has also been to southern Africa for the lifetime highlights of following African wild dogs on the hunt in the Okavango Delta of Botswana, and swimming in the Devil's Pool at Victoria Falls. In Uganda, she has trekked to see the endangered mountain gorillas in Bwindi and watched wild chimpanzee behavior in Kibale Forest.



Outside of Africa, Emily has adventured extensively across her home state of Colorado and throughout the Rocky Mountains, and studied abroad in Europe. Emily became increasingly interested in wildlife and conservation after spending three months in 2018 living in a camper in the untamed wilderness of Canada and Alaska, from backpacking among grizzly bears in Banff, to hiking among Dall sheep in Denali National Park, to boating with humpback whales in the Kenai Fjords.

## Deo Magoye, Co-Founder of The Wild Source Tanzania & Senior Safari Guide

Deo is the Managing Director of The Wild Source Tanzania and co-owner of Njozi Camp. Guiding is his passion and our Tanzania team have dubbed him the 'King Guide'. Most companies will claim their guides are great but a quick look at Deo's history illustrates that he is a one-of-a-kind for this region. In 2008, Deo was featured as the Safari Guide and Bush Lore expert for the South African television show *Voetspore: Journey from Gansbaai (South Africa) to Gabon*, a 3-month expedition through rarely visited terrain.



This was a follow up to his role on the same series when their expedition went from Cape Town to Cairo. Deo's guiding skills are well known, making him the guide selected by many film crews and professional photographers. He was the head guide for a *National Geographic* film crew for 4 months making a film of the Serengeti migration, and he has guided for *BBC* filmmakers as well. Deo guided legendary wildlife photographer Tom Mangelsen for his East Africa shoots, as well as Boyd Norton and Joe McDonald who have contributed to the *Audubon Field Guide for African Mammals* and created their own books.





## AWARDS & TESTIMONIALS

### Awards

- ❖ Fodor's Top 10 Tour Operators for Africa
- ❖ Fodor's Highly Recommended Outfitter in *Complete Guide to African Safaris*
- ❖ Denver Zoological Foundation Research Associate
- ❖ Two guides on *Conde Nast's* Top 25 Best Safari Guides for Africa

### Client Testimonials

"Our African safari with The Wild Source was exceptional. Of importance to us was that our guides had outstanding local science knowledge and we were out from dawn to dusk viewing the wildlife (what we came for)." – Genevieve A.

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"Words cannot describe our safari experience with The Wild Source. We were very fortunate to have booked our safari with a company who values conservation, professionalism and customer service. Our guide was excellent, he was highly knowledgeable about the animals, the environment, the region and the weather. This company knows what they are doing, we were worry free on our entire trip, and highly impressed with the accommodations, and private guide and transportation. I would book with The Wild Source for our next safari, in a heartbeat!" – Melvina B.

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"My numerous travels planned by The Wild Source have been exceptional. They leave nothing up to chance; anticipate every need; go above and beyond; and address every detail. Working with TWS enables me to travel anxiety free, confident that I'm protected and cared for. I highly recommend them!" – Anita L.

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"The Wild Source is a consistently superb wildlife travel service with a strong focus on exceptional guiding, customer comfort and service and importantly, a highly ethical approach to wildlife travel. I have traveled through The Wild Source on custom and small group trips to Tanzania, Kenya, India, Brazil, Chile--and anticipate future trips with them. I give them the highest possible recommendation!" – Kay Q.



# THE WILD SOURCE FOUNDATION

Since our inception in 2008 The Wild Source safari operation has been on a mission to conserve wildlife, using travel as a major tool. Over the years, The Wild Source has invested tens of thousands of dollars and countless hours into philanthropic programs without any non-profit status. We simply considered these activities an essential part of our culture and the best way to meet our desire to contribute to the regions where we operate safaris. Major support has gone to wildlife research, job skills development and creating ownership opportunities for local people within safari guiding operations and safari camps. We often considered starting a nonprofit Foundation to put more focus on our conservation initiatives, but short on time and accomplishing a lot with our business to philanthropy model – it was never pursued.

As Covid-19 ground the safari industry to a halt in March 2020, we faced massive challenges. It was quickly evident that in 2020 The Wild Source would have less ability to support our mission-based projects, simultaneously the communities we worked with would be facing economic devastation and potentially health risks. Past travelers began contacting us with their concern for the wonderful people they had met on their African safaris and asking how they could help. This was a profound intersection, seeing the rapid rise of hardship, in concert with people reaching out wanting to donate funds to assist. In response, The Wild Source Foundation (TWSF) was formed in April 2020, as an immediate crisis response but always with the bigger vision to grow into supporting ongoing conservation, empowerment, and research.

## Mission

The Wild Source Foundation is dedicated to creating lasting wildlife conservation through the empowerment of local communities. We focus on three areas of need: wildlife research and conservation, creation of economic empowerment, and education / training.

## Mechanism

The Wild Source Foundation leverages the on-the-ground partners and connections of The Wild Source safari operation to identify needs directly from the communities where our safaris operate and collaborate to create opportunities for community empowerment and conservation of wildlife.

### **Wildlife Research & Conservation – examples of some of the work we have supported:**

- Wildlife monitoring & anti-poaching Okavango Delta (Botswana)
- Big cat research Ndutu/Serengeti (Tanzania)
- Research paper submitted in 2020 (published February 2021) African Journal of Wildlife Research – ‘Outcomes of lion, Panthera leo, translocations to reduce conflict with farmers in Botswana’

### **Economic Empowerment – examples of some of the work we have supported:**

- Funding Contribution for Ping's Dairy (Kenya)
- Funding Contribution for Opuk Pub (Tanzania)
- Maasai Designs: Craft and Fashion projects to grow Entrepreneurship for vulnerable Maasai women (Kenya)
- Business Planning Services for Gudigwa Store project (Botswana)
- Food donations to serve multiple Maasai communities largely out of work from Covid tourism shutdown

### **Education & Job Training – examples of some of the work we have supported:**

- Tuition Sponsorship for Secondary School pupils (Tanzania)
- Driving school for wildlife biologists in training (Tanzania)
- Worked with Wild Bird Trust Botswana for Teacher Training in the wilderness (Botswana)



## MEDIA RESOURCES

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### Images:

Please contact Emily Hancock for hi-res, press approved images.

### Social Media:



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