



Reddish-brown Bearded Saki
by Allan Hopkins/Flickr



Giant River Otter, by Diego Grandi

Save 2.2 Million Acres of Pristine Amazon Forest From Mining

In the ancient tropical wilderness of remote southern Guyana, dense, intact rainforest blankets the largest block of protected areas in the northern Amazon biome. These forests make up part of South America's Guiana Shield, one of the largest remaining blocks of primary tropical forest on Earth with over 90% intact forest.

The region is home to numerous threatened species like the Giant Otter, Giant Anteater and Giant Armadillo as well as Reddish-brown Bearded Saki and Guiana Spider Monkey, Northern Tiger Cat, and Jaguar.

Gold mining is the greatest threat to the ecosystem, its species, and to human communities, primarily Wapichan Indigenous Peoples. Roads are another imminent threat that increases access to forest resources.

Rainforest Trust seeks \$2,335,251 to support our partner, South Rupununi District Council (SRDC) / South Central Peoples Development Association (SCPDA), an Indigenous-led NGO, in an extraordinary opportunity to protect 2,238,000 acres of highly intact rainforest in the new Wapichan Headwater Conserved Area by formally establishing Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) or Amerindian Protected Areas. This project will help secure a new land title for one ancestral Indigenous territory and "extensions" of titles on four Wapichan Wiizi territories, which will protect larger areas of their customary lands.

The Wapichan headwaters are formed by a network of freshwater sources that include some of Guyana's largest rivers. This ecological corridor links the Amazon and Essequibo River basins through a complex hydrological network, and it stores high levels of carbon.

CONNECTIVITY

The new conserved area will become part of a vast mosaic of protected areas stretching along the border with Brazil in western Guyana, linking the 1.5-million-acre Kanuku Mountains Protected Area in the north and the 1.6-million-acre Konashen Community-Owned Conserved Area in the south. Rainforest Trust is also currently supporting the establishment of



Giant Armadillo, by Andrew Snyder



2,238,000
ACRES

\$2,335,251
PROJECT COST

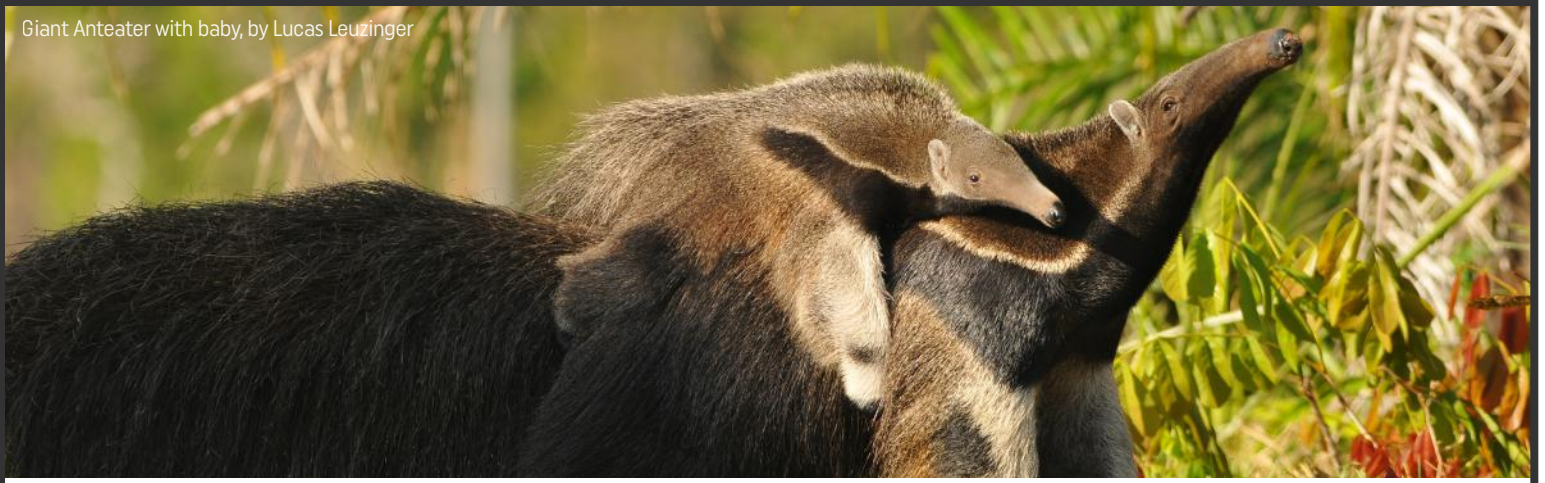
\$1.04
COST PER ACRE

553,300,740 mT
CO₂ EQUIVALENTS
STORED

KEY SPECIES:

Giant Otter (EN),
Giant Anteater (VU),
Giant Armadillo (VU),
Guiana Spider Monkey (VU)

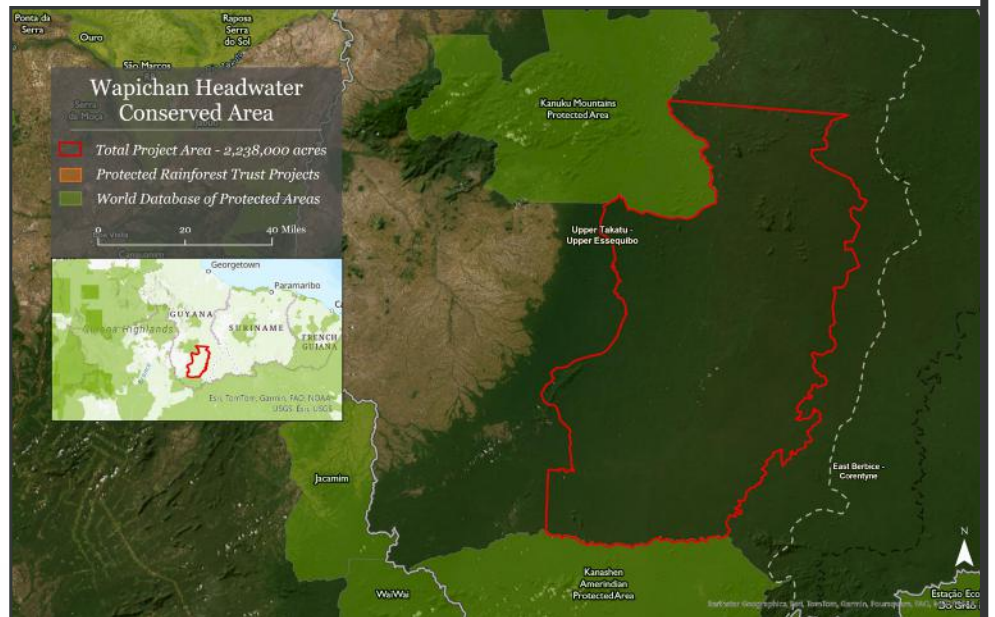
Giant Anteater with baby, by Lucas Leuzinger



741,000 acres of Indigenous Community Conservation Areas in this conservation corridor with partner Conservation International Guyana.

STOP THE RELENTLESS SPREAD OF GOLD MINING

The threat gold mining poses for Guyana's natural areas may date back centuries, but it is still alive today, evidenced by the blanket of global mining claims stretching across northern Guyana. Deforestation continues to be driven by legal artisanal gold mining that cuts into primary forests and threatens the still-intact Wapichan Wiizi territories as well. Securing land tenure rights will enable Indigenous communities to stop new mining, logging or other extractive concessions in their territories.



SUPPORT DECADES-LONG EFFORT BY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO PROTECT THEIR TERRITORIES

Our partner's organization is led by Indigenous Wapichan people, who have been working for 20 years to demarcate their territories, develop maps, and collect biodiversity data for this area, especially of freshwater fish, birds, and amphibians. With each survey, species are identified that are new to science. The Wapichan rely on the forests and waters for their survival and their livelihoods, and they hold the mountains sacred.

When the five Wapichan villages obtain legal recognition of their traditional ownership and management of their lands and resources, it will guarantee land tenure, resource security through biodiversity preservation, and the preservation of their cultural values and practices.

Kanuku Mountains, by SRDC

