

February 22, 2007

Dear friends and family,

Greetings from Waza in the extreme northern tip of Cameroon! I'm flying for a national park survey this week. This is a special survey project in connection with the WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) of Waza National Park. Due to ongoing poaching activity, surveyors are particularly interested in an accurate elephant count. Although the vast majority of our flying is in direct support of missionaries in the bush, this survey provides subsidy to missionaries so they can afford to use the airplane. It also provides an important service to the local community and government.

Since the runway at Waza has been closed for several years, I flew from Yaoundé to Garoua (about half-way to Waza) on Monday afternoon. Monday night and Tuesday morning I traveled by land to Waza to complete a ground survey of the runway before the second pilot came with the airplane. Although the majority of the runway was in great shape, this is the first time I've ever needed to evaluate an area damaged by a herd of elephants that crossed it several months ago! It's dry season and this region is semi-arid so it is extremely dry and rather warm (100° in the shade). We completed our first survey flight this morning. Although we didn't see the elephants we were looking for, I did see two lions that jumped into a tree! Once I return from Waza, I will work on uploading pictures to my website.



Life has been quite busy since arriving the end of January. When I arrived, the aviation group was focused on fielding the helicopter that has recently arrived here in Cameroon. Initially I worked on completing an inspection on the airplane so that they could focus on the helicopter. The helicopter left Yaoundé for its home base in Banson on Feb. 7, and I did my first checkout flight in Cameroon on Feb. 9.

I'll share a bit more about my day-to-day living situation in a future update. For now, here are several praises:

1. Continued good transition to life in Cameroon.
2. Helicopter program is started and has completed several operational flights.
3. My toolbox is here and back together (It's great to be using my own tools again).
4. Good opportunity to visit a number of airstrips in the far north of Cameroon during this Waza survey.

Thank you so much for your prayers. **Please join me in praying for:**

1. Safety during the Waza survey & ongoing flight checkout in Cameroon.
2. Health & strength - I did have an upset stomach this weekend after attending a Cameroonian event.
3. Wisdom as I consider other local involvements.

Thanks so much for your continued prayers, notes of encouragement and faithful support.

May the Lord bless you!

In Him, Robert

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P.S. We found the elephants the second day.