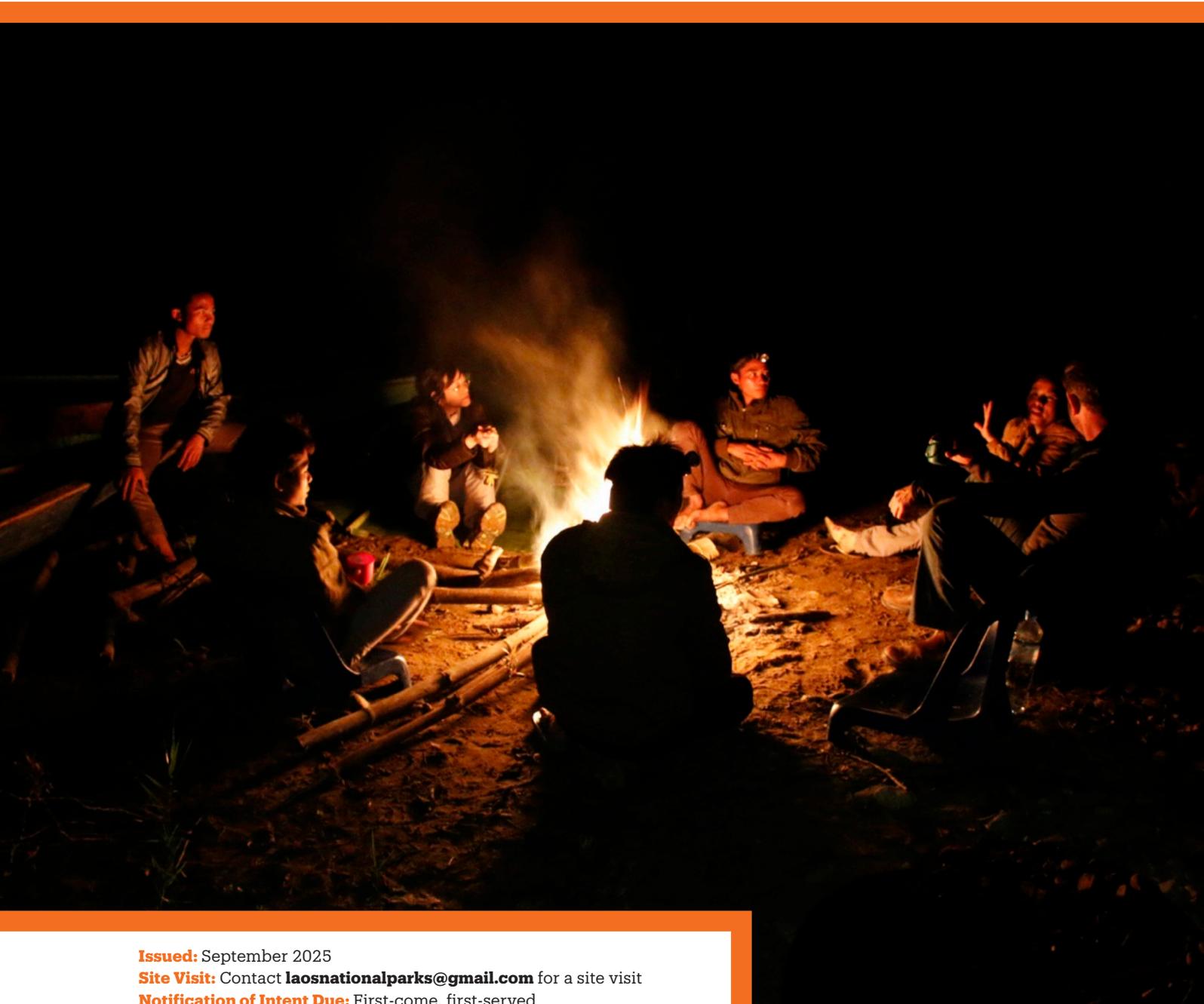


Private Sector Tourism Investment Opportunities

Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park

Investment Highlights 2025

- ➔ Nam Nern Night Safari
- ➔ Phou Louey Trekking: Cloud Forest Challenge & The Nests
- ➔ Tham Pa Ling Archaeological Cave



Issued: September 2025

Site Visit: Contact laosnationalparks@gmail.com for a site visit

Notification of Intent Due: First-come, first-served

Proposals Due: According to the MOU after receiving initial approval to move forward



Nam Et Phou Louey National Park
Lao PDR
laosnationalparks@gmail.com
www.laoparks.la



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PHOTOS: DOMINIQUE LE ROUX/ WCS / TONY DEARY



Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods



The Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) is developing sustainable, private-sector driven nature-based tourism (NBT) as one of the pillars of its 5-Year National Socio-Economic Plan and 2030 National Green Growth Strategy (NGGS). With an impressive diversity of natural capital, Lao PDR's comparative advantage in NBT is a reflection of its expansive national protected area (NPA) network, which covers roughly 20% of the country's total land mass. The Lao protected area system plays an essential role in protecting endangered wildlife species, including endemic species of the Annamite Mountain range, a global biodiversity hotspot. It is also home to a diverse group of ethnic minority peoples, whose history, culture and religious traditions are intertwined with nature.

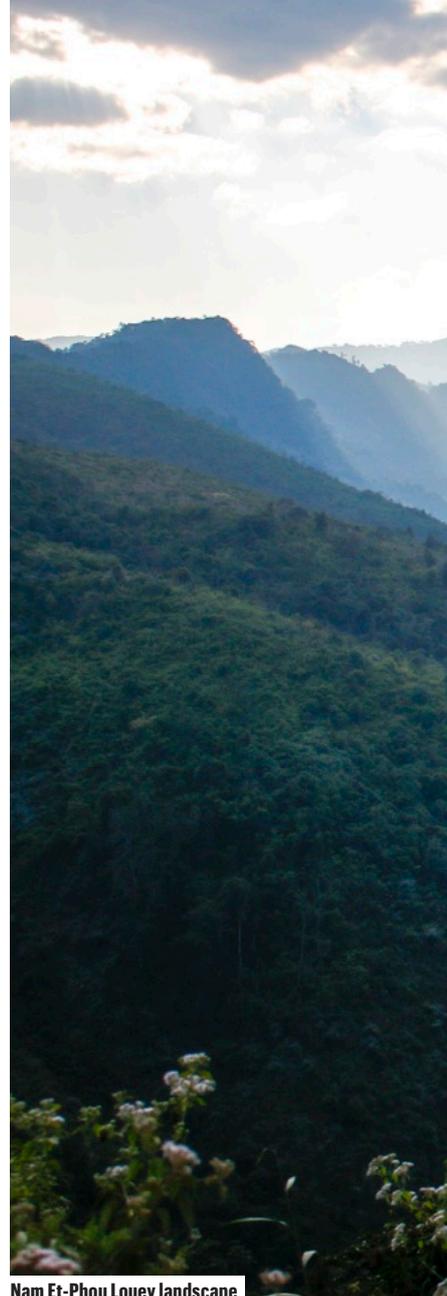
Laos has been making a name for itself as an international and regional destination for NBT, adventure tourism, ecotourism, and community-based tourism. Tourism has the potential to become Laos' top export and revenue earner, but this will require sustainable private sector investment and proactive public-private partnerships. With the right planned investments, tourism in protected areas has the potential to be positive force for lasting economic growth, local employment, and sustainable conservation financing. The Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods Project (LLL) is working towards promoting inclusive private sector investment to leverage the natural assets of Lao PDR for sustainable tourism growth that benefits investors, local people, and conservation.

Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park is the second largest protected area in Laos, covering three northern provinces. This park's several flagship ecotourism programs have won many international awards, including the World Responsible Tourism Awards (2013 & 2014), TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Award and Certificates of Excellence (2018, 2019 & 2024), and ASEAN CBT Standards (2024). The park is seeking investors interested in working together with ethnic minority communities to improve, develop, market and manage the park's nature-based tourism attractions, including the Nam Nern Night Safari and the Phou Louey Cloud Forest Trek and Nests. Entrepreneurs with a love of nature, a long-term vision for sustainable ecotourism development and an eye for an investment opportunity should apply.



ສສ.ປ.ອ. ສົມຫວັງ ພິມມະວົງ

Associate Professor Dr. Somvang Phimmavong
Director General, Department of Forestry, Lao PDR

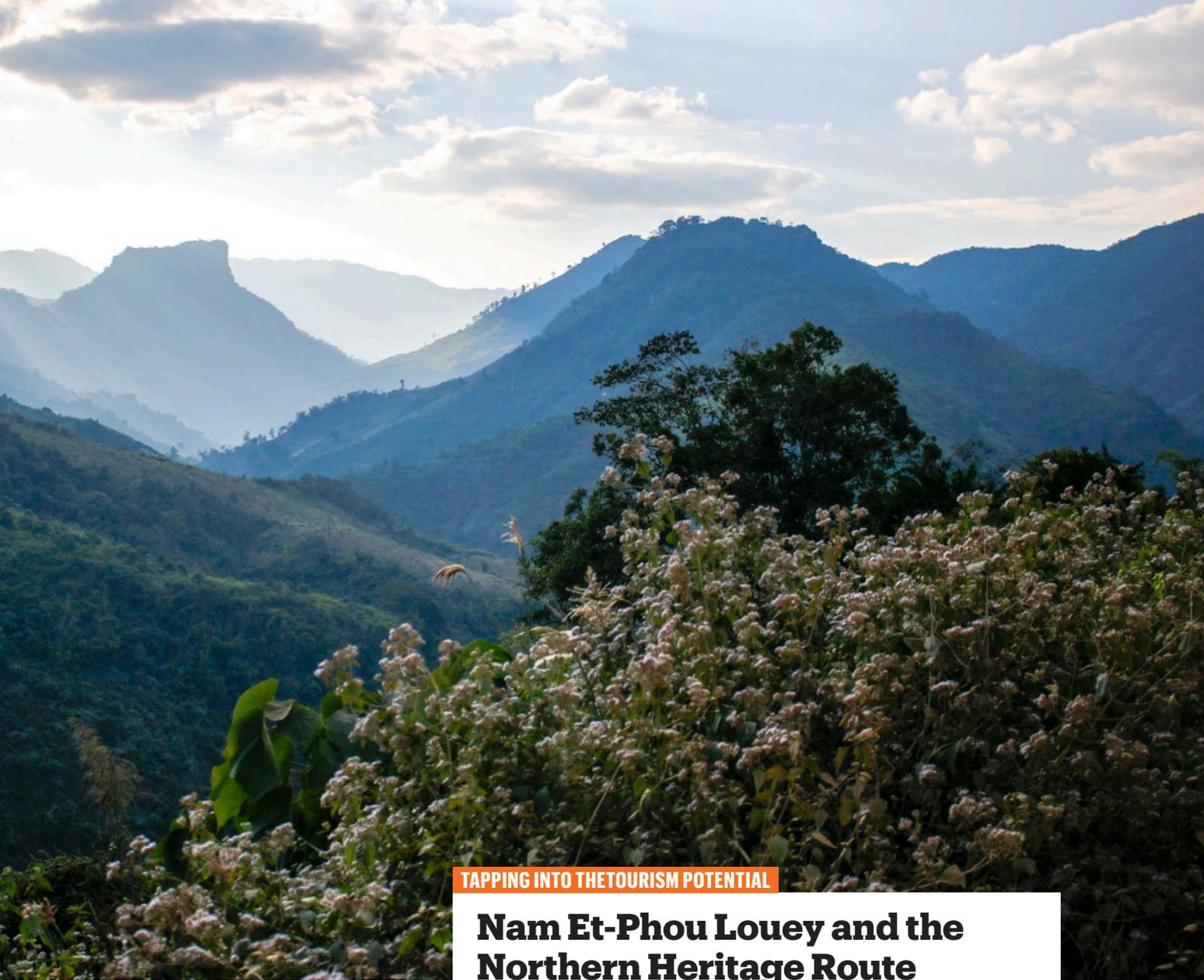


Nam Et-Phou Louey landscape



PHOTOS DOMINIQUE LE ROUX





TAPPING INTO THE TOURISM POTENTIAL

Nam Et-Phou Louey and the Northern Heritage Route



Phou Louey trekking

- **Nam Et-Phou Louey** is the nearest national park to the most popular destination in Laos, Luang Prabang, a globally-renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The park is located along the Northern Heritage Route, linking the Viengxay Caves, the birthplace of Lao PDR, and the ancient and mysterious Plain of Jars. Nam Et-Phou Louey sits in a very strategic position in the middle of this route.
- The park's existing tours, the Nam Nern Night Safari and Phou Louey-Poung Nied Trekking Trail Network that includes the Cloud Forest Challenge and The Nests, have received multiple international awards and have helped develop a definitive wildlife-based tourism brand.
- However, a lack of private sector investment has limited growth. Many of the park's attractions remain undeveloped, including visits to natural, archaeological and historical attractions of international and regional importance, multi-day expeditions to some of the most pristine areas in the park, and a lack of accommodation and restaurant services in surrounding towns.



KEY ATTRACTIONS

Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park - The best wildlife viewing experience in Laos

- Nam Nern Night Safari is the leading wildlife experience in Laos, where many species can be seen, including a variety of cat species, such as Asian golden cat and leopard cat.
- Phou Louey Mountain treks offer multiday rugged adventures in one of the country's wildest outbacks that has high biodiversity including Northern white-cheeked gibbons.
- With more than 300 bird species, the national park is one of the most popular bird watching destinations in Northern Laos.
- Tham Pa Ling Cave, located in the national park, is one of the most important archaeological sites in Asia for its prehistoric human and animal remains, and itineraries can also include the mystical Standing Stones located on the edge of the park.
- Sites linked to the Secret War include the famous Pha Thi outpost (Lima Site 85) and Lima Site 36, and tours can be combined with visits to the Viengxay Caves.
- Tad Kone in Xone District is the highest waterfall in Houaphan Province. Other impressive waterfalls in the park include Tad Salay, Tad Koud, Tad Leuay, and Tad Loy.
- The Nam Et River traverses the park and has opportunities for spotting wild elephants.
- Nearby attractions to the park headquarters include the Muang Hiem hot springs, one of the country's most impressive natural hot springs, and ethnic Tai Daeng weaving villages.

PHOTO TONY DEARY



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Key Markets

- Small tour groups traveling the Northern Heritage Route by private van between Luang Prabang, Nong Khiaw, Phonsavanh (Plain of Jars) and the Viengxay Caves.
- Independent travelers touring the Northern Heritage Route by motorbike, bicycle or private car.
- Domestic tourists visiting the Viengxay Caves, the Plain of Jars and Luang Prabang.
- Overland tours to/from Hanoi and Mai Chau in Vietnam.

Visitor Statistics 2018-2023

Area	Visitors in 2019
Nam Nern Night Safari	1019
Phou Louey - Pong Nied Treks	428
Nam Kone Waterfall	1164
Total	2611

Accessibility

- **Luang Prabang Town, Train Station & Airport:** 6 hours (220km) to Phou Louey Trek departure point. Trains daily from Vientiane (2 hours) and Vang Vieng (1 hour). Daily flights from Bangkok (1.5 hours), Chiang Mai (1 hour), Vientiane (1 hour) and more.
- **Nong Khiaw:** 3 hours (85km) to Phou Louey Trek departure point.
- **Plain of Jars/Phonsavanh Airport:** 4 hours (151km) to Nam Nern Night Safari departure point.
- **Sam Neua Airport:** 3 hrs (100km) to Nam Nern Night Safari departure point.
- **Viengxay Caves:** 3.5 hrs (128km) to Nam Nern Night Safari departure point.
- **Vietnam: Hanoi and Mai Chau:** Hanoi - 11.5 hrs (455km) / Mai Chau - 8 hrs (308km) to Nam Nern Night Safari departure point.



Clouded leopard

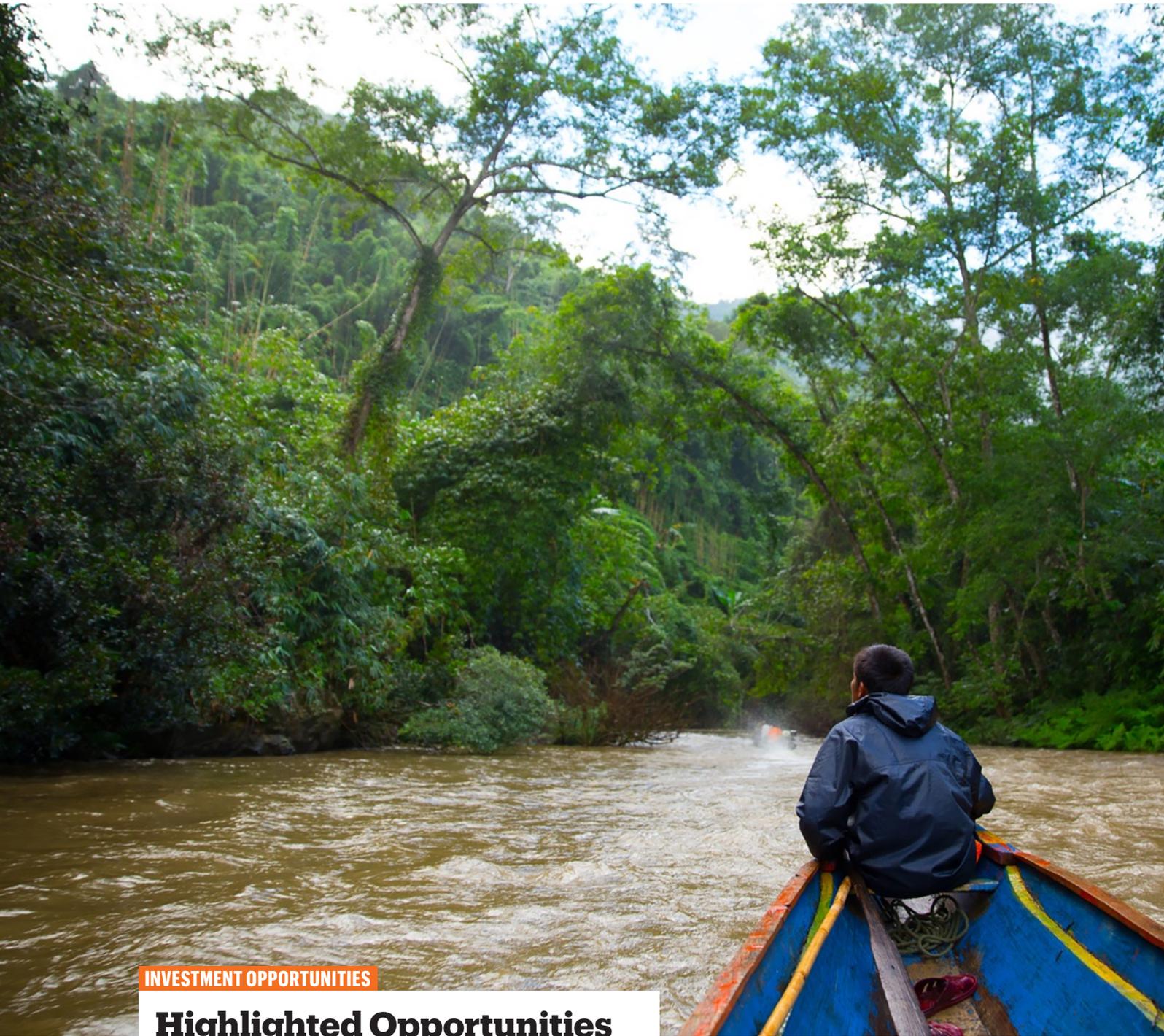


Nam Nern Night Safari Camp



Common Kingfisher

PHOTO NEPL



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Highlighted Opportunities

There are three featured tourism investment opportunities based on park management and stakeholder input:

- 📍 Nam Nern Night Safari
- 📍 Phou Louey: Cloud Forest Challenge and The Nests
- 📍 Pa Ling Archaeological Cave

Other Opportunities:

Investors are free to propose other activities or areas inside or around the protected area that have high potential and follow park regulations and guidelines.

PHOTOS TONY DEARY



Nam Et Phou Louey National Park
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Nam Nern Night Safari

Son Khoua Village Area, Houameuang District, Houaphan Province
Totally Protected Zone of Nam Et-Phou Louey

The Investment Opportunity

The Nam Night Safari is a wildlife-viewing boat tour, which has won international awards for its unique model of incentives for communities to protect rare species. The tour has two or three day programs, with accommodation in open-air bungalows located inside the park. The tour is managed by the local communities and the park with support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). An investor is sought to improve, market and manage the tour with local communities.

Unique Selling Points

- One of the best known wildlife experiences and boat adventures in the country;
- Already promoted by most reputable tour operators;
- Existing infrastructure that includes bungalows and dining area that can be upgraded for a more comfortable experience;
- Trained and experienced village guides and cooks;
- Located on the Northern Heritage Route linking the Plain of Jars, Viengxay Caves, Nong Khiaw and Luang Prabang;
- Ethnic minority Khmu and Tai Daeng culture of Ban Son Khoua.

Investment Needs

- Improve existing tour with upgraded accommodation and services;
- Develop activity options such as birdwatching and survival experiences;
- Provide transportation services to facilitate travel from Luang Prabang, Phonsavanh, and Sam Neua;
- Improve sustainability and waste management systems;
- Increase promotion to drive more visitor traffic.

Accessibility

- Son Khoua village is accessible by paved road year-round;
- Lack of public and private transport hinder growth in visitor numbers.

Partner Communities

- Son Khoua Village (Khmu and Tai Daeng ethnicities);
- 13 villages supporting conservation and sharing funds.



Boating up the Nam Nern River



Boating up the Nam Nern



Preparing for the night safari



PHOTO ELEANOR BRIGGS/WCS

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Cloud Forest Challenge and The Nests (Phou Louey Mountain)

Navene Village, Viengkham District, Luang Prabang Province, **Nam POUNG & Sakok Villages**, Hiem District, Houaphan Province, **Totally Protected Zone**

The Investment Opportunity

Phou Louey Mountain trekking trail network offers 2-5 day trekking, camping and wildlife discovery, including camera trapping. The trek has won international awards and takes visitors to some of the most pristine and biodiverse wilderness in Laos and the region, including Phou Louey cloud forest and Pong Nied salt lick, where visitors overnight in the Nests. The tour is currently managed by communities and the park with support from WCS. An investor is sought to improve, market and manage the tour in partnership with local communities.

Unique Selling Points

- Exceptional rugged wilderness with pristine forests;
- Well-known itinerary promoted by reputable tour agencies;
- Wildlife camera trapping activity supports conservation;
- Existing infrastructure including the Nest pods, wildlife viewing tower, 50km of trails, designated campsites and tent platforms;
- Trained village guides, cooks and handicraft producers;
- Traditional Khmu culture,

storytelling and interpretation;

- Nearest national park trekking from Luang Prabang.

Investment Needs

- Manage and improve this existing, award-winning tour with upgraded Nests and campsites and improved services;
- Improve and promote wildlife viewing and camera trapping activities along the trekking route and at the salt lick;
- Provide reliable transportation from Nong Khiaw;
- Recruit English-speaking guides and train village guides.

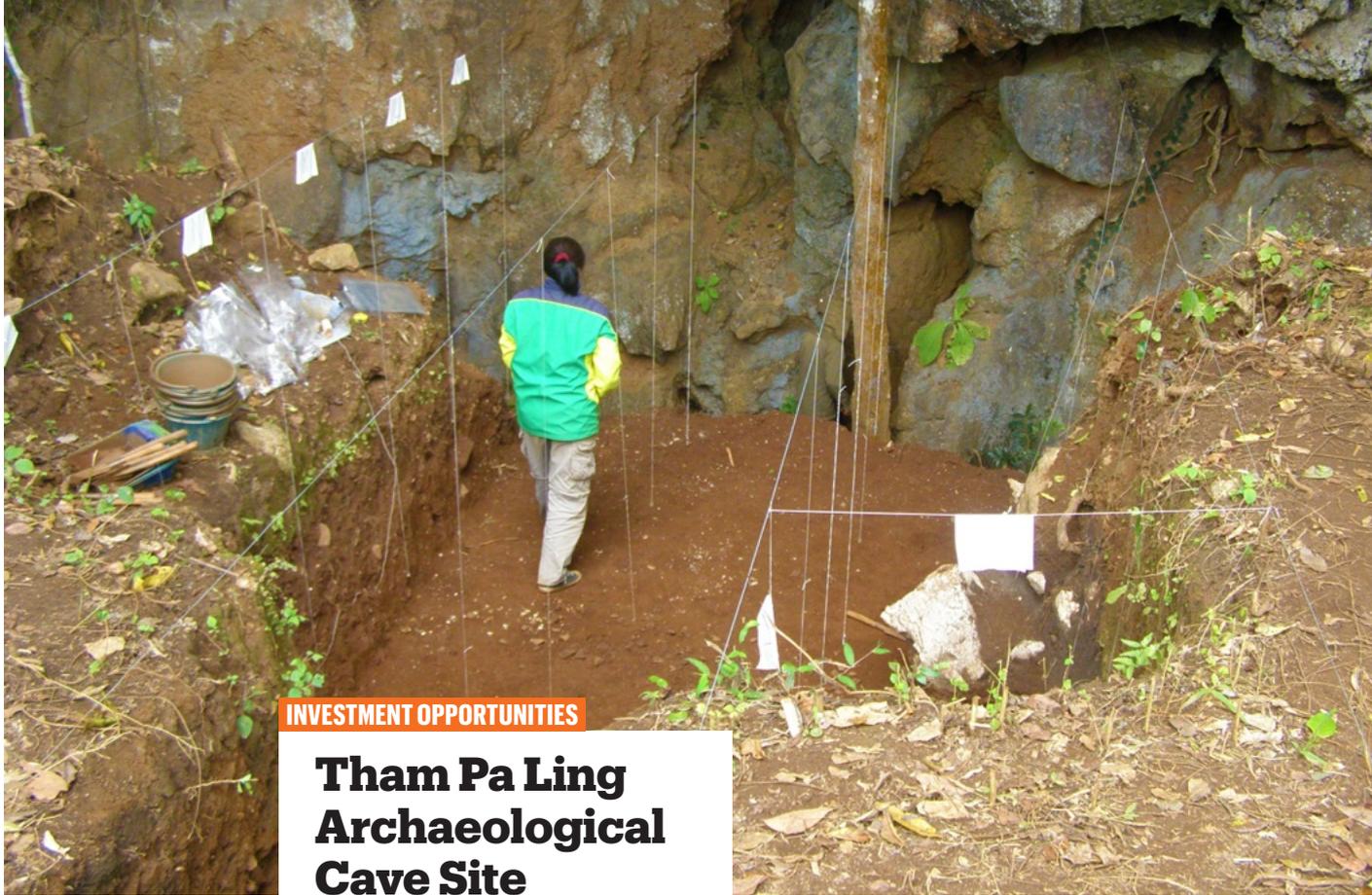
Accessibility

- All three entry points to the national park are located along Route 1, a paved road that links Luang Prabang and Houaphan provinces;
- Better transport links will help to boost visitor numbers.

Partner Communities

- Entry points: Navene, Sakok and Nam Pong villages (Khmu ethnicity);
- Nine villages supporting conservation and sharing benefits.





INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Tham Pa Ling Archaeological Cave Site

Long Ngua Pa Village, Hiem District, Houaphan Province
Controlled Use Zone of Nam Et-Phou Louey

The Investment Opportunity

Tham Pa Ling Cave is an archaeological site of international importance with discoveries of the oldest human remains found in Asia to date, as well as other significant finds that are changing the way archaeologists interpret the natural and human history of the Southeast Asia region. The site consists of multiple caves (Tham Hang and Tham Long Ngua Pa) and has not yet been opened for tourism. Authorities and local communities are looking for an investor to help them develop, market and manage the attraction in an appropriate manner that protects the site and provides quality interpretation aimed at mid to high-end visitors.

Unique Selling Points

- One of most important archaeological sites in Asia;
- A chapter of human and natural history yet untold;
- Traditional and vibrant Hmong

culture and organic coffee in the nearby host village of Long Ngua Pa;

- Can combine with other tours in the park as 1-2 day add-on.

Investment Needs

- Interpretation of the cave archaeology, including signage and possible audio tours;
- Construct barriers and walkways for easy access and protection from visitor impacts;
- Construct a restaurant/café and visitor center;
- Train village guides and develop community homestays;
- Promote sustainability and improve waste management systems.

Accessibility

- All-weather gravel road from the park headquarters in Muang Hiem town to Long Ngua Pa village.

Partner Communities

- Long Ngua Pa Village (Hmong)

Other Areas

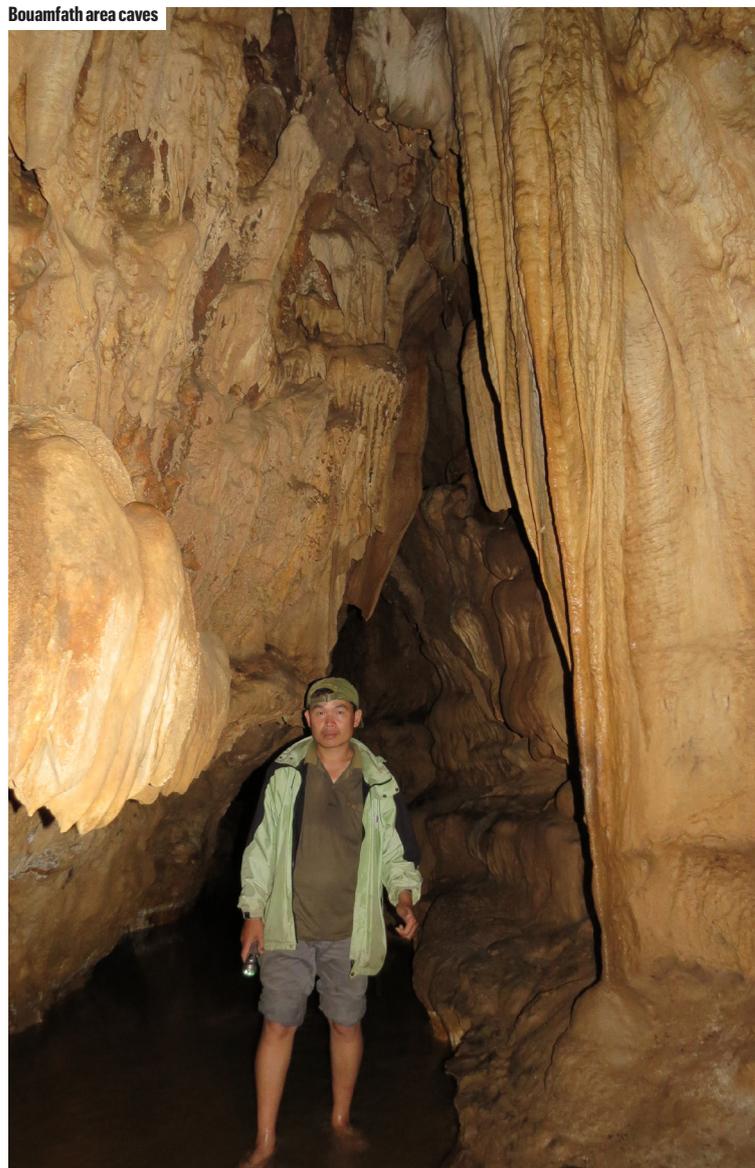
There are many other areas with tourism potential in Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park, which investors may also consider:

- Nam Kone Waterfall in Sone District
- Nam Et River boat trip with opportunities to see wild elephants and other rare species
- Pha Thi Historical Site
- Northern-white-cheeked gibbon treks in Bouamfath area
- Old French Trail wilderness trekking in Pha Daeng area
- Waterfalls in Hiem District including Tad Salai and Tad Koud waterfalls near Donkhoun village.

Investors are also welcome to propose for investment and development other attractions in Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park not listed in this manual.



Salai Waterfall



Bouamfath area caves

PHOTOS PAUL ESHOO

Environmental & Socially Responsible Investment

PHOTO DOMINIQUE LE ROUX



Trekking the Cloud Forest

Zoning

- For investments inside the **Totally Protected Zone (TPZ)**, no permanent infrastructure is allowed. Only campsites, toilets, trails, zip lines, boating, viewpoints & picnic spots are allowed.
- For investments inside the **Controlled Use Zone (CUZ)**, no large infrastructure such as hotels and resorts are allowed. Only low-impact infrastructure such as ecolodges, community guesthouses, and semi-permanent tented camps are permitted.
- For investments in the **buffer zone**, other tourism infrastructure types are allowed, including hotels and resorts.

Sustainable Capacity

- The capacity of any tour area will depend on the sensitivity of the area and zoning.
- For trekking and camping tours inside the totally protected zone groups should be limited (e.g.: one group per area per day with approximately 10 visitors per group plus guides). Actual limits will be mutually agreed with the investor based to an impact assessment and needs of the investor.
- Investment proposals should provide details on the capacity requirements of the tour, and proposed facilities, balancing impact management, tour experience, and sustainable benefit sharing for all partners.

Environmental Guidelines

- For tours inside the TPZ, strict waste



Experience local flavours

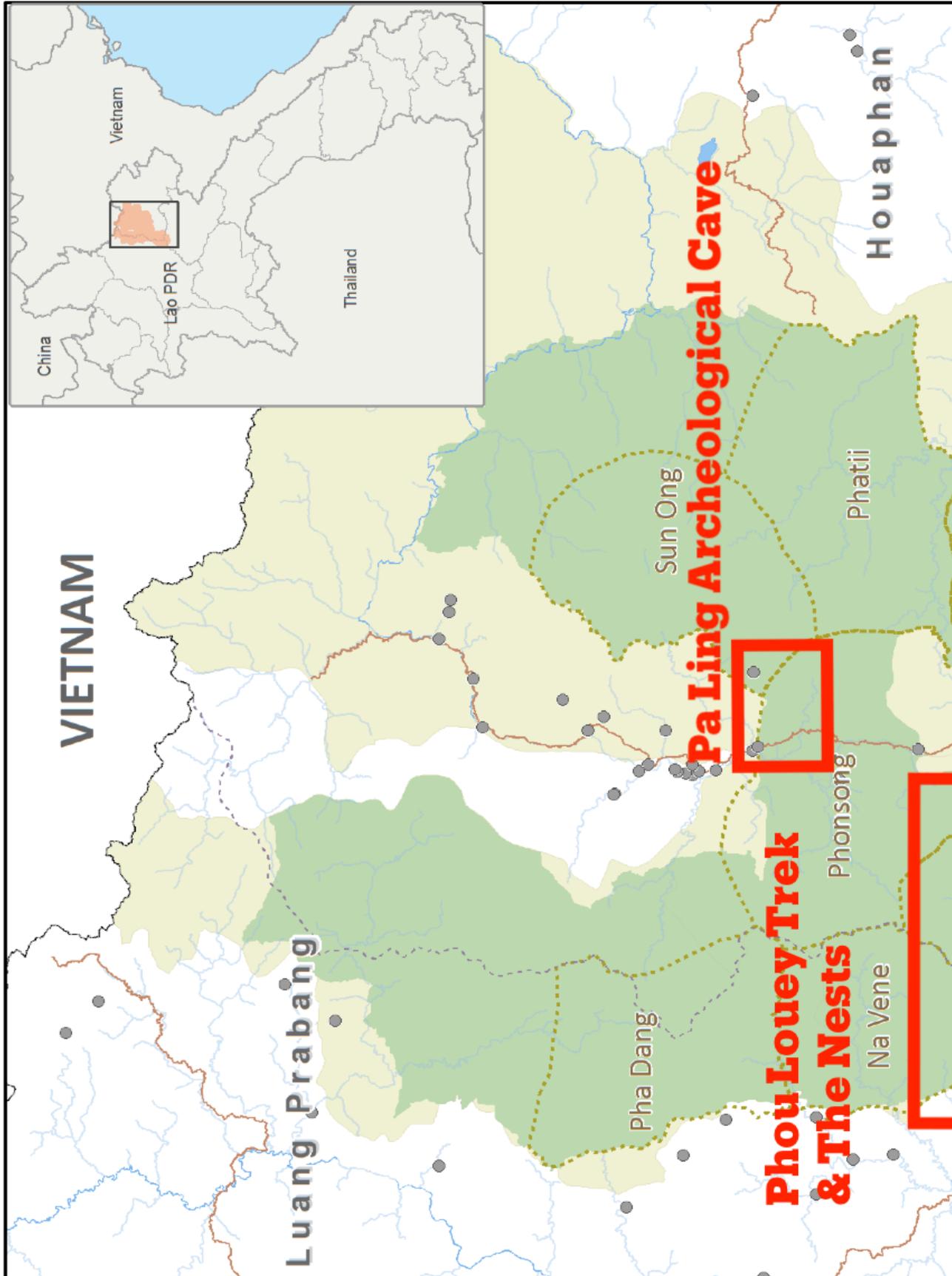
PHOTO TONY DEARY

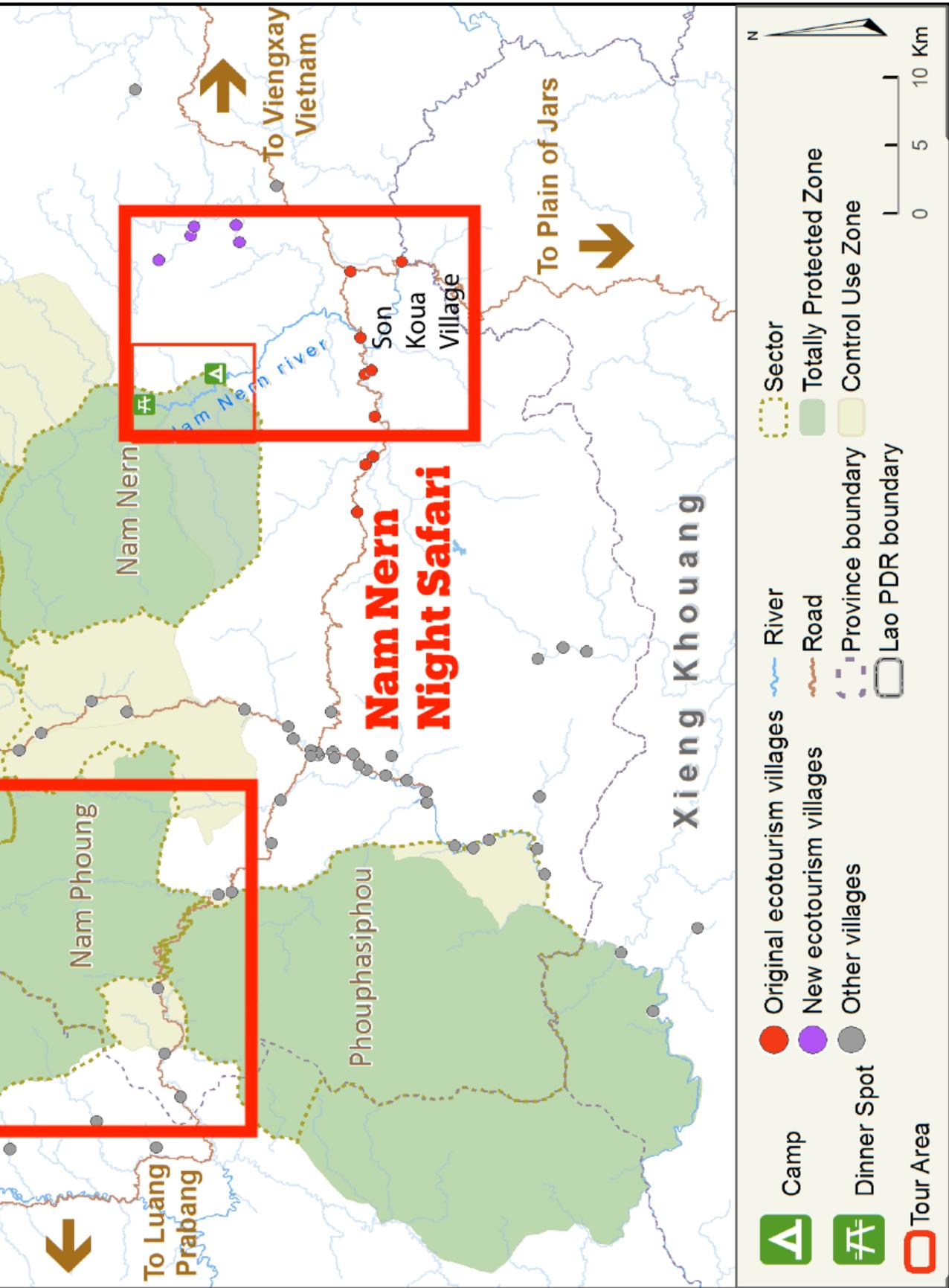
- management procedures are required. All waste must be carried out, and no burning or burying waste allowed. For facilities in the CUZ and buffer zone, waste must be managed according to district waste management regulations, with maximum effort to reduce overall waste.
- Investment proposals that do not propose large infrastructure are not required to conduct a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) but must pass an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) according to MAE regulations. Proposals for lodging and larger infrastructure may be required to conduct an EIA.
- All investments must be designed to limit impacts on the environment, landscape, water resources, and biodiversity. Designs should demonstrate that impacts have been addressed.
- Infrastructure and tours should also ensure no loud noises or disturbances in natural areas or villages.
- All materials used for infrastructure inside the park must be reviewed by the park in advance to ensure that no prohibited wood or other materials are used.

Social Guidelines (Community Participation)

- Communities must be partners in developing and managing the investment.
- Communities must be consulted during the proposal and negotiation process
- Villagers must be trained and hired by the investor as local guides, cooks, camp managers, lodge or resort staff, etc.

Map of Nam Et-Phou Louey Zones & Investment Areas





Nature-based Tourism Business Leveraging Facility

The Lao Landscapes & Livelihoods (LLL) Project supports the Nature-based Tourism Business Leveraging Facility (BLF), which has matching funds available to support investments in tourism and tour service management cooperative contracts. Prospective investors can apply for matching funds as needed. The facility has three types of financing available:

Planning and feasibility work:

This will have no minimum amount per selected application, no matching required and a maximum contribution of US\$2500 to support surveys, consultations with communities and other field work required for preparation of proposals. Such funds will account for no more than 10 percent of the total funds available through the BLF.

Challenge Funds:

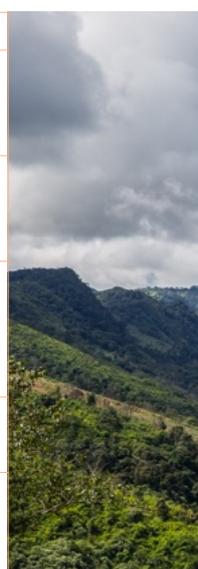
These will target investment in particular areas or for more specific investments, typically to attracting concession investments or public

private partnerships identified by the project as high priorities. Maximum contribution of US\$200,000 per challenge to support investments of US\$400,000 or more. Such funds will account for roughly 50 percent of the total matching grants (approximately nine challenge grants) available through the BLF.

Matching funds for MSMEs:

For product development and marketing work for businesses located in and around the project protected areas of up to US\$20,000 per application and a maximum of two applications per MSME (Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises). This type of funding will account for no more than 50 percent of the total matching grants (approximately 90 MSMEs). Businesses selected for challenge grants can recommend financing for its partner MSMEs in order to develop NBT value-chains. The following matching requirements can include in-kind contributions. Matching requirements will be as follows:

Type of work	Project funds up to:	Applicant will contribute:
Construction of new facilities/buildings	50%	50% (can include in-kind contributions of materials and labor)
Upgrade existing facilities and equipment	70%	30% (can include in-kind contributions of materials and labor)
Staff/Community Training	90%	10% (can include in-kind contributions of accommodation/food/travel for trainers and trainees)
Development of new or improved activities, attractions and tours (including upgrade to boats)	70%	30%
New or improved websites, brochures, marketing campaigns, marketing materials/advertising campaigns	90%	10% (can include in-kind contributions of accommodation, food and travel)



Agreement types

- For large investments that include significant infrastructure investments, concessions agreements are encouraged, which can be made for up to 30 years according to the Investment Promotion Law.
- For smaller investments that have only small-scale infrastructure, Cooperation Agreements with partner communities and the protected area authority are allowed, which can be made for up to 20 years.

Maintenance & Conservation Fees

- The company is responsible for all maintenance costs of facilities, trails and other infrastructure or equipment used to manage and operate their tour services.
- Entry fees per visitor must be paid in addition to negotiated annual concession or cooperation agreement fees, unless otherwise specified in the agreement.

Taxes & Other Fees

- Relevant taxes including 10% VAT are required according to VAT and other tax laws.
- Labour Law must be followed, including the payment of Labor taxes and fees.
- Investments in remote areas (Zone 1) are entitled to a profit tax exemption for up to 10 years.

PHOTO D. LE ROUX

Dramatic mountains landscapes



PHOTO TONY DEARY

Connect with nature in Nam Et-Phou Louey



PROPOSAL INSTRUCTION AND PROCESS

According to the Agreement on Tourism in Forest Areas of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, No. 1926, 03/06/2025, steps for cooperative agreements are as follows:

1. Send Letter of Intent

Send a letter of intent to the National Protected Area Management Division (PAMD), Lao Department of Forestry.

E-mail: laosnationalparks@gmail.com

2. Forms to Complete:

Fill out application forms:

- Application form (Form #1) that includes technical and financial proposal

E-mail: laosnationalparks@gmail.com

- Business Registration and Tax ID
- Company description and CVs of owner, manager and experts
- Please submit the application to the National Protected Area Management Division (PAMD) in hard copy directly to the PAMD office. Your documents will be stamped and you will receive a receipt slip.

3. Evaluation of Proposals

- Proposals will reviewed by relevant departments and evaluated using the application Evaluation Form (Form #1).

- Within 10 working days, you will receive a response on the initial proposal evaluation.

4. Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

- Ecotourism experience (company profile & expert staff) **20%**
- Business vision, marketing strategy and itineraries/packages **20%**
- Involvement of local communities **20%**
- Benefits for conservation & environment **20%**
- Financial Plan & Terms & Conditions **20%**

5. Village Consultations, Site Visit and IEE

If the proposal is agreed to in principle, an MOU will be signed and a site visit, village consultations (Form #2), initial environmental examination (IEE), and feasibility study must be completed.

6. Final Approval & Contracting

- Final approval will be announced 10 working days after receiving the final proposal.
- Contracting will follow a standardized form (Form #3).

PHOTOS TONY DEARY

Spot birds and other wildlife in Nam Et-Phou Louey



Rare wildlife in Nam Et-Phou Louey

Contact us for further enquiries about private sector tourism investment opportunities

**Protected Area Management Division,
Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment,
Khouvieng Road, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

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☎ +856-021-215000

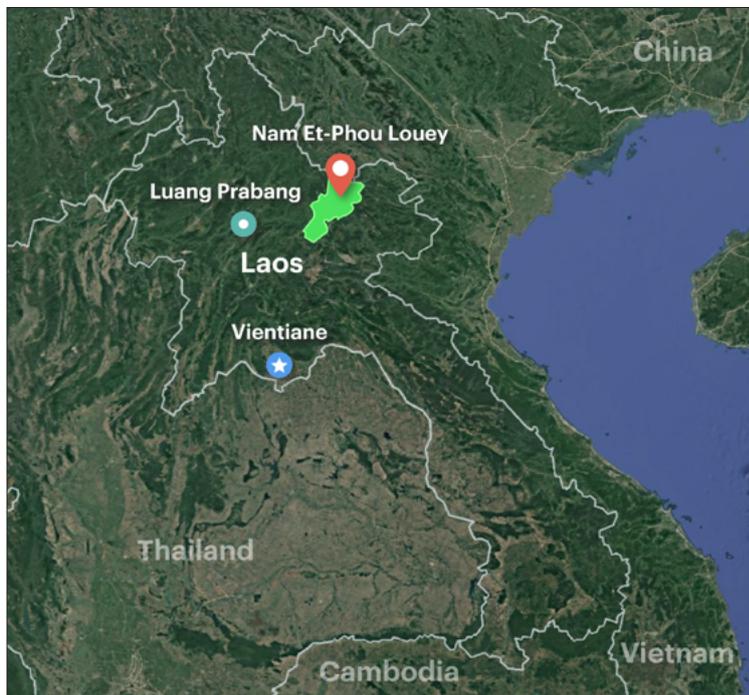
🌐 laoparks.la

Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park

Location: Northern Laos

Province: Luang Prabang, Phonsavanh & Houaphan Provinces

"Nam Et-Phou Louey National Park is the second largest protected area in Laos, covering three northern provinces. This park has several flagship ecotourism programs which have won numerous international awards. The park is seeking investors to improve, develop, market and manage the park's many nature-based tourism attractions. These include the award-winning Nam Nern Night Safari, the country's premier wildlife experience, and the Phou Louey Cloud Forest Trek and The Nests, one of the most rugged and rewarding treks in the country."



Supported by the Lao Landscapes & Livelihoods Project, funded by the World Bank with contributions from the Global Environment Facility and the Canada-World Bank Clean Energy and Forest Climate Facility.