



2011 Final Report
CONAPAC Strengthens Sustainability and Outreach

CONAPAC experienced another successful year, setting and achieving many goals by December. With additional responsibilities, growing programs and more staff, CONAPAC's name recognition grows. Other NGOs, volunteer groups, students and tourists look to CONAPAC as their first contact and gateway to the rainforest communities we serve. We are happy to be of service and expect this role to continue to grow in the coming years. There is nothing like an NGO's local full-time and committed presence to secure successful sustainable projects.

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL DETROIT ZOO EXPEDITION 2011 (AAS)

Week #1: For the 18th year, deliveries of school and classroom supplies were made to remote jungle villages. Sixteen volunteers from the United States and Canada participated from Saturday April 2 until Monday April 11. With nine CONAPAC and Loreto Department of Education staff, three guides and eight boat drivers and their crews, we were ready to begin. This year we made deliveries of individual school supply packets to 4,000 students and teachers, classroom supplies for 98 schools, ranging from Kindergarten to high school, thus providing assistance to 57 different Amazon communities. Our volunteers this year were a mix of veterans and new faces. One interesting thing was that four of our volunteers--Mary Knauer, Joe McCarthy, Jan McCarthy and Robert Fearon--were all 80 years old or older! What a bunch of kids! They worked as hard, if not harder, than any other volunteer, putting in long days despite heat, humidity and bugs. We hope the 80-somethings keep on coming to volunteer in Perú!

Week #2: For the third year, as part of the yearly AAS Expedition, a second group of volunteers came to help with a large community project. Three volunteers from the first week stayed on to help out with the second week project, making a total of 13 volunteers for this group. After

delivering school supplies to the final three communities, the group moved on to the river village of Llachapa. This community currently has a centralized water treatment plant. Due to the distance, many residents need to walk a distance to collect clean water. As a pilot project, we divided the community into three zones, placing different systems in each zone. The volunteer team helped in the assembly and installation of 16 individual water systems in homes. The team, along with community members, spent four days working on this project. In addition, despite the rain, several volunteers worked with the children of the community on art projects. The artwork was displayed and appreciated by all. Finally, the team hosted a "feria" or exchange of gifts and local items for sale. All were pleased with their gifts and purchases, and longtime friendships were formed.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Once again, teacher and community workshops were hosted in May and June. This year the centralized meetings were located in the communities of Pucallpa, Yanamono I, Centro Unido and Llachapa. Despite record high water levels, attendance was excellent. There were no conflicts with compulsory education workshops in Iquitos or the national presidential election, which occurred in past years. The themes presented this year included teacher-led integration of the community into the education process, rights of indigenous populations, protection of the environment, and methods for teaching reading.

At the end of the year, CONAPAC finished the extensive annual evaluation process, which included a full team of 18 educators and CONAPAC staff. The teams visited each community (57) and spent the day reviewing and interviewing teachers, parents and community leaders. The point of this evaluation process is to rate the community's level of participation and interest in our programs, the rate of full commitment to the contract the community signs to be part of the AAS program, teacher attendance rates and teaching effectiveness, and student progress in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of this process the team reviewed all rankings and made final observations and recommendations for 2012.

At the end of last year, after much discussion and debate, and weighing several variables, it was decided to trim our program. Regrettably, 16

communities were cut due to long-standing disinterest or failure to follow through on the most basic of requirements. All these communities are welcome to rejoin the program when they are ready to make the commitment. Our door is open. The positive aspect of this program reduction was that we had more time to help the remaining communities in the program, a much higher level of teacher and community leader participation was seen in the workshops. Though funding was down due to the current global financial crisis, we were still able to provide the same level of individual and classroom supplies as in previous years.

WATER TREATMENT PLANTS & EDUCATION

CONAPAC continues to expand its water program for the third year running. Since 2008 CONAPAC has installed 21 community water treatment plants in Amazon and Napo River communities. These simple gravity-fed systems, which require no electricity, have proven to be effective and easy to operate. Each water plant can provide up to 10,000 liters of clean water, enough for 350-400 people per day. Each of these communities is part of our Adopt-A-School program. These villages are well organized and eager to develop their communities. Donor interest in water projects has been extremely high. One of our more interesting donors this year was a young man from New York who single-handedly raised enough money for a water treatment plant (\$4200) as a requirement for his Bar Mitzvah. Look on our website for the "Our Donors" page for more details of this wonderful accomplishment.

http://www.conapac.org/CONAPAC_donors.html

Along with the construction of the water treatment plants come our education and monitoring. Before a water treatment plant is inaugurated, CONAPAC hosts an all-day workshop for adults and children. We provide lunch for the whole community and present a variety of topics for the adults while the children work on water-themed art projects. Both groups learn more about the contamination of water sources, how these sources are interconnected around the world, how this impacts their health, and simple guidelines for the care and maintenance of water plants and their household buckets. In addition, the subject of regular monthly payments for clean water is discussed and a group of community residents are democratically elected to manage and run the water plant along with the

monthly accounts. The children get a visit to the water treatment plant in order to learn more. They play games and break into groups to create murals depicting water themes. They hear more about the importance of only drinking clean water. At the end of the day, one mural team wins prizes and the murals are shared with the rest of the community.

This education component has been invaluable for the overall success of our programs. Water education continues in the Adopt-A-School program, too, and at every available opportunity, our CONAPAC staff visited communities to find out more about their successes and challenges. Regular monitoring is an important part of the improvement of this program. We've had good success in raising enough money to pay for salaries and gasoline to help facilitate this necessary part of a successful water program.

Finally, we were asked by the local Rotary Club of Iquitos if we would host a water education workshop for the community of Gran Perú. This village had received a new water treatment plant from international Rotarians but there had not been an education piece included. The CONAPAC team carried out a day-long workshop for the whole town, including lunch and household water buckets for all. It was well received and we anticipate handling more water workshops in the future for this Rotary club as they, too, continue to build water treatment plants along the Amazon River.

THIRD PARTY EVALUATIONS FOR WATER SYSTEMS

For the third year running, CONAPAC hosted a team of graduate students from the University of Colorado. These students, who specialize in development for emerging nations, have teamed up with biology and environmental engineering students from the Universidad Naturaleza Amazonas Peruano (UNAP). A team of five spent four weeks in Perú—two in the jungle and two in the city of Iquitos. They visited most of CONAPAC's water projects, where community members were asked a variety of questions, water plant structures were inspected and water quality testing was completed. Final results were delivered in a lengthy report in September in both Spanish and English.

The team found that demand and usage rates continue to climb from previous years. Also, rates of payment are improving. An area of concern is

consistent water quality. Although the water treatment plants are producing better quality water than what the users would experience directly from the river, consistency is lacking. There are a variety of variables that contribute to this situation. CONAPAC and the audit team have big plans for 2012 to help this situation by implementing a new pilot project to improve water quality. Also, a University of Colorado PhD candidate will be here to intern for 4-6 months and to help oversee the implementation of this new monitoring/training program.

This University of Colorado program has an NSF Grant for three years, which helps cover their transportation and logistical costs. So they will be back to help CONAPAC again in 2012 and 2013. Each year new ideas and insights improve our program. This on-going collaboration with our NGO and a third-party evaluator provides invaluable information which continues to strengthen our leadership position in this area of the Amazon rainforest.

PILOT PROJECT IN LLACHAPA

In 2010, an assistant pastor, Gale Hendricks of the LifeSource Adventist Church from Denver, Colorado, visited Iquitos and the jungle. He was specifically scouting out partnership opportunities for his congregation to help provide clean water to poor areas in developing countries. He was referred to CONAPAC through a medical team that regularly visits here and a great conversation was started. Out of this meeting came the idea of a pilot project to install smaller individual household water systems. LifeSource Church agreed to fund a project to provide two different types of water filtration systems in 32 homes. We chose the community of Llachapa on the Napo River. Although this community already had a large community system, because many people live very far away, we were finding that not all families were taking advantage of the clean water. By breaking the community into three zones, we wanted to see if usage rates would improve and if care by homeowners for the smaller systems was manageable for the average jungle resident.

We broke the project into three parts: (1) A pre-interview process, (2) assembly and installation handled by Adopt-A-School volunteers, (3) a final follow-up survey six months later. In between, the water evaluation team of university students handled an interim interview for more data gathering.

The final results were an overwhelming positive reception of the new smaller and more convenient water systems. Families now only have to bring untreated water from the closest source and process it in their homes at any time. There is no need to walk to the community water treatment plant or time it during regular operating hours. The homeowners quickly learned how to work the systems and care for them regularly. In the pilot project we gave 16 families a mini water plant in their homes. Sixteen other homes received simpler systems provided by the Peruvian government. In the end, the residents far preferred the mini water systems over the government system. We are now seeking funding from Reverend Hendricks and his congregation to help retro-fit those homes in Llachapa with the mini systems.

We are now planning to put more of the mini water plant systems in classrooms. In smaller communities where there is not yet a large water treatment plant, we are considering installing units in schools where the children can learn the value of clean water and the care and maintenance of these systems. The first such systems were added in our two jungle library locations—Yanamono and Sapu Playa—with good results. We will continue to look for donor support in this effort to expand mini water treatment systems where appropriate.

LAS MALVINAS TEACHING GARDEN

It has been another busy year at Las Malvinas. Besides the regular rotation of the fish farm, turtle pond, vegetable garden and nursery, some new experimental projects were attempted as well. They were: a study in hydroponics, a pumpkin patch, a snail project, a medicinal plant garden and an ornamental flower garden. In addition, a new shallow well was added to water the garden and to fill the fish pond, reinforcement of the wire fence took place, the outdoor gazebo classroom received a new palm thatched roof, and a new composting area was created. The children continue to practice their English to help with guided tours to tourists, and a large variety of classes are regularly held in the garden gazebo. Our full- and part-time gardeners, Gilbert and Javerth, continue their work in the garden and devise new teaching strategies. The seniors maintained and then harvested the fish pond in November. In December, with the proceeds

from the sale of fish, the students were able to hold a special graduation and celebration party at a local restaurant.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Once again this year, our partnership with Explorama Tours, was continued by facilitation of community service projects for visiting tourist guests. Several student groups came this year, along with adults from the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, the Oregon Zoo, and the Pharmacy Workshop. Work included planting trees, laying cement sidewalks, building water plants, leading art projects, and painting houses. This year we hosted 16 different groups with 390 people! Community service projects continue to be well received by village residents, where opportunities for cross-cultural experiences are enjoyed by all participants!

CCC AMAZON JUNGLE LIBRARY

This year quite an exciting addition came to CONAPAC in the form of a jungle library. About 12 years ago, Dr. Nancy Dunn came from the United States to set up housekeeping in the rainforest near Explorama Lodge. She built a library for area children and created after school reading programs and other fun activities. With time, the novel concept of a library grew and became accepted and appreciated by area river residents. Nancy added another branch to the library in Sapo Playa and helped develop the local women's sewing co-op, along with adding vocational training scholarships and computer and music classes to the library's offerings.

Earlier this year, Nancy decided it was time to retire from the library and her life in the rainforest. She has returned to the United States and is now pursuing other interests and opportunities. Before she departed, she chose to pass on the library to CONAPAC as a gift so that we might continue the good work she had started. At that time, Megan Thomas, from the U.S., was here in Iquitos volunteering her time to CONAPAC. When this opportunity came up, Megan jumped at the chance to carry on Nancy's work. She is now the full-time library director and has received her Peruvian work papers and legal residency for three years. Megan is living at Explorama Lodge and

working in the library most days, continuing after school reading programs and special activities, and planning and organizing all that the library has to offer. With her presence at the Lodge and the opportunity to speak to visiting tourists, we anticipate increased donations to this program and more visits to the library by our traveling guests.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- This year we partnered with a local NGO, Amazon Cares. AC is an organization that cares for street dogs and cats by sheltering them and caring for their health. They also provide sterilization and adoption services. Mostly, Amazon Cares and its volunteer doctors work in the city of Iquitos, but this year we helped them host their first series of clinics in four jungle communities. Volunteer veterinarians arrived from overseas to assist with health care, surgery and education. Bringing this message to the jungle residents was an opportunity to reinforce CONAPAC's goal of environmental conservation for land, water, and all rainforest life.
- We continue to facilitate high school scholarships for two students. The two girls from the village of San Alejandro now attend classes at the high school in Llachapa. This was their third year and we appreciate the support they receive from donors Dave and Dottie Bonnet, who have committed to their education. Food, clothing, soap and gasoline are provided on a monthly basis. Next year we will add one more student who also lives in San Alejandro.
- Donor Linda Lownds once again provided detergent, bar soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes to several jungle communities. With the help of volunteers, we made gift bags of the supplies and other volunteers over the course of the spring handled deliveries. Linda provided these important items to 113 families representing well over 500 individuals.

2010 MAJOR PURCHASES

New desks and chairs were added to the office this year, along with two laptops computers for use in the city and the jungle. In addition, the roof

of our boat, the IE Amigo, was replaced, and maintenance and repairs were done on both CONAPAC boats.

STAFFING

Two major staffing changes occurred this year. First, the addition of the library to CONAPAC required us to find a replacement for Nancy. This is where Megan came in. She has taken over full responsibility as the library director. Along with this position, Megan regularly works with the teachers and students at Las Malvinas School. Her educational background and full command of the Spanish language is an incredible asset to both programs. She has gained legal Peruvian residency for three years and splits her time between the jungle and Iquitos.

The other major personnel change was the loss of Marcos Oversluijs. Marcos joined CONAPAC in March of 2005, when there wasn't much more to CONAPAC than the Adopt-A-School program. Marcos helped develop many ideas over the years and was pivotal in its recent growth, in particular the water program. After more than six years with us, it was time for Marcos to pursue his personal goals and spend more time with his family. We are sad to see Marcos leave and wish him the very best.

FUNDING PARTNERS

INDIVIDUAL DONORS: Although the financial crisis has impacted our funding, support remains strong from the U.S. and abroad. For 2011, we had almost 200 individual donors, with amounts ranging from \$50 to many thousands. Although corporate donors are very important, our smaller individual donors remain the bread and butter of CONAPAC.

DETROIT ZOO: CONAPAC could not do all it does without the strong commitment of the Detroit Zoo and its leadership. As a 501-3c corporation, the Zoo continues to process all of our U.S. donations without taking administrative fees. It provides staffing, marketing, advertising and information for our programs and volunteer expeditions. And this year they gave a substantial undesignated dollar donation to use as we see fit.

VOLUNTEERS: Volunteer fees continue to be our core source of funding for salaries. This year we hosted 27 volunteers plus two Zoo staffers to help with deliveries and community projects. It is important to us to fill

these spots, and CONAPAC has encouraged the Detroit Zoo to do all it can to help meet this goal for 2012. The Zoo will continue as the primary recruiter and manager for volunteers. Their willingness to handle marketing, advertising, and coordination of volunteers has been invaluable.

INTERNATIONAL EXPEDITIONS: IE once again came through with substantial money to help pay for the garden at Las Malvinas, gasoline, our boat, the IE Amigo, and salary costs for James. A number of IE tour groups passed through the garden at Las Malvinas and we anticipate more visitors for 2012. So much of what we accomplish comes directly from the generosity of International Expeditions, and we anticipate their continued support in the coming year.

SAGA CHARITABLE TRUST: The SAGA Charitable Trust continues to raise awareness of its many programs around the world through its magazine, mailings, and the Internet, our water projects being one of them. SAGA funded four water treatment plants and four workshops for 2011 for a total donation of \$24,000. As of now, we have built 21 water plants, 12 of which have been funded by SAGA. For 2012, SAGA has committed to three water plants and partial underwriting of our new pilot project to improve monitoring and oversight.

AMAZON AMIGOS: This group is the non-profit arm of a small travel company called Environmental Expeditions. Owner Frances Gatz works tirelessly to come up with new ideas for funding streams for CONAPAC. Amazon Amigos contributed to a number of small projects this year, such as fish farms, flower gardens and camu camu patches.

EXPLORAMA LODGES: Explorama continues to offer important logistical support to CONAPAC during the AAS expedition weeks by donating boats, guides, drivers, and room and board. Explorama also accommodates CONAPAC staff and guests during the year on their boats when space is available. Explorama covers room and board at its lodges, when necessary, to CONAPAC staff and in Iquitos provides office space, utilities, and IT support at no cost to our NGO. This year, over 400 bed nights with meals were given to CONAPAC staff members, representing a fair market value of more than \$40,000. There is no doubt that CONAPAC could not continue to exist without the support and partnership with Explorama Lodges and its owners.

MARKETING

Our CONAPAC web mistress, Nancy Cowal, continues to do an excellent job regularly maintaining and updating the website. Each year, we review our programs, making sure that what is posted on line is valid information. Nancy is a great photographer and, with the help of other volunteers, she regularly rotates our photos, keeping the website fresh and interesting. Nancy, who lives and works in North Carolina, maintains the website on a volunteer basis. This year we decided to add a CONAPAC Fan Page on Facebook. Social media is a very popular mode of communication, and with so many international visitors and volunteers passing through the jungle each year, we thought this was a great way to stay connected. So far the Fan Page has 109 followers and it continues to grow.

When photographer Ann Hailey toured the Peruvian Amazon in 2009, she visited a Yagua community for a program of song, dance, blowgun practice, and other elements of traditional culture. She met artisans, including a young girl named Rosita, who was making a charming doll with a body that was a two-inch scale of the South American lungfish (*Lepidosiren paradoxa*). This doll, named the Fishscale Girl, accompanied Hailey to her home in Davenport, Iowa, where she created a book to send Rosita to show how the doll was faring in her new life. The book has been published (along with a sequel), and Ms. Hailey passed on the Peruvian copyrights to CONAPAC. We have published 2,000 softbound copies, which are now available for sale in all the Explorama gifts shops for \$15.00 US. A hardbound version has been printed in the States and is available for purchase at the Detroit Zoo gift shop. For more information about the trials and tribulations of Fishscale Girl, check out her blog and website at: www.CochiyPress.com and www.FishscaleGirl.com, a commercial free space for children and youth.

As CONAPAC enters its 21st year and Adopt-A-School begins its 19th, we all celebrate the efforts of so many who make this organization function. Without our donors, volunteers, staff and the owners of Explorama none of our best intentions would bear fruit. It takes committed partners to make it all happen. Thanks to everyone who has played a part in “making a difference” this year here in the Amazon Rainforest of Perú!